



Children take a hit from winter diseases

Healthcare facilities see surge in diarrhoea, pneumonia cases

AHMED DEEPTO

The influx of child patients suffering from pneumonia, winter diarrhoea and other cold-related diseases has been straining hospitals.

The pneumonia ward at Dhaka Shishu Hospital and Institute was at capacity yesterday. In the first four days of the month, 139 children with pneumonia and 155 with diarrhoea were treated there.

Last month, the numbers were 216 for pneumonia and 69 for diarrhoea. In November and October, 227 and 292 children with pneumonia and 53 and 28 with diarrhoea were treated there.

"Children under five are particularly vulnerable to cold-related viral diseases," Professor Mahbubul Hoque, director of the hospital, told The Daily Star.

On January 3, temperature fell to 8.3 degrees Celsius in Panchagarh and 13.6 degrees Celsius in Dhaka, Met officials said. Temperatures rose slightly the following day, but meteorologists say there will be another cold spell by the end of this week.

At Panchagarh Sadar Hospital yesterday, a nine-month-old baby boy died three days after he was admitted there.

WHAT TO DO

Drink plenty of water

Wear masks and hats when outdoors

Maintain hygiene

Eat food containing Vitamin C

Junior Consultant Monowarul Islam said the baby named Mostakim had a cough, fever, and diarrhoea.

PNEUMONIA

At Shishu hospital, there were long queues of worried parents with kids in front of the outpatient sections yesterday.

Thirty-one children were admitted to the 681-bed hospital with pneumonia-related complications, according to data.

Eighteen-month-old Abrar Fahad was brought to the hospital from Hatia, Noakhali, on December 26 with fever, severe breathing difficulties and diarrhoea.

"He fell ill in late November but his condition deteriorated in the middle of December. Now he is needing oxygen support," said Abrar's mother Rabeya Begum.

"Doctors say his condition will improve, but it will take some time," she said.

According to icddr,b, more than two children die every hour from pneumonia in Bangladesh. Pneumonia remains among the top five infectious diseases to kill children under five around the world, accounting for 14 percent of 0.7 million deaths from the infectious diseases.

DIARRHOEA

Sixteen-month-old Adnan Labib had to be admitted to the icddr,b hospital with diarrhoea more than once in a month.

"Even after giving him oral saline, Labib is not recovering," said Labib's mother, Shimu Akter.

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PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Clad in sweaters, leggings and monkey caps to keep warm, sisters Kamna and Ritu Poddar walk through the thick morning fog to get to their school. The photo was taken in Beel Pabla village of Khulna's Dumuria upazila yesterday.

Unemployment rate climbs

Women bear the brunt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's unemployment rate rose to 4.49 percent in the July-September quarter of 2024 from 4.07 percent a year earlier, with women bearing the brunt of the downturn, according to official data, as political turmoil and security concerns took a toll on the labour market.

The jobless rate for women surged to 7.16 percent from 6.15 percent year-on-year, while the unemployment rate for men edged higher to 3.81 percent from 3.46 percent over the same period, data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) showed.

In total, the number of unemployed individuals reached 26.6 lakh in the third quarter of last year, an increase of 1.7 lakh from a year earlier.

Of the total unemployed population, jobless men accounted for 17.9 lakh, up from 16.4 lakh in the same period the previous year, while the number of unemployed women reached 8.7 lakh, compared with 8.5 lakh a year earlier.

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Khaleda will fly to London for treatment tomorrow

Says Fakhrul after top BNP leaders meet her

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia would fly to London tomorrow night for treatment, party's Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has said.

He said this to reporters after BNP Standing Committee members met the party chief at her Gulshan residence last night.

The meeting was attended by Standing Committee members



Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Jamiruddin Sircar, Mirza Abbas, Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, Abdul Moyeen Khan, Nazrul Islam Khan, Salahuddin Ahmed, Selima Rahman, Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, Amir Khasru

Mahmud Chowdhury, Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku, and AZM Zahid Hossain.

In another development, LDP President Col (retd) Oli Ahmed

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Always be ready for combat to shield country's sovereignty

CA tells army personnel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army personnel must always be ready for combat to protect the country's sovereignty, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has said.

He was speaking after witnessing the Army Manoeuvre Exercise 2024-25, organised by the army's

55 Infantry Division at Rajbari Military Training Area yesterday, the Inter-Services Public Relation Directorate (ISPR) said in a press release.

"The Bangladesh Army is a place of pride and trust for the nation," Prof Yunus said.

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JULY UPRISING

Govt to sit with parties for draft of proclamation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government will hold talks with the political parties soon and prepare the draft of the July uprising proclamation based on the outcome of the dialogues, Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam told a press conference at the Foreign Service Academy yesterday.

He, however, did not give any dates for the talks.

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সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

"এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, অনেক বিদেশি নাগরিক অবৈধভাবে বাংলাদেশে অবস্থান করছেন/কর্মরত রয়েছেন। এমতাবস্থায়, অবৈধভাবে বাংলাদেশে অবস্থানরত/কর্মরত ভিনদেশি নাগরিকদের আগামী ৩১ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে বাংলাদেশে অবস্থানের বা কর্মরত থাকার প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ বৈধতা অর্জনের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। এক্ষেত্রে সংশ্লিষ্ট সকল দপ্তর/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে প্রয়োজনীয় সহযোগিতা প্রদানের জন্যও অনুরোধ করা হলো। এই সময়সীমা অতিক্রান্ত হবার পর অবৈধভাবে অবস্থানকারী এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠানের বিরুদ্ধে আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে"।

"It is hereby brought to the notice of all concerned that many foreign nationals are illegally staying/working in Bangladesh. In this case foreign nationals illegally staying/working in Bangladesh are requested to acquire the necessary documents to stay or work in Bangladesh by 31 January 2025. In this regard, all concerned departments/institutions are also requested to provide necessary cooperation. After this deadline, legal action will be taken against those staying illegally and the relevant institutions".

স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়

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MOJA KORI

cultural revelation of Korail

REHNUMA SHAHREEN

When speaking about Gulshan and Banani, the two most elegant areas of Dhaka, a polychromatic image of towering skyscrapers, corporate prestige, and the opulence of daily life comes to mind. At the middle of these two urban epicenters, hides another reality that often dismays the people of its neighborhood, named Korail.

Korail is one of the most overcrowded and unplanned regions of the city, which often puts itself in the headlines for unfavorable reasons. But lately, a wind of transformation has been blowing through the narrow pavements of Korail, raising the hopes, dreams, and a sense of identity among



PHOTO: COURTESY



the people living here.

Once overlooked, fortunately, the boundless potential of the inhabitants was explored and revealed by Paraa, a research-based design and architecture studio, spending the last three years working closely with this community and has fueled this change. Their

efforts and initiatives culminated into one of the most exciting exhibitory events of the year, Moja Kori.

Sharara Khan, one of the organisers and architects from Paraa, described the vision behind their work, saying, "We are trying to build this space, Machan, as a collective hub for the habitants of Korail, so that they can showcase their ideas and use it for capacity building. Even if one artist emerges from this initiative, or if someone starts their own creative journey, that will be our success. The possibilities here are endless."

One of the most distinctive features of Moja Kori was the way it focused on the participation of Korail's own people. Residents were not just spectators, but active collaborators in every aspect,

starting from contributing as artists, to volunteering, to organising and managing.

A daily exhibition was held as part of the four day program where, along with art manifestations and exhibition, there were workshops that focused on a variety of topics, ranging from the chaotic cosmopolitan experiences to playful rhymes, creative handicrafts to the photo walk — it had it all. An interesting film screening was arranged at a rickshaw garage in a very unique manner. There were interactive talks sessions and performances throughout the whole program.

Nujhat Jahan Khan, a writer, has worked with children and youth from Korail on a project called Writers from Korail, producing fictional stories that

were later exhibited at the event with hand-designed covers. Regarding the project, she said, "We held a few workshops over the last three months, then we called for submissions and the response was overwhelming. Seeing their stories take shape and displayed like this has been an amazing experience."

The impact of this initiative goes beyond exhibition or event activities, it has had a profound influence on the lives of Korail's residents. Women who once lacked a safe space to spend their spare time, now have a common space where they can connect and grow. The community's perspective has shifted as well, with neighbours becoming more supportive and encouraging.

"The girls here feel safer now than they did a few years ago and most importantly, we have a space of our own. Even the viewpoint of our neighbours, who once discouraged us, has changed. So, we can dream of doing things we never thought possible," said Maliha Akter, a resident and volunteer of the event.

The event Moja Kori was not an ordinary one, it was a statement that the people of Korail are more than their struggles. Be it through embroidery, photography, painting, or performance art, the festival exhibited their creativity, mastery, and determination. It was a reminder to the whole city that even in the densest corners of a city, where survival often takes precedence over everything else, art and culture can thrive and transform lives.

Cold spell likely from January 9

It may last for 3 to 4 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It may drizzle in different places for a couple of days before another cold spell begins on Thursday, Met officials said.

The cold spell is likely to be felt first in the Northern, northeastern, southeastern regions and then in the southeastern part and Dhaka and its adjacent districts, Meteorologist Abul Kalam Mallik told The Daily Star.

"The coldwave will be felt for three or four days," he said, adding that the difference between day and night temperatures will reduce amid the cold spell, he said.

The northern and southwestern regions, in particular, may see a severe cold wave in the middle of this month.

According to the meteorological department, sunshine in the next couple of days may cause temperatures to rise slightly. However, dense fog will prevail from midnight to morning, especially near rivers, he said.

Ferry services on the Paturia-Daulatdia and Aricha-Kazirhat routes resumed as fog lifted yesterday morning after over 10 hours.

Syrian ministers urge lifting of US sanctions in first visit to Doha

AFP, Doha

Ministers from Syria's transitional government urged the United States to lift its sanctions on Damascus during their first visit to Qatar since overthrowing president Bashar al-Assad.

In a statement, Qatar's foreign ministry said the Gulf country's premier met with Syria's interim foreign minister, Asaad al-Shaibani, defence minister Murhaf Abu Qasra and the new head of intelligence, Anas Khattab.

Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani "reiterated the State of Qatar's position in support of Syria's unity, sovereignty and independence," the statement said.

Unemployment

FROM PAGE 1

Experts have attributed the rise to widespread layoffs and safety concerns in urban areas, particularly affecting women.

"The political unrest in July and August likely exacerbated the unemployment situation," said Selim Raihan, executive director of the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling, a research organisation. "For women, the security challenges in urban areas could also be a significant factor."

Towfiqul Islam Khan, a senior research fellow at private think-tank the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the overall demand fell during the July-September quarter as industries faced a challenging time.

"It was a volatile time. Both labour supply and demand decreased significantly," he said.

The figures were compiled using the global standards outlined by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), hosted by the International Labour Organization.

This marks the first time Bangladesh's statistical agency has adopted the updated methodology in its quarterly labour report, alongside the data under the 13th ICLS, aiming to provide more precise and timely employment data. Most countries have transitioned to using the 19th ICLS standards to improve the accuracy of their labour force surveys.

As per the 13th ICLS, the unemployed population was 25.50 lakh, or 3.64 percent of the total in the July-September period, up from 24.3 lakh or 3.31 percent a year ago.

CPD's Towfiqul welcomed the publication of labour data in line with the 19th ICLS to portray a better picture. "However, BBS did not publish its sectoral data. So, it would not actually help the policymakers," he said.

However, Prof Raihan questioned the definition of the unemployed, saying the BBS data does not reflect the actual picture of the labour market.

According to the definition followed by the BBS, a person is to be considered unemployed if he or she did not work at all during the previous week (not even for an hour) or was temporarily absent from work.

"Our national labour market condition is not quite good. While the unemployment rate is reported to be below 5 percent — often referred to as the natural rate of unemployment. It is confusing and fails to provide an accurate picture of the labour market," said Prof Raihan.

The real situation would have been evident if individuals who fall under the condition known as "disguised unemployment" were counted, he said.

"In any case, if we take into consideration the disguised unemployed, the unemployment rate would likely be 10 percent," he said.

"Our economic growth is not effectively helping us for sufficient job creation because it is heavily reliant on a few specific sectors, such as ready-made garment and remittance," Prof Raihan explained.

The World Bank in its development update report in October 2024 said Bangladesh's economic progress over the last decade did not translate into a sufficient number of urban jobs in industry. "As a result, Bangladesh is at risk of missing out on a historical opportunity to take advantage of demographic dividends," the report said.

Children take a hit from winter diseases

FROM PAGE 1

Officials said most patients come from Mohammadpur, Gulshan, Kamrangirchar, Ashulia, Mirpur and 20 other areas of Dhaka. Among the patients who are not from Dhaka, most are from Gazipur, Narayanganj, Narsingdi, and Keraniganj.

Two-year-old Mobasser Hossain from Rupganj of Narayanganj was admitted to the icddr,b on Wednesday.

His father, Ashraf-ul-Islam, said, "My son has never been this sick

before. We don't know when he will recover."

In 2024, 675 children were admitted every day at the icddr,b. In the last 18 days, the average was 914.

Doctors say many of the recent patients are infected by rotavirus, a very contagious virus that causes diarrhoea.

Scientists at icddr,b had tested every 50th diarrhoea patient and found that 60 percent of them had rotavirus.

Lubaba Shahrin, an icddr,b

scientist, said the main cause of the spike in cases was rotavirus.

Children should be taken to a hospital if they suffer excessive vomiting, cannot retain food, show behavioural changes, have high fever, or pass blood in stool.

"If an oral rehydration solution is given and the patient throws up immediately, it's a sign that institutional care is needed," she said.

Clean water, warm food, and proper hygiene can protect children from diarrhoea, she said.

Khaleda will fly to London for treatment

FROM PAGE 1

Bir Bikram visited Khaleda at her residence in the evening.

During the meeting, he inquired about her health, said Oli Ahmed's Press Secretary Salah Uddin Razzak.

The 79-year-old former prime minister, who has been suffering from multiple health complications, including arthritis, diabetes, liver cirrhosis, and kidney ailments, requires specialised care unavailable in Bangladesh, according to her doctors.

According to the party sources, Khaleda is expected to stay with her son, Tarique Rahman, in London before heading to the US for treatment of her ongoing liver complications.

This will be her first reunion with Tarique in seven years, and her first overseas visit since she was freed from jail.

Khaleda is set to leave Dhaka for London at 10:00pm Tuesday on an air

ambulance of Qatar Airways.

According to party insiders, a 15-member team will travel with her. The team includes her late son Arafat Rahman Koko's wife, Syeda Sharmila Rahman, several doctors, BNP leaders, personal staff, and two housemaids.

Office of the BNP chief has already informed the foreign ministry about her trip, including details of the team travelling with her.

In March 2020, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, the government temporarily released her on an executive order, suspending her sentence on the condition that she will remain at her Gulshan residence and not leave the country.

She was convicted in Zia Orphanage Trust and Zia Charitable Trust graft cases.

On August 6 last year, Khaleda was fully freed by an order from President Mohammed Shahabuddin after

the Awami League government was ousted by a mass uprising.

Talking to reporters, Fakhru said, "Madam [Khaleda] has instructed us to work together for the people and for democracy."

"We hope she will return home soon after her treatment."

BNP sources said Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani will provide a special aircraft for Khaleda. The air ambulance is fully equipped with advanced medical facilities.

Khaleda will undergo a liver transplant at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Maryland, US. Her medical records and test reports have already been sent there.

During the AL government, Khaleda's family requested the authorities several times to permit her to go abroad for treatment, but she was denied.

Questioning settled issues not wise

FROM PAGE 12

consciousness shaped by the spirit of the 1952 Language Movement, the 1971 Liberation War, the 1972 constitution, and the 2024 student-led mass uprising, he said.

The goal of the Liberation War was to establish equality, human dignity, and justice in Bangladesh. However, even after 53 years, the dream of building the desired Bangladesh remains unfulfilled, said Dr Kamal, adding that the spirit of the 2024 mass uprising now reflects the aspirations for a democratic, inclusive, and discrimination-free society.

In recent years, democratic institutions have become nearly dysfunctional due to blatant partisan interference. Reforming these institutions and creating an environment for free and fair elections is a moral responsibility of all political parties and the public, he said.

The interim government formed to carry out these reforms must be given reasonable time and full support so

that they can successfully implement the necessary reforms, he added.

"We cannot deviate from the spirit of building a democratic and humane, inequality-free Bangladesh as envisioned in the Liberation War. Similarly, we must not let the dream of establishing a new, inequality-free Bangladesh through the 2024 mass uprising be thwarted. These historic aspects are interconnected and complementary."

The 87-year-old emeritus president of Gono Forum gave a brief speech before his statement was read out.

In the speech, Dr Kamal said, "We have achieved significant milestones through our movement. We must sustain these efforts to strengthen the unity of the people. It is only by consolidating this unity that we can achieve our goals. Unity has always been our priority, as divisions only weaken us. Let us come together to intensify our street movements and uphold the vision we have accomplished so far."

"We will continue our movement by uniting the people against corruption

and terrorism. By creating a society free from corruption and terror, we can build a just and equitable nation where our fundamental objectives can be realised. With the power of unity, we can achieve the main objectives of the country together."

Gono Forum President Mustafa Mohsin Montu questioned the understanding of the people who talk about "burying the constitution of 1972"

"No one has the right to play a game with this issue. The crisis is not with the constitution itself, but those who have misused it. Discussions about the constitution are welcome, but those who are trying to create controversy regarding the Liberation War, the state, or the constitution through such remarks should refrain from doing so."

Gono Forum General Secretary Mizanur Rahman said, "We cannot question past achievements like the Liberation War and the constitution by comparing them to Sheikh Hasina's misrule or using her misrule as a pretext to undermine them."

Govt to sit with parties

FROM PAGE 1

About whether the proclamation would be announced by January 15, as per the deadline set by the Anti-discrimination Students' Movement and the Jatiya Nagorik Committee, he said they will announce it "soon".

The two platforms on December 30 said they would announce the July mass uprising proclamation the next day.

Initially, the CA Press Wing had said the government had no involvement in the student leaders' proclamation event.

However, that very night it said it would take initiative to prepare the proclamation based on national consensus.

Following that, the student leaders after a late-night meeting announced a "March for Unity" programme in support of the interim government's initiative.

WORKING TO BRING HASINA BACK Shafiqul also said the interim government is working relentlessly to extradite fallen autocrat Shiekh Hasina from India.

"It's the government's top priority. She had been involved in enforced disappearance, killings, kleptocracy, and siphoned off billions of public money. She must face trial," he said, adding that nobody in the world "wants to give space to a killer".

"Many in the Indian media didn't know the horrors of Hasina. Many have started writing [about it] recently. When the whole world will know, the pressure will mount. We'll do our best to bring her back. If not, those who will come to power will do so later as it is a generational issue.... It's the nation's desire. We're very hopeful."

Shafiqul further said they have not yet heard anything from the Indian side regarding Hasina's extradition request through the note verbale by Bangladesh. "But the government's efforts are still underway to bring her back."

He also said the government is investigating reports of Awami League leaders fleeing after August 5, and assured that the probe will be conducted by honest officials.

"Investigations led by officials from the previous Awami League government may not yield good

results."

Regarding criticism of the recently-approved draft of the Cyber Protection Ordinance 2024 by Transparency International Bangladesh, the press secretary said, "We welcome any kind of the criticism and take them positively. Asif Nazrul will talk speak on this issue soon."

Shafiqul noted that the commission investigating enforced disappearances is doing good work.

He mentioned plans to arrange visits for journalists to a few of the "Aynaghors (detention centers)" to showcase the horrific methods used for disappearances.

Highlighting incidents like irregularities in three previous elections, the Shapla Chattar crackdown, and money laundering cases during Hasina's rule, Shafiqul said that each issue is being addressed.

He added that the Police Bureau of Investigation is working hard to expedite the investigation of the murder of journalist couple Sagar Sarwar and Meherun Runi.

Responding a query, Shafiqul said state media exists in every country, and it plays an important role.

"BTV [Bangladesh Television] and BSS [Bangladesh Sangbad Shangstha] have been granted independence and are free to exercise press freedom according to their roles. Over the past five months, media in the country has enjoyed unprecedented freedom."

Asked whether BSS will report on the corruption during the AL regime, he said, "We don't interfere in their management. We hope they'll design their programmes reflecting the spirit of the July uprising."

Speaking at the press conference, Deputy Press Secretary Azad Majumder said many European countries have initiated relocating their visa centres from Delhi to Dhaka, or another neighbouring country, upon the request of Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus.

"Bulgaria has already announced transferring its visa centre for Bangladeshis to Indonesia and Vietnam. Romania has announced the issuance of visas from the embassies in Vietnam and Thailand. Kazakhstan also said it will issue visas to Bangladeshi students from Bangkok."

SC upholds scrapping of 4 cases

FROM PAGE 12

lawyer Kayser Kamal told reporters that his client is still accused in 18 to 19 cases although most of the cases lodged against him have already been dismissed.

Many false and fabricated cases were filed from political motives to harass Tarique and tarnish the image of BNP during the regimes of military-backed caretaker government and Sheikh Hasina led government, he added.

On October 23 last year, the HC scrapped the four extortion cases after hearing the rules that questioned the legality of the trials of the cases.

The rules were issued by the court following petitions filed by Tarique in 2008, when he was in Bangladesh.

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Voters deprived in past elections: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Voters were deprived of exercising their rights in past elections because decisions were made to serve the rulers' interests, said election commissioners yesterday.

"Our commitment is to deliver a free, fair, and credible election to the nation, which has been absent for so long," Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin said while inaugurating a training programme for trainers for the upcoming voter list update drive, scheduled to begin on January 20.

"I want to eradicate the pain of those who have been denied their voting rights. We stand by our commitment and seek everyone's cooperation," he said.

EC Abdul Rahman El Masud stressed the importance of an accurate voter list, calling it a prerequisite for a free and fair election.

EC Begum Tahmida Ahmad reflected on the failures of previous commissions, attributing them to the influence of those in power. EC Anwarul Islam Sarker vowed that the current commission would do whatever is necessary to restore the credibility of elections.

Meanwhile, the commission in a statement yesterday said enumerators will visit homes from January 20 to February 3, to collect data of citizens to update the electoral roll.

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus witnessing the manoeuvre exercise of an infantry brigade at Rajbari Military Training Area yesterday. Bangladesh Army's 55 Infantry Division organised the event, attended by Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral M Nazmul Hassan and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan.

PHOTO: ISPR



NCTB prints wrong date for Abu Sayed's death in textbook

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two new NCTB textbooks for classes nine and ten feature two different dates of the killing of Abu Sayed, the student leader in Rangpur whose death led to the July mass uprising spreading like wildfire across the country.

This apparent error has caused confusion among many.

Abu Sayed, a student leader of Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur, was shot dead at close range by police on July 16 while he stood with his arms outstretched in defiance against police brutality.

The pictures of his death became an iconic image of defiance of the July uprising, drawing people from all corners of the country onto the streets.

The new English for Today textbook for students of classes nine and ten, published by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), has a section on Abu Sayed.

A write up titled "Graffiti" says that on July 17, 2024, Abu Sayed, an unarmed organiser of the students' protest, was killed.

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BNP to strengthen national unity against fascism Says Salahuddin

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior leader Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said their party's acting chairman has instructed them to make every possible effort to maintain national unity to resist the rise of fascist forces in the country.

He made the comments while speaking to reporters at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport after his return from London.

In response to a question about the message Tarique Rahman sent through him, Salahuddin said, "Our acting chairman has instructed us to make every effort to keep the nation united, as otherwise, we understand that fascist forces and their associates could be emboldened."

"I believe our ultimate challenge should be to foster the anti-fascist national and mass unity that has developed in Bangladesh as a political culture. Otherwise, fascism could rear its ugly head again," he said.

When asked about Tarique's possible return, he said they had not yet been able to create the necessary environment for his return. "It will take some more time, but he will definitely return home," he said.

The BNP leader said it may not take much time for the institutional, legal, and political environment to be restored.

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'We are paying for past policy errors'

Finance adviser tells event

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The interim government aims to establish a reform legacy to guide future administrations, said Finance Adviser Dr Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday.

"We are here for one and a half years or so. We will not stay long but want to leave our footprints, good examples," he said, speaking at the launch of a report titled "Enhancing Saudi-Bangladesh Economic Engagement: Trends, Key Challenges & Long-term Growth Prospects".

Referring to ongoing reforms, Salehuddin said, "It will be like having a rural road that can connect the highway." He highlighted the detrimental impact of corruption and policy missteps during the previous Awami League government, which deterred major foreign investments.

"Corruption and policy mistakes in the past have cost us. Many foreign investors could not invest due to policy shortcomings," he said, citing irregularities in the share market under the previous regime.

Saudi Ambassador Essa Youssef Essa Al Duhaillan said Saudi oil giant Aramco is interested in building a refinery in Bangladesh, potentially enabling exports to China, India, and beyond. He criticised past neglect, saying Aramco delegations visited Bangladesh thrice between 2016 and 2018 but were not engaged.

He emphasised addressing procedural barriers for foreign investors, adding that Saudi renewable energy company ACWA Power is keen to invest \$3.5 billion in Bangladesh.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain highlighted the need for skilled migrant workers, while Foreign Secretary Md Jashim Uddin emphasised the importance of systematic mechanisms to unlock untapped economic potential between Dhaka and Riyadh.

Bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia currently stands at \$2.1 billion, with Saudi FDI at \$232 million in 2023.

Secretary (East), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr Md Nazrul Islam delivered the welcome address, while M Masrur Reaz, chairman of Policy Exchange, presented the report.

We are here for one and a half years or so. We will not stay long but want to leave our footprints, good examples.

BFIU seeks bank account details of 21 more journo

STAR REPORT

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) yesterday sought the bank account details of 21 more journalists.

A senior official of BFIU confirmed the matter to The Daily Star.

Saiful Alam, editor of the Daily Jugantor; Pranab Saha, sacked editor of DBC News; Hasan Zahid Tusher, former deputy press secretary to ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina; M Shamsur Rahman, editor-in-chief and CEO of Independent TV; Mamun Abdullah, head of news at Independent TV; Animesh Kar, special correspondent of Independent TV; Md Ruhul Amin Russell, managing editor of Bangladesh Pratidin; and Mahmud Hasan, deputy editor of Bangladesh Pratidin are among them.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

Dismissed trainee SIs protest in front of Secretariat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of dismissed trainee sub-inspectors (SIs) protested in front of the Secretariat yesterday, demanding reinstatement to their jobs.

The protesters are part of the 40th Outside Cadet batch and were dismissed from the Bangladesh Police Academy in Sardah, Rajshahi. They were accused of breaching discipline during their training.

However, many of the trainees have alleged that the accusations were baseless or unjustified.

Sheikh Farid, a protester, highlighted the financial strain caused by his dismissal.

"My father, a farmer, borrowed Tk 5,000 every month to support me during training. After a year of hard work and without receiving a salary, I've lost my job," he said.

The protesters have called on higher authorities to review their cases and provide accountability.

The grievances of the dismissed trainees stem from their expulsion on October 23 last year, just a month before their scheduled graduation.

A total of 252 trainees were expelled for alleged breaches of discipline. On November 4, an additional 58 trainees faced similar dismissals.

Later, 11 more trainee SIs were dismissed, including eight members on January 1.

Subir Roy, one of the coordinators of the protest, said the government should take steps to restore the dignity of the dismissed trainees.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

কম খরচে এবং নিরাপদে ক্যাশ আউট করুন রকেটে

ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংকের

ATM/CRM থেকে ক্যাশ আউট চার্জ **৯ টাকা** হাজারে মাত্র

যেকোন শাখা, উপশাখা থেকে প্রতিবার ক্যাশ আউট চার্জ **১০ টাকা** মাত্র

এছাড়াও এজেন্ট থেকে ক্যাশ আউট চার্জ **১৬.৭০ টাকা** হাজারে মাত্র

১৬২১৬
দিন-রাত ২৪ ঘণ্টা এই কোড এসএম থেকে

ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক
আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী

Ex-MP SA Khaleque passes away

UNB, Dhaka

SA Khaleque, a former MP and vice president of the Dhaka city unit of the BNP, passed away yesterday at a hospital in Dhaka. He was 97.

Khaleque, also a former deputy mayor of undivided Dhaka City Corporation and a five-time MP, breathed his last around 3:30pm at United Hospital, said BNP media cell member Sayrul Kabir Khan.

He said the former MP had long been suffering from various old-age complications.

Khaleque's namaz-e-janaza will be held in front of the BNP's Nayapaltan central office at 12:00pm today. Another Janaza will be held at 2:00pm at Mirpur Bangla College, and he will be laid to rest at his family graveyard near Gabtali Mirpur Shahi Mosque.

Jane Patricia Gomez no more

STAR REPORT

Jane Patricia Gomez, a Bharatanatyam dancer and former teacher of St Gregory School, passed away at her Indira Road house on Saturday, aged 50. She had been battling cancer since 2017, said a press release.

Patricia is survived by her father, mother, husband, and only son.

Her passion for dance began at Bottomly School. She later honed her skills in Bharatanatyam under the tutelage of Kartik Sinha and Father George Saju, eminent figures in the South Indian classical dance tradition. She performed Bharatanatyam dance on BTV and various stages in Dhaka.



Owners and drivers of CNG-run auto-rickshaws registered for Dhaka district (areas outside the metropolitan area) blocked a busy street in Dhaka's Bailey Road area yesterday, demanding permission for their vehicles to operate in the Dhaka metropolitan area. The drivers took position near the Officer's Club for about an hour from noon, causing significant traffic congestion.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

CYBER PROTECTION 'Draft ordinance mirrors repealed acts'

Say 27 citizens in a statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twenty-seven citizens, victims of two repealed oppressive acts, have expressed strong dissatisfaction with the government for neglecting citizen participation and transparency in the formulation of the Cyber Protection Ordinance-2024.

Victims of the abolished Cyber Security Act and the repealed Article 57 of the ICT Act yesterday said in a press release that people are sadly witnessing a lack of participation from all stakeholders and a lack of transparency in the legislation regarding the drafting and approval of the Cyber Security Ordinance.

The statement said the draft was approved in principle by the Advisory Council without the involvement of all stakeholders and sufficient discussion.

This approach creates no qualitative difference between the secret drafting

of the law and the fascist culture of the Awami League government under the misrule of the Hasina. They said there is no fundamental difference between the repealed DSA and the approved draft ordinance except repealing some controversial sections of the CSA, and reducing penalties.

Rather, sub-sections 1 and 2 of Article 8 empower the director general of the National Cyber Security Agency to remove or block any information deemed to be a threat to national unity, security, defense, religious values or public order, which would create discriminatory way of giving a single citizen the sole power to take all decisions in the matter.

The signatories include, Rahim Shuvo, a journalist from Thakurgaon; Saidul Haq, a Feni student; Manzila Jhuma, a Supreme Court lawyer; Jamal Meer, journalist from Barguna, and Nusrat Jahan, teacher from Patuakhali.

3 to die for killing student in Dhaka

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced three people to death for killing Ismail Hossain Jisan, 24, a student of the European University of Bangladesh (EUB), in Dhaka's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in 2019.

The convicts are Hasibul Hossain alias Hasib, Shrabon alias Shaon and Abdullah Al Noman. Of them, Hasib and Noman are now in jail while Shaon is on the run.

Judge Farzana Yeasmin of the Dhaka 5th Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the verdict in the presence of Hasib and Noman in the courtroom.

The judge acquitted another accused, Sajni Akhter, as her involvement in the killing was not proven.

Patients pass harsh

FROM PAGE 5

from 10 districts of Khulna division and neighbouring areas, overwhelming its limited infrastructure, he added.

In recent days, the strain has intensified due to a surge in cold-related illnesses.

Between Saturday morning and Sunday morning alone, 260 new patients were admitted, pushing the total to 1,260, with 12 deaths reported in 24 hours. On Friday, the admissions reached 1,368, with 17 deaths.

A walk through the hospital paints a grim picture. Relatives of patients stretch polythene sheets across verandas,

corridors, and stairwells to shield against the wind. In the overcrowded Medicine Wards 5 and 6, there's barely space to step. In paediatric corridors, families have resorted to keeping sick children on the cold floor, as extra beds fail to meet demand.

Dr Mizanur Rahman, assistant director of KMCH, said, "Since mid-November, the influx of patients with diarrhoea, pneumonia, breathing difficulties, and other cold-related diseases has been unmanageable. Patients are exposed to the cold in open spaces due to the bed shortage. Many are getting worse rather than better," he said.

BNP to strengthen

FROM PAGE 3

and field-level reforms. "I call upon the interim government to give attention to completing the necessary reforms based on national consensus alongside taking election preparations so that we can proceed to the democratic process promptly."

Regarding the move by the leaders of the Anti-

Discrimination Student Movement, he said their party will welcome the emergence of any new political party in the current context of the country. "But it shouldn't be like the king's party with the support of the government. It would be better for them to come through a healthy political process."

NCTB prints wrong

FROM PAGE 3

movement for quota reform in Rangpur, was shot and killed by police as he stood with his arms stretched out, leaving his mother, Monowara Begum, shell-shocked and crying. "My son only wanted a job; if you don't want to give him a job, then don't but why did you kill him?"

Meanwhile, a write up titled "Amader Natun Gourobhagtha" in the Bangla Shahitya textbook for class nine and ten students read that the movement received its

most iconic and defining image on July 16, when Abu Sayed from Rangpur stood steadfastly and advanced in the face of police gunfire.

A teacher of government secondary school in Mirpur said that this is a "callous mistake", and everyone is aware when Abu Sayed was killed.

"I think there is no coordination among the textbook writers," the teacher said.

Contacted, NCTB Chairman Professor AKM Reazul Hassan said they will look into the matter and will fix the confusion.

BFIU seeks

FROM PAGE 3

The rest are Daily Khola Kagoj senior reporter Zafar Ahmed, who is now working at Bangla News, Daily Jatiya Orthoniti Editor MG Kibria Chowdhury, Amader Somoy and Amader Orthoniti Chief Reporter Deepak Chowdhury, Ekushey TV's Head of Input Akhil Kumar Poddar, Ekattor TV journalist Jhumur Bari, Ekushey Sangbad Editor Ziadur Rahman, Daily Kalbela special correspondent Angur Nahar Monty, My TV Chairman Nasir Uddin Sathi, SA TV journalist Rashed Kanjan, BSS Senior Reporter Shahnaz Siddiqui, Ekushey TV journalist Rashed Chaudhry, SA TV Head of News Mahmud Al Faisal, and Samakal journalist Rama Prasad.

Earlier, the BFIU summoned the bank account details of 12 journalists.

Dismissed

FROM PAGE 3

dismissed SIs, vowed to continue their movement until their demands were met.

The rally started around 10:00am and continued till 4:00pm the day, but none of the seniors, or from the government had any scope to meet, he said.

Roy said, "We are not going to back down until we get a fair resolution. We will hold the rally again tomorrow [Monday] at the same place, in front of the home ministry."

PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 6					
Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 5:30	12:45	4:00	5:30	7:00	
JAMAAT 6:05	1:15	4:15	5:35	7:30	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of Executive Director
Cotton Development Board
Tula Bhaban, Krishi Khamar Sarak
Farmgate, Dhaka-1215
www.cdb.gov.bd

কৃষি সমৃদ্ধি

Number: 12.07.0000.111.99.161.09 Date: 05/01/2025

e-Tender Notice

Subject: Invitation for the procurement of Stationery and Consumable items for Cotton Development Board (HQ)

This is to notify that the following tender has published through e-GP Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) as following:

Tender ID	Package No.	Name of the goods	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time
1058829	APP GR 06	Procurement of Stationery and Consumable items for Cotton Development Board (HQ)	20/01/2025; 5:00pm	21/01/2025; 11:00am

This is 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 Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

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

05-01-2025
মোঃ আবু ইলিয়াস মিঞা
Deputy Director

GD-50

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Kushtia.
email : eekus@rhd.gov.bd

Reference No.35.01.5000.439.07.003.25-40(22)

Date: 05-01-2025

e-Tender Notice

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

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package Reference No.	Name of work	Last Date & Time of Selling	Date & Time of Closing and Opening
01.	1058699	e-GP/PMP/W-02/KURD/2024-25	Periodic Maintenance Program (PMP) For Strengthening, Wearing Course, Earth work and Incidental Works at (Ch: 0+000 km to 13+500 km, Total Length = 13500.00 m) of Mirpur- Shehala-Pragpur BDR Camp Road (Z-7461) under Road Division Kushtia during the year 2024-2025.	02-02-2025 At 17:00 hours.	03-02-2025 At 11:30 hours.

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 submission the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any Member of Schedule Banks for e-GP.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and form e-GP help desk (helpdesk@procure.gov.bd).

(Md. Nayemur Rahman)
Assistant Engineer (A.C.), RHD
Road Division, Kushtia.

(Md. Monzurul Karim)
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Kushtia.

GD-59

Voters deprived

FROM PAGE 3

The commission has decided to collect data of citizens who were born on January 1, 2008 and before. They will also collect the information of those who were not enlisted in the other voter update process. During the home visits, enumerators

will also deduct the names of deceased voters.

After collecting the information, EC will also collect biometric details from the prospective voters from February 5 to April 11.

The EC will complete the data processing works by May 5, said the statement.

Seeking Opportunity

Seeking a job in a national or international organization/company as a Procurement Specialist, Construction Management Specialist, Individual Consultant, Senior Engineer, or a Similar role.

Profile Summary:

- Retired as a Superintending Engineer from a reputed government engineering organization.
- 18 years of extensive experience in the procurement of works, goods, and services.
- 12 years of proven expertise in construction management.
- Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from a renowned public engineering university.

Contact Information:

Phone : +8801711240805, Email : reza.eed@gmail.com

খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিমিটেড
বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী, খুলনা

০৫ জানুয়ারী ২০২৫

তারিখ: ১৬/৫৯/২৪-২৫

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

০১।	ক্রসকারী গ্রাইন্ডারের নাম	খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিমিটেড, বাংলাদেশ নৌবাহিনী, খুলনা।
০২।	ক্রসকারী মালমালের বিকল এবং পরিচাল	36 items of Electric Cable Tray, Horizontal Elbow, Reducer, Horizontal Tee, Vertical Tee, Inside Vertical Risers etc.
০৩।	দরপত্র প্রদানের তারিখ	০৬ জানুয়ারী ২০২৫ থেকে ২৯ জানুয়ারী ২০২৫ (অধিক চলারতাল সময় পর্যন্ত)।
০৪।	দরপত্র করার তারিখ	২৭ জানুয়ারী ২০২৫ (কোটা ১১.১৫ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত)।
০৫।	দরপত্র প্রদানের তারিখ ও সময়	২৭ জানুয়ারী ২০২৫ কোটা ১১.৩০ ঘটিকাখণ্ডে খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ডের এনালিসিস রুমের।
০৬।	দরপত্র গ্রহণের স্থান	ক) খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিমিটেড এর ইলেকট্রিক্যাল (কোটা শাখা) হতে অফিস ভলিউমের সফরে। খ) নৌ-উপকরণ, বিল্ডিং-নামা শাখা, বিল্ডিং-৩, ঢাকা হতে অফিস ভলিউমের সফরে।
০৭।	দরপত্র প্রদানের স্থান	খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিমিটেড এর প্রধান গেটে রিক্টিক ট্রাক্স বাক্স বাক্স আনা প্রদান করতে হবে অথবা Online (ই-মেইল: oiocoml.ksy@gmail.com এ প্রেরণ করা যাবে এবং dgm1.ksy@gmail.com কে CC তে যথেষ্ট হবে) এ দরপত্র শাখায় প্রদান করা যাবে।
০৮।	টিকার অনুমতি	টিকার ১,০০০/- (টাকা এক হাজার বার অনুমতি)।
০৯।	দরপত্রের পরিচাল	উদ্ধৃত নম্বর ০৫, হতে খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিমিটেড এর অনুমতি/টিউ/পে-অফিস আকারে (সেক্রেটারি) প্রদান করতে হবে।
১০।	যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	ফোন: ০২-৪৪১১০৯৭/৪৪১১০৯৮ ফ্যাক্স: ০২-৪৪১১০৯৭/৪৪১১০৯৮ ইমেইল: oiocoml.ksy@gmail.com , dgm1.ksy@gmail.com ওয়েবসাইট: www.khulnashipyard.gov.bd
১১।	নিষেধ নির্দেশনাবলী	খুলনা শিপইয়ার্ড লিমিটেড কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীতকৈ কে কোন লক্ষ্য দরপত্র গ্রহণ / বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন।

GD- 49

ডিজিএম (সিএজপি)

সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড
(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানি)
Sylhet Gas Fields Limited
(A Company of Petrobangla)

গ্যাস জ্বালি সঙ্গ।
এর স্বাস্থ্য ঝুঁকি রয়েছে জ্বালি
দাহিত্ব গুলদ বন্ধ।


সূত্র নং- ২৮.২০.৯১৫৩.১৪২.১৪.০০৯.২৪ তারিখ: ০৫ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫

দরপত্র প্রক্রিয়া স্থগিত

সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড এর উৎপাদিত পেট্রোলিয়াম পণ্য পরিবহনের নিমিত্ত পরিবহন ঠিকাদার নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে আহ্বানকৃত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-২৮.২০.৯১৫৩.১৪২.১৪.০০৯.২৪ (জাতীয়) তারিখ: ১০-১২-২০২৪ অনিবার্য কারণবশত: এতদ্বারা স্থগিত করা হলো।

উপ-মহাব্যবস্থাপক (প্রকিউরমেন্ট)

GD-53


 (মোহাম্মদ মোমিনুল ইসলাম ভূঁইয়া, পিপিএম)
 বিপি-৭৪০৬১০৯৮১০
 পুলিশ সুপার
 ইন্ডাস্ট্রিয়াল পুলিশ-১ ঢাকা।
 +৮৮০২২২৪-৯৯৮০২৬, ☎ ০২২২৪-৯৯৮০১৮
 ই-মেইল-ip1.sp@police.gov.bd



Child Protection Unit sets sights on Coldplay ahead of India concert

Coldplay is gearing up to perform in India, as part of their *Music of the Spheres World Tour*. However, yesterday, just days ahead of their Ahmedabad concert, a legal notice was issued to lead singer Chris Martin and the event organisers.

The District Child Protection Unit in Ahmedabad has sent a notice to Chris Martin and the concert organisers, warning them against including children on stage in any capacity during the live show.

Additionally, the organisers have been directed to ensure that no children are allowed into the venue without earplugs or hearing protection, according to ANI.

The notice also emphasised that sound levels exceeding 120 decibels could pose serious health risks to children attending the concert.

MITHILA JOINS Bangla dub of ‘Descendants of the Sun’

The hit Korean drama *Descendants of the Sun*, famed for its record-breaking story and Song Joong-ki and Song Hye-kyo’s chemistry, is set for a Bangla dub production, with a voice actor announced.

Rafiath Rashid Mithila will be joining as the voice artiste for the second lead character, Dr Yoon Myung Joo, in the series.

Khalid Hossain Ovi announced the news on his Facebook account with the caption, “Mithila will voice the fierce and formidable Dr Yoon Myung Joo in the highly anticipated Bangla dub of *Descendants of The Sun*. The character has originally been portrayed by the internationally recognised South Korean actress Kim Ji Won.”



Golden Globes Awards crown its winners today

The Golden Globe Awards is always the first major event that commences the Hollywood award season. The 82nd edition of the ceremony is set to take place at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles.

The programme begins at 7:00am (BST) today, with Nikki Glaser making history as its first solo female host.

Filmmaker Jacques Audiard’s genre-defying *Emilia Pérez*, about a Mexican drug lord transitioning to life as a woman, earned 10 nominations, a record for a comedy/musical.

The Globes also honours the best in series, with comedy *The Bear* earning five nominations, and historical epic *Shogun* and comedy *Only Murders in the Building* tied at four.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

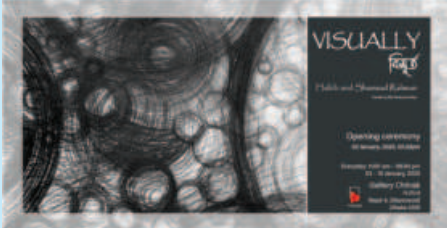
Visually Bimurto

Featuring the works of Habibur Rahman and Shamsad Rahman, the exhibition merges architectural principles with visual aesthetics, creating a world of intricate textures, shapes, and lines. Using both natural and digital mediums, the pieces encourage viewers to explore space and form interactively. Habibur Rahman and Shamsad Rahman, both award-winning designers, incorporate their architectural expertise into their artworks.

Date: January 3-15, 2025

Time: 11am - 8pm

Venue: Gallery Chitrag



Himesh Reshammiya revives ‘80s masala in ‘Badass Ravi Kumar’



Himesh Reshammiya is set to reprise his role as Ravi Kumar from *The Xpose* in the upcoming film *Badass Ravi Kumar*, a vibrant homage to 1980s Bollywood. Directed by Keith Gomes and produced by Himesh Reshammiya Melodies, the film features a screenplay by Kushal Bakshi and Reshammiya, with dialogues by Bunty Rathore.

The trailer teases high-octane action, showcasing Ravi Kumar wielding a chainsaw against foes. Prabhu Deva plays the magnetic antagonist Carlos Pedro Panther, while Kirti Kulhari stars as the bold Laila. The ensemble cast includes Sanjay Mishra, Johnny Lever, Sunny Leone, and debutant Simona as Madhubala, opposite Himesh.

Award-winning films spotlight indigenous voices at Hill Film Festival



The sixth Hill Film Festival concluded on Saturday at DrikPath Bhubon, Dhaka, celebrating outstanding cinematic achievements. This year’s festival, a vital celebration of indigenous cinema, showcased 62 films from 20 countries, spanning a range of genres from short fiction to experimental works, and representing 18 different languages.

Zayed Siddiki’s *Raven* won Best Short Fiction, while Chanho Lee’s *Water Lilies* earned Best Feature Fiction, with Lee dedicating the award to his passionate

cast and crew. *Wild Coast Warriors* by Nick Chevallier and team claimed Best Feature Documentary, and *Mama* by Nadia Nazar received Best Experimental Film. The Best Student Film Award went to *Sound of Silence* by Soumik Bakshi Dipto, Irfanul Haque, Sanjida Swarna, and Pail Sarkar. These accolades reflect the festival’s dedication to diverse voices and genres, amplifying indigenous stories and creative excellence across fiction, documentary, and experimental filmmaking.

COUNTRYWIDE

CHITAI PITHA

A beloved winter delicacy

PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY, Bagerhat

As winter grips the rural areas of Bagerhat, the aroma of freshly prepared Chitai Pitha -- locally known as Kachi Khocha -- draws crowds to village markets. These traditional rice pancakes, served with either warm date molasses or a savoury mix of mustard and shrimp paste, have become a seasonal favourite, bringing joy to customers and livelihoods to vendors.

At the busy Signboard Bazar in Kachua upazila, 70-year-old pitha seller Md Monsur Ali Sheikh has become a familiar figure. For over

Similarly, Hasi Begum, another pitha vendor in the same market, runs her small business with a slightly different pricing strategy.

She sells two pieces of Chitai Pitha for Tk 15, earning around Tk 1,500 daily.

However, rising costs of raw materials have eaten into her profits. “I spend Tk 700 on ingredients daily, and although I sell enough to make a decent income, the increased prices of essentials leave me with little profit,” she said.

Customers also express their fondness for Chitai Pitha.

Khayar Shikdar, a regular patron,



a decade, he has served this winter delicacy with a smile, earning between Tk 1,500 and Tk 2,000 daily.

Monsur starts his sales at 4:00pm and continues until 10:00pm, ensuring customers enjoy the pitha fresh and warm. He said he specially sources the date molasses to enhance the pitha’s flavour.

“I serve the pitha in two ways -- soaked in hot, thin date molasses or paired with a savoury blend of mustard and shrimp paste. Both are equally popular,” Monsur said.

described the pitha as “incredibly delicious” and said he often travels from Kachua to enjoy it fresh at the market.

“The combination of the warm molasses and the pitha is perfect for the cold weather. I also pack some to take home for my family,” he said. With the season in full swing, demand for these pithas is expected to grow, ensuring the age-old tradition of pitha-making thrives in rural Bangladesh, said Rejaul Hossain Chanchal, president of Signboard Bazar cooperative.

Broadband tariffs set to drop 20pc

FROM PAGE 12

“We have thoroughly analysed the entire internet market ecosystem and identified opportunities to reduce prices at various stages,” Bari said.

In Bangladesh, internet connectivity begins with international submarine cables and International Terrestrial Cables (ITCs) supplying bandwidth to International Internet Gateways (IIGs) and distributed to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) through Nationwide Telecommunication Transmission Networks (NTTNs). ISPs deliver internet to consumers.

“So, we have decreased the prices for IIG and ISPs,” said Bari, previously the director general of the BTRC’s

systems and services department.

The commission found that the internet bandwidth consumption has tripled to 6,036 Gbps between September 2021 and September 2024, increasing the transmission costs charged by NTTNs. And it should be reduced.

With bandwidth prices falling in the international market, the costs for IIGs and ISPs can also be reduced, ultimately enabling end users to access more affordable internet services.

The commission also found that ITC operators, who are also licensed as IIG operators, sell internet to their subsidiaries at significantly lower

rates, creating uneven competition.

The BTRC has directed its Engineering and Operations Division to put an end to this malpractice and ensure the same price.

Subsequently, the BTRC has managed to lower the cost of bandwidth purchased by ISPs from IIGs, the wholesale providers of bandwidth, by 15 to 25 percent.

This has paved the way for lower internet prices at the consumer level.

“In our entire value chain, the BTRC will not be able to demonstrate any reduction in costs, including staff salaries, electricity expenses, or space rent, and there was no adequate consultation with stakeholders before

lowering the ISPs’ price,” said Aminul Hakim, chief executive officer of Amber IT, a top ISP.

Without lowering the NTTN price, there is no justification for reducing the price of IIG and ISPs, he added.

However, the BTRC officials said they have held multiple stakeholder consultations before arriving at the decision.

“It is a bit complicated now to bring down the prices of the NTTNs and the ITCs, but we will do it soon,” Bari said.

As of November last year, Bangladesh had 13.28 crore internet subscribers, of which 1.37 crore are broadband internet users.

Tulip lived in flat gifted by Hasina ally

FROM PAGE 12

lived in her sister’s flat for a period, adding that such arrangements are common among family members and that the political affiliations of others have “nothing” to do with Tulip.

Tulip herself has also denied any wrongdoing and described allegations against her as politically motivated.

She remains a close ally of UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, who has expressed confidence in her integrity. **CALL FOR RESIGNATION GROWS** The disclosures have drawn fresh scrutiny on Tulip’s ties to Hasina’s government, which was ousted last year amid allegations of corruption, human rights abuses, and the deaths of hundreds of protesters.

The Hampstead flat is one of several properties related to Tulip’s family and Awami League members.

Meanwhile, a recent Financial Times report has triggered a new storm in the UK, with opposition Conservative MPs calling for Tulip to resign, reports The Daily Mail.

The report said the MP had lied about receiving a flat at King’s Cross, now worth £700,000, as a gift.

The Mail on Sunday repeatedly asked Tulip if she was given the two-bedroom apartment, previously owned by a property developer connected to Sheikh Hasina.

She has denied it was a gift, insisting that her parents had bought it for her. She also threatened the Mail on Sunday with legal action.

However, The Daily Mail on Saturday quoting Labour sources reported that the flat was indeed given to her by the

developer as an “act of gratitude”.

On Saturday, Tory MPs demanded she stands down as Treasury minister unless she explains herself.

Bob Blackman, the Tory MP for Harrow East, said: “Ms Siddiq needs to clarify the position in relation to her property dealings and explain what was stated originally and why. If she does not, her position as a minister is untenable.”

Matt Vickers MP, shadow home office minister, added: “Allegations of this nature against any member of government are unacceptable, but are even more questionable when the minister is Starmer’s anti-corruption minister.”

And Ben Obese-Jecty, the Tory MP for Huntingdon, said: “This new information about Tulip Siddiq is troubling.”

“Now that it has been shown the flat was gifted to her and not purchased by her as previously claimed, Tulip Siddiq has further questions to answer.”

The Financial reported that the flat was gifted to Tulip in 2004 by Abdul Motalif, an associate of senior Awami League members.

Abdul Motalif confirmed to the Financial Times in a phone call that he bought the King’s Cross property but declined to comment on what he did with it.

“Following financial support provided by Tulip’s parents to an acquaintance during a challenging time in his life, he subsequently transferred a property he then owned into Tulip’s ownership as an act of gratitude for her parents’ support,”

said a person familiar with the matter, reports Financial Times.

However, a spokesperson for the minister denied any wrongdoings.

“Any suggestion that Tulip Siddiq’s ownership of this property, or any other property is in any way linked to support for the Awami League, would be categorically wrong,” spokesperson said.

Tulip currently resides in a £2.1 million property in Finchley, north London, owned by Abdul Karim Nazim, a UK-based member of the Awami League’s executive committee. Nazim began renting the property to Tulip in 2022, reads The Sunday Times report. Tulip’s spokesperson stated that she and her husband pay market rent for the property and that their housing arrangements are above board.

FURTHER FAMILY TIES

The Sunday Times further detailed that Tulip’s mother Sheikh Rehana lives in a £1.2 million property in Golders Green, reportedly owned through an offshore trust by Shayan Rahman, son of (Salman F Rahman) a billionaire Bangladeshi politician and former adviser to Hasina. Rahman’s family has faced legal troubles since Hasina’s ousting, with his father currently in custody in Bangladesh.

Another Hampstead property, where Tulip’s sister and mother once resided, was owned by Kazi Zafarullah, a senior Awami League member who was jailed in 2007 for extortion. The property was sold in 2012 for \$499,000. Zafarullah was later implicated in offshore financial dealings and remains in prison.

Rokeya univ

FROM PAGE 12

disciplinary committee found evidence that these students were involved in the attacks on other students who took part in the student movement.

He also said show cause notices were sent to the teachers, officials, and staff members involved in the attack; however, they did not respond.

“The syndicate has endorsed taking action against them. A decision regarding their dismissal will be made in the upcoming syndicate meeting,” he added.

Abu Sayed, a 12th batch student of the English department at BRUR, was one of the coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Students’ Movement and actively participated in the protests against the government’s decision to reinstate quotas in government jobs.

On July 16, last year, while protesting in front of his university campus, an unarmed Sayed, who posed no apparent threat, was shot dead by police from close range -- an incident that later became a symbol of the protest that eventually ousted the Awami League government.

An image of Sayed standing with his arms outstretched in the face of police firing, moments before he was shot, went viral and sparked widespread protests. His killing led to national mourning and a public outcry for justice.

On August 18, Ramzan Ali, Sayed’s elder brother, filed a case naming 17 people as responsible for the killing. The case is currently being investigated by the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI). Among the 17 accused, 14—including the former DIG of Rangpur Range and the former Rangpur Metropolitan Police Commissioner—were banned from leaving the country.

Massive storm slams US with snow, bitter cold

Emergency declared in Kentucky, Missouri

AFP, Washington

A powerful winter storm hammered the United States yesterday, with meteorologists warning millions in the east faced blizzard conditions and some areas would see the heaviest snowfall in a decade.

More than 60 million people are in the path of the dangerous storm, set to plunge the eastern half of the United States into a deep freeze of Arctic air through today resulting in severe travel disruptions.

The National Weather Service (NWS) warned of ice, snow and gale-force winds in states from the central plains to the Mid-Atlantic.

Winter storm warnings have been issued from western Kansas clear across to the coastal states of Maryland, Delaware and Virginia, an unusually broad 1,500-mile (2,400-kilometer) swath under immediate threat.

The governors of Kentucky, Missouri and Virginia have declared a state of emergency in their states.



PHOTO: AFP

Hillary Clinton receives the Medal of Freedom from United States President Joe Biden during a ceremony at the White House in Washington, DC, on Saturday. Hillary was honoured for having “made history many times over decades in public service,” including being the first woman nominated by a major party for a US presidential run, the White House said in a statement.

Determining fate of Syria’s missing ‘huge challenge’: ICRC

AFP, Damascus

Determining the fate of those who went missing during Syria’s civil war will be a massive task likely to take years, the president of the International Committee for the Red Cross said.

“Identifying the missing and informing the families about their fate is going to be a huge challenge,” ICRC president Mirjana Spoljaric told AFP in an interview.

The fate of tens of thousands of detainees and missing people remains one of the most harrowing legacies of the conflict that started in 2011 when president Bashar al-Assad’s forces brutally repressed anti-government protests.

Many are believed to have been buried in mass graves after being tortured in Syria’s jails during a war that has killed more than half a million people.

Thousands have been released since Islamist-led rebels ousted Assad last month, but many Syrians are still looking for traces of relatives and friends who went missing.

Spoljaric said the ICRC was working with the caretaker authorities, non-governmental organisations and the Syrian Red Crescent to collect data to give families answers as soon as possible.

Hezbollah not meeting truce terms

Warns Israel, threatens ‘to act with force’

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz yesterday accused Lebanese group Hezbollah of not meeting the terms of a ceasefire, warning that if the militants continued to breach the deal, Israel would “be forced to act”.

Katz issued his warning after visiting the military’s northern command and it followed a similar accusation against Israel by Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem on Saturday.

Katz said Hezbollah had still not withdrawn “beyond the Litani river” in southern Lebanon, as stipulated in the ceasefire deal.

He added that “if this condition is not met, there will be no agreement and Israel will be forced to act on its own to ensure the safe return of residents of the north to their homes.”

Other provisions had not been implemented, Katz said, such as the “dismantling of all (Hezbollah) weapons and the thwarting of terrorist infrastructures in the area by the Lebanese army”.

On Saturday, the UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon accused Israel of a “flagrant violation” of the 2006 Security Council resolution that forms the basis of its November ceasefire with Hezbollah.

The statement from the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) came as Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem warned the militant group’s patience with Israeli violations could run out before the end of the ceasefire’s 60-day implementation timeframe.

“We have said that we are giving an opportunity to prevent Israeli violations and to implement the agreement and we will exercise patience,” Qassem said.

The fragile truce, which took effect on November 27 after two months of full-blown war between Israel and Hezbollah, has been marked by accusations of violations from both sides.

Under the terms of the ceasefire, the Lebanese army is to deploy alongside UN peacekeepers in the south as the Israeli army withdraws over a 60-day period.

Hezbollah is to withdraw its forces north of the Litani River -- some 30 kilometres (20 miles) from the border -- and dismantle any remaining military infrastructure in the south.

UN accuses Israel of ceasefire breach as Hezbollah says losing patience

BGB detains

FROM PAGE 12

member of Teknaf Union Parishad, said they were informed that a boat carrying Rohingyas was seen floating near the Baharchara beach.

Among the detainees, Alam, 30, said he was from Nashong village in the east of Akyab (now Sittwe) in Myanmar.

He said the “Mug Bagi (Arakan Army)” has been torturing the Rohingyas there, so they tried to sneak into Bangladesh. They left the place five days ago on a wooden boat.

“Today [yesterday], a trawler towed us towards the beach as our engine broke down, and handed us over to the BGB.”

Jaher Alam, another Rohingya from a neighbouring village, said, “There are five Muslim villages in our area. The Arakan Army has been forcefully training us with weapons to stand against the junta troops. We Rohingyas were subjected to inhuman torture if we refused to join the ‘Mug Bagi’ group. We thought it was better to die in Bangladesh than fight in Myanmar.”

Always be ready

FROM PAGE 1

“To fulfil their pledge, the army members will always have to be kept ready for war to protect the country’s sovereignty,” he said.

He emphasised modern and up-to-date training for the army personnel to achieve operational skills so that they can protect the country. They need to be inspired by the mantra: “Training is the best welfare”, he said.

The chief adviser also said, “Training of army personnel should be realistic to attain operational skills, bravery, and professionalism.”

He praised the skills and high quality training of the army members who participated in the exercise.

General Waker-Uz-Zaman, chief of army staff; Admiral M Nazmul Hassan, chief of naval staff; Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan, chief of air staff; and Major General JM Emdadul Islam, GOC of 55 Infantry Division and Area Commander of Jashore Area, welcomed the chief adviser on his arrival at the venue.

Other advisers of the interim government and senior officers of the armed forces were also present.

During the hour-long exercise, members of the Bangladesh Army equipped with state-of-the-art weapons successfully conducted the attack exercise by creating a realistic war environment, the ISPR said.

Fighter aircraft of the Bangladesh Air Force, aircraft of Army Aviation, and helicopters, along with various types of modern tanks, APCs and artillery guns, were used in the exercise participated by all arms and services, including infantry, engineers, and commandos of the Bangladesh Army.

Prabir Mitra

FROM PAGE 12

Corporation, followed by the second janaza at the premises of Channel i.

He will later be laid to rest at the Azimpur graveyard in the capital.

Prabir is survived by three sons and one daughter.

Born on August 18, 1943, in Chandina, Cumilla, Prabir spent his formative years in Old Dhaka, where his passion for acting began to flourish. His early love for the stage was sparked during his school days through his performance in Rabindranath Tagore’s iconic play “Dakghar”.

Prabir made his silver screen debut in 1969 with “Jolchhobi”, directed by H Akbar. However, the film was not released until January 1, 1971. Despite initially playing lead roles, Prabir found lasting success as a character actor, captivating audiences with his depth, versatility, and innate ability to breathe life into complex roles. His performances in films such as “Titash Ekti Nadir Naam”, “Jibon Trishna”, “Fariyad”, “Rokto Shopoth”, “Charitrohin”, “Angaar”, and “Fakir Majnu Shah” are considered cinematic landmarks.

Six banks

FROM PAGE 12

Social Islami and ICB Islamic Bank, while KPMG would be looking at First Security Islami, Global Islami and Union Bank.

The board of directors of six banks jointly decided that their MDs will be on leave as the central bank will be taking those banks under the review of assets quality, BB Spokesperson Husne Ara Shikha told journalists yesterday.

The MDs have been asked to go on temporary leave to ensure that no one can interfere in the review, she said, adding that if their involvement in irregularities is not found in the audit they will be able to rejoin the bank after their leave period ends.

“But if anything is found, then other considerations will have to be made,” she added.

Syed Waseque Md Ali, the MD of First Security Islami Bank, was sent on three months’ leave on Saturday. The other five banks sent their MDs on leave yesterday.

Economist Prof Anisur Rahman no more

FROM PAGE 12

agriculture is your textbook and farmers are your teachers.”

Born in 1933, Prof Anisur studied economics at Dhaka University and Harvard University in the US.

He is known for his significant contribution to Bangladesh’s liberation. He joined the Planning Commission as a member after the 1971 Liberation War.

In 1977, he joined the International Labour Office in Geneva, the permanent secretariat of the UN’s International Labour Organisation. He retired from the organisation in 1990.

Debapriya Bhattacharya, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said he very closely worked with Prof Anisur after his return from Geneva.

Prof Anisur worked tirelessly and advocated for the structural transformation of Bangladesh’s economy, Debapriya said. “He was unparalleled in his patriotism and love for the people.”

Prof Anisur was a strong advocate for self-development and participatory action research. He played an instrumental role in the introduction and promotion of participatory action research in Bangladesh through Research Initiatives-Bangladesh, a research-funding agency. He was one of the honorary founding members of its board of directors, according to Pathak Shamabesh, a publishing house.

He also pursued his passion for music and was honoured with the Rabindra Puraskar in 2004 for his contribution to Rabindranath Tagore’s music and literature.

Prof Akash said Prof Anisur’s relatives stay abroad and are expected to come to Dhaka.

His body will be kept at the mortuary of BIRDEM General Hospital in Dhaka. It will be brought to the Central Shaheed Minar at 11:30am tomorrow so that people from all walks of life can pay their tributes.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held at Segunbagicha Mosque after Zohr prayers on the same day.

He will be laid to rest in Netrokona.

Dhaka South City Corporation

Office of the Executive Engineer
Zone-4, Nagar Bhaban, Fulbaria, Dhaka

Ref No. 46.207.007. 24.09. 09. 2024-2025

Dated:05.01.2025

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender are invited in e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by office of the Executive Engineer, Zone-4 Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka South City Corporation for the procurement of following package, which will be available at e-GP website from date 05-Jan-2025, 23:00.

SL No.	Tender ID, Ref No.	Name of works	Last Selling date and Time	Tender Closing Date and Time
01.	1053871 Z4_WD-07-GW-35-2024-25	Development works of Road Tatibazar to Raisaheb Bazar more at Ward No. 35.	28 -01-2025 12:00	28 -01-2025 15:00

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

(Md. Mofizur Rahman Khan)
Executive Engineer
Zone-04 (Nagar Bhaban)
Dhaka South City Corporation
+Ph:223387666.

ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/২০৯/২০২৪-২০২৫

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়
মানিকগঞ্জ
www.police.manikganj.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-২৭/ই

তারিখঃ ০৪/০১/২০২৫খ্রিঃ

উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৪/২০২৪-২০২৫

“দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট এ্যাক্ট-২০০৬” এবং “দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেগুলেশন-২০০৮ (সংশোধনীসহ)” মোতাবেক ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরে মানিকগঞ্জ জেলা পুলিশের স্থাপনা পুনর্নির্মাণ কাজ (সিভিল, স্যানিটারী ও বৈদ্যুতিক) বাস্তবায়নের জন্য বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত ঠিকাদার/নির্মাণ প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরযুক্ত খামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

স্ল	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বত্বাধী মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ
১	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
২	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	পুলিশ সুপার, মানিকগঞ্জ
৩	সংগ্রহ সত্তার জেলা	মানিকগঞ্জ
৪	দরপত্রের বিষয়	জুলাই-আগস্ট/২০২৪ এ ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত মানিকগঞ্জ জেলার সিংগাইর থানার অফিস-কাম ব্যারাক ভবনের পুনর্নির্মাণ কাজ (সিভিল, স্যানিটারী ও বৈদ্যুতিক)
৫	দরপত্রের সূত্র নং ও তারিখ	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, মানিকগঞ্জ স্মারক নং-২৭/ই তাং-০৪/০১/২০২৫
৬	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)
৭	বাজেট তহবিলের উৎস	পুলিশ হেডকোয়ার্টার্স, ঢাকা কর্তৃক বাজেট বরাদ্দ সাপেক্ষে
৮	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ	১৯/০১/২০২৫খ্রিঃ, ১৪.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত (ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত)
৯	দরপত্র দাখিলের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২০/০১/২০২৫খ্রিঃ, বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
১০	দরপত্র বাজ় খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২০/০১/২০২৫খ্রিঃ, বেলা ১৪.০০ ঘটিকা, দরপত্রদাতা/মনোনীত প্রতিিনি সন্মুখে খোলা হবে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন)
১১	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর ঠিকানা	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, মানিকগঞ্জ।
১২	দরপত্র গ্রাফির স্থান	ডিআইজি, ঢাকা রেঞ্জ কার্যালয়, ঢাকা, পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, মানিকগঞ্জ ও ঢাকা জেলা
১৩	দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, মানিকগঞ্জ
১৪	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, মানিকগঞ্জ
১৫	দরপত্র প্রদানের ব্যয়গত	“দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট এ্যাক্ট-২০০৬” এবং “দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেগুলেশন-২০০৮ (সংশোধনীসহ)” মোতাবেক সিভিলে বর্ণিত যাবতীয় শর্তাবলী পালন ও কাগজ/লিপিপত্রাদি দরপত্রের সঙ্গে দাখিল করার সম্ভবতা থাকতে হবে।
১৬	দরপত্রের সাথে যে সকল কাগজপত্র জমা প্রদান করতে হবে	দরপত্রের সাথে (ক) হালনাগাদ ট্রেন্ড লাইসেন্স (খ) আয়কর পরিশোধের সার্টিফিকেট (গ) আর্থিক স্বচ্ছতার স্বপক্ষে ৫০,০০,০০০/- (পঞ্চাশ লক্ষ) টাকা স্থিতিসহ দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্ব দিন পর্যন্ত ব্যাংক লেনদেনের বিবরণী (ঘ) স্টাট সনদপত্র (ঙ) ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্বাক্ষরিত প্যালে অবেনদপূর্বক সিভিলে সংগ্রহ করতে হবে (চ) দরদাতা কালো তালিকাভুক্ত নয় মর্মে অঙ্গীকারনামা (ছ) প্রতিিনি দ্বারা সিভিলে সংগ্রহ করতে হলে প্রতিিনিধিকে সিভিলে গ্রহণের ক্ষমতাপ্রদান করতে হবে। সকল কাগজপত্রের ফটোকপি ৯ম গ্রেড/তদুর্ধ্ব কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত করে দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে। সিভিলে বর্ণিত সকল শর্তাবলী ঠিকাদার প্রতিষ্ঠানকে মেনে নিতে হবে।

স্ল	লট নং	নাম/বিবরণ	সিভিলের মূল্য (অক্ষরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্র জামানত	কাজ সমাপ্তির সময়
১৮	(১)	জুলাই-আগস্ট/২০২৪ এ ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত মানিকগঞ্জ জেলার সিংগাইর থানার অফিস-কাম ব্যারাক ভবনের পুনর্নির্মাণ কাজ (সিভিল, স্যানিটারী ও বৈদ্যুতিক)।	২,০০০/-	২,১২,০০০/-	১১০ দিন

২০

দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম

মোহাম্মদ ইয়াছিন খান

২১

দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী

পুলিশ সুপার, মানিকগঞ্জ

২২

দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা

পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, মানিকগঞ্জ

বিশেষ শর্তাবলীঃ

(ক) নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

(খ) দরপত্র আহবানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীতকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার পূর্বে ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

(গ) কোন কারণবশতঃ দরপত্র বাজ় নির্ধারিত সময়ে খোলা সম্ভব না হলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে দরপত্র বাজ় খোলা হবে।

০৪/০১/২০২৫

মোহাম্মদ ইয়াছিন খান

বিশি-৭৮০৬১১৯৭২২

পুলিশ সুপার, মানিকগঞ্জ

ফোনঃ ০২-৯৯৬৬১০৮০০

ই-মেইলঃ smanikgonj@police.gov.bd

GD-49

Parties must exercise democracy first

Lack of internal democracy casts doubt on the future of reforms

As it is becoming increasingly clear, it is not enough to just plan state reforms and get some of them executed before the next election. To ensure the momentum is not lost post-election, political parties that will eventually take the reins of reform implementation must, too, credibly demonstrate that they can deliver the reforms as promised. As things stand, there remains a huge trust deficit in this regard, considering our experience with the reform drive under the last caretaker government that fizzled out after the 2008 election. One way to prevent that dreadful prospect is to ensure internal reforms within our political parties.

The argument is simple: if they cannot exercise democracy within their internal activities and decisions, how can they uphold democracy at the national level? A party that is run on the principles of accountability and transparency and in line with its own constitution is more likely to stick with the state reform agenda. Otherwise, political parties, once elected to power, risk falling back into the same patterns of patronage, corruption, and authoritarian tendencies that have plagued Bangladesh for so long. Sadly, as a report by this daily again reminds us, most parties still function as highly centralised entities, with little regard for internal accountability or democratic practices.

Our analysis of 25 parties reveals that party constitutions promising regular leadership elections and grassroots-driven MP nomination processes are routinely set aside. Party leaders also hold on to power for years, even decades, only to relinquish control in the event of ill health, legal troubles, or death. For example, Awami League's Sheikh Hasina has been unopposed as party president for 43 years, while BNP's Khaleda Zia has held her position for 40 years. Although almost all party constitutions stipulate a council, every three or four years, to elect their office bearers, in reality, councils are rarely held and have rather morphed into mere formalities, rubber-stamping decisions made by party heads. Also, despite some parties introducing term limits or other reforms, such provisions are seldom enforced. The reliance on dynastic politics further entrenches these issues.

Such practices have hollowed out the democratic essence of our political parties. Accountability for crimes or any breach of code of conduct by party members is another casualty under such circumstances. Since the political changeover on August 5, we have seen many instances where unruly members of some parties simply replaced their Awami League counterparts in various sectors, thus continuing corrupt and repressive practices of the past. It is precisely because of this trend that many have doubts about the continuity of the reform drive under a political government, which is unfortunate considering the huge sacrifices that went into bringing us this historic opportunity for change.

We urge political parties to critically review their internal practices so that citizens can be confident of their ability and sincerity to sustain the reform drive post-election. They must honour their own constitutions and regularly hold and enable their councils to become genuine platforms for electing leaders and shaping policies. They must lead the change that they want to see in the state.

When will our roads be safe?

Govt must take holistic measures to reduce fatalities

The figure 8,543 is not just a statistic representing the fatalities from road crashes in 2024. It symbolises the lives we, as a nation, have failed to protect from our unsafe roads. In fact, according to a report by Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, our roads were less safe last year compared to 2023—crashes increased by 1.56 percent, fatalities by 8.11 percent, and injuries by 21.56 percent—indicating a deteriorating trend.

The Jatri Kalyan Samity attributed the rise in crashes and deaths to the increasing number of motorcycles and battery-run auto-rickshaws, as well as the illegal operation of both high-speed and slow-moving vehicles on highways. In 2024, motorcycle-related crashes accounted for 36.62 percent of all incidents and 30.08 percent of all fatalities. The inherent instability of these vehicles makes them particularly prone to accidents. Yet, the previous government's policies encouraged their proliferation. Similarly, it failed to curb the rampant use of motorised three-wheelers, vehicles with almost no safety features, which have become a significant contributor to highway crashes of late.

We have discussed the factors behind road crashes—such as unfit vehicles, reckless driving, unskilled drivers, and the unholy nexus between transport leaders, politicians, and law enforcers—ad nauseam, while numerous experts offered recommendations. But little has changed. The authorities attempted a number of road safety initiatives but succumbed to pressure from transport owners and associations.

Although many of the leaders and politicians linked to the previous regime—key players in perpetuating irregularities in the transport sector—are now on the run, the systemic problems in the sector persist. A recent example was the violent crash at the Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway toll plaza, which claimed at least six lives. The bus that rammed into three parked vehicles there had no legal documents, the driver lacked a valid license, and the owner allegedly bribed a close associate of a former lawmaker to operate it on that route.

We urge the government to take decisive steps to stop such corrupt practices and make our roads safe, keeping in mind how previous ad hoc and unplanned efforts have repeatedly failed. Establishing a dedicated commission to reform the sector and fully implementing the Road Transport Act, 2018, could be crucial first steps. It is high time for change—too many lives have already been lost.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Trump supporters storm the Capitol

On this day in 2021, supporters of then President Donald Trump stormed the US Capitol, where Congress was meeting to certify Joe Biden's win in the 2020 presidential election. Trump and his backers alleged widespread voter fraud, though there was no evidence for the claims.

Systemic failures, rising inequality, and the path to recovery



Anu Muhammad
is former professor of economics from
Jahangirnagar University.

ANU MUHAMMAD

Until the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government in 2024, Bangladesh's economy was heavily shaped by rampant corruption, plundering, and illicit asset transfers orchestrated by a select few powerful groups. These practices caused long-term harm to the nation, putting immense pressure on foreign currency reserves, which continued to decline steadily. The economy was further strained by extravagant, debt-financed projects that burdened the nation with high repayment obligations. Inflation reached unprecedented levels, affecting daily life. Despite reports of steady GDP growth, employment challenges remained unresolved, exacerbating social unrest. The rising prices of essential commodities, including gas and electricity, compounded the economic strain on ordinary citizens, intensifying inequality and centralising wealth among a privileged few.

The centralisation of wealth and deepening of social inequality created a precarious economic situation. Without a change in governance, these crises would have worsened. After the Sheikh Hasina administration fell, corruption and asset misappropriation linked to specific banks and development projects came to a halt. A sprawling network of extortion that had permeated various sectors was also dismantled. This shift provided an opportunity for much-needed reforms. The interim government has begun addressing these challenges by forming commissions to investigate systemic failures and propose solutions. It has pledged to base its reforms on findings from these commissions. A white paper committee has already submitted a detailed report highlighting the mismanagement, corruption, and plundering that characterised the previous tenure.

During the previous administration, institutions were rendered ineffective, functioning as tools to implement directives from the top. Institutional processes were sidelined, creating inefficiencies and widespread public mistrust. Restoring these institutions to serve public interests and realigning them with their intended roles has become one of the most critical responsibilities of the current administration. For example, the Bangladesh Bank's integrity and functionality were undermined during the last regime as its policies were

tailored to serve the interests of select groups. Financial irregularities, such as the plundering of funds under the guise of loans, reached an alarming scale. Groups like Beximco, S Alam, Bashundhara, Summit, Orion, and a few more received disproportionate financial benefits, creating instability across the entire financial sector.

Immediate actions such as restructuring politically manipulated banks, shutting down institutions established for vested interests, and implementing measures to curb inflation must take precedence. Addressing irregularities within the



VISUAL: ANWER SOHEL

financial sector is critical to reducing economic haemorrhage and restoring public confidence. Stabilising the financial system and normalising the dollar exchange rate would create a healthier economic environment. Reports such as those by Farashuddin on the Bangladesh Bank and Ibrahim Khalid on the share market provided actionable recommendations, yet no significant progress has been made to act on these insights. This government must prioritise these reforms, ideally by early 2025, to demonstrate its commitment to addressing the financial sector's deep-rooted problems.

In the power and energy sectors, the government has suspended the indemnity law that protected harmful projects from scrutiny. However, it has also announced that many controversial projects and agreements initiated under this law will remain. This decision is deeply concerning, as

several of these projects are detrimental to national interests. The Rampal coal-fired power plant, which threatens the ecological balance of the Sundarbans, and the Rooppur nuclear power plant by Russia, managed by Indian entities, require immediate reassessment. Both projects have been criticised for their financial inefficiencies and environmental risks, raising questions about their long-term viability. Ample research, documentation, and evidence regarding the irregularities and harmful impacts of these projects already exist. There is no need to delay action further. While cancelling projects like Rampal and Rooppur might result in some financial losses, the cost of continuing them would be significantly higher, both economically and environmentally. Lives, livelihoods, and critical natural resources, such as the Sundarbans, are at stake. The government must prioritise the well-being of its people and take decisive steps to mitigate these risks by terminating or renegotiating such harmful projects.



VISUAL: ANWER SOHEL

During the last administration, aside from oligarchs, significant benefits were granted to civil-military bureaucrats and the police to maintain political control. Meanwhile, crucial public sectors like education and healthcare were neglected. This neglect led to systemic inefficiencies, chaotic management, and severe resource shortages. Students and labourers, two of the most vulnerable groups in society, faced acute financial deprivation, limiting their opportunities and quality of life. To address this, the government must allocate more resources to education and healthcare and align funding levels with the UN-recommended proportion of GDP. The interim government could begin that by increasing budget allocations and ensuring their effective utilisation.

It is important to announce a national minimum wage policy by early 2025. Such a policy should ensure that no worker's income falls below the

poverty line. Instead, the minimum wage should be adjusted to reflect a liveable income, allowing workers to meet their basic needs and contribute meaningfully to the economy.

While extortion networks have been curbed in most sectors, there are signs of their resurgence. The supply chain for essential goods remains dominated by an oligopoly or a handful of influential corporate groups. Their influence distorts market dynamics and restricts fair access to goods for citizens. The previous government not only failed to dismantle this oligopoly but actively supported it. The current administration must address this issue by breaking the control of these groups and ensuring competitive practices in the marketplace. Introducing a universal rationing system could be a vital step towards achieving this goal.

Rationing systems, currently limited to select groups such as the military and police, could be expanded to include all citizens. By ensuring equitable access to essential goods, such a system would reduce the influence of monopoly groups and stabilise market prices. Many countries have successfully implemented similar systems. The government can draw from these examples and reorganise the public goods distribution framework to create a fairer and more inclusive system.

Institutional decay was a hallmark of the Hasina administration, affecting sectors from education and healthcare to banking, infrastructure and even the judiciary. Restoring institutional integrity requires urgent attention. However, the resurgence of coercive practices within institutions, mob violence, power grabs, and forced resignations threatens a fair working environment. These practices must be stopped to rebuild trust and allow competent individuals to perform their roles effectively. Without functional institutions, efforts to restore economic and social stability will remain futile.

Bangladesh's economic policies have long been shaped by institutions like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and Asian Development Bank (ADB). The World Bank and ADB, with their various projects in sectors such as water, energy, railways, education, healthcare, jute, forestry, and infrastructure, and the IMF with its loan flow, actually determine policy frameworks to support global, regional, and local big businesses at the cost of public interest and the environment. Detailed investigations into projects and programmes supported by these institutions are essential to determine the scale of public suffering, deprivation, and national loss, including the environmental disasters caused by them. Mechanisms must be introduced to hold these institutions accountable. Without addressing this systemic issue, meaningful economic change will remain elusive.

A call for moral tourism in CHT

Azwad Bin Karim
is a content writer.

AZWAD BIN KARIM

While Bangladeshis frequently express solidarity with oppressed communities around the world, the Indigenous communities of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) at times remain overlooked in their ongoing struggle for recognition and rights.

While places like Cox's Bazar and Sylhet are the most visited places among tourist attractions, the CHT region has seen many tourists over the last decade. The sprawling hills and the different rivers that wind through the valleys offer views that mesmerise the eyes. Thus, it is not unfair to assume that tourist groups nowadays are considering exploring locations within the CHT for their next adventure. However, these exquisite tourist locations, such as Sajek Valley, Kaptai Lake, and Bandarban, carry the dark past of the Indigenous communities; behind all the beauty of the region, the pain of their suffering quietly lingers.

The Indigenous communities have experienced oppression in different forms, including arson attacks and forced evictions. For instance, on the night of February 19, 2010, arson attacks targeted 200 *Pahari* households in the Baghaihat area of Sajek union in Rangamati. Furthermore, in Bandarban's Nilgiri, many Mro and Marma families from

six villages were evicted to make way for resort developments. There have been countless instances of such "land-grabbing" cases.

While these spots are spellbinding and major contributors to the tourism sector, they certainly raise questions about our morals when we visit these places; thereby, indirectly supporting this expulsion. Does exploring these places bring out the "righteousness" we readily claim to uphold as per our captions on social media awareness posts? Aren't we tacitly approving of these

Does exploring these places bring out the 'righteousness' we readily claim to uphold as per our captions on social media awareness posts? Aren't we tacitly approving of these evictions? Our double standard is glaringly evident in this case.

evictions? Our double standard is glaringly evident in this case. We lay significant emphasis on equality and equity, yet we almost invariably turn a blind eye to the persecution that has been going on for decades in these regions. This ignorance reflects a massive gap in awareness about these matters. Nevertheless, among young tourists—a major portion of visitors to these regions—there appears to be a fair level of cognisance. Despite this, the pursuit of adventures almost always supersedes moral considerations.

If we want to be "morally correct," our actions should align with what

we stand for. Thus, we should carefully weigh our decision before booking a ticket to one of these places. Well, these might prompt knee-jerk remarks like "these spots are remarkably contributing to the tourism sector," which is absolutely true. Nonetheless, that is not an apt response, given the fact that we are dealing with moral principles. Morality addresses right and wrong based on ethical principles, irrespective of economic gains. The question I am asking is: whether or not these so-called "trivial" moral

Does exploring these places bring out the 'righteousness' we readily claim to uphold as per our captions on social media awareness posts? Aren't we tacitly approving of these evictions? Our double standard is glaringly evident in this case.

aspects should be considered. If we can stop consuming Coca-Cola for its endorsement of Israeli aggression in Palestine, the continuation of travelling to these spots solely for pleasure is, by no means, morally justifiable. Well, it's true that the situation might not change much if we stop going to these places, and no one might not effectively benefit from that. However, there are various ways through which we, as individuals, can contribute to making things better for the Indigenous communities, thereby not only staying true to our morals but also focusing on the greater

good of the society.

To begin with, one of the easiest ways to ensure a morally responsible trip is to stay at a hotel or resort that was built on undisputed land, ensuring no displacement of the local population. Besides, we can follow the path often adopted by some adventure lovers, such as staying with the Indigenous communities in their traditional *machang* homes. These homes, built on elevated platforms, offer the best experience, providing picturesque views and a serene environment. This also gives travellers an opportunity to understand the sufferings of the Indigenous communities, fostering empathy. However, many travellers may feel unsafe, or find such arrangements inaccessible, rendering this impactful for many. Alternatively, we can integrate them into the workforce of this growing tourism sector to ensure peaceful and sustainable livelihoods for them.

If achieving such option is not viable, we can contribute to community-led initiatives aimed at improving the livelihoods of the Indigenous communities. While it is very easy to list all the measures that can be adopted, the ground reality is very different, and execution often poses challenges. If all else fails, and if we get the chance during our trip, we can still leave a mark by sitting with them, sharing stories, learning from their resilience, and recognising the humanity that binds us all beneath the surface.

Transforming police-citizen relations



Dr Habib Zafarullah
is adjunct professor of public policy at the University of New England, Australia, and former professor of public administration at Dhaka University. He is the founding president of the South Asian Network for Public Administration (SANPA).
He can be reached at habibzed@gmail.com.

HABIB ZAFARULLAH

Over 190 years ago, then British Prime Minister Sir Robert Peel articulated a profound insight regarding the police force's relationship with the public, "The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police existence, actions, behaviour and the ability of the police to secure and maintain public respect." As Bangladesh struggles to improve its law enforcement system, this insight is crucial. We must radically change police-citizen relations after a history of authoritarianism and governmental domination. Our survival depends on this transition.

Bangladesh's police force has had a history marked by violence, oppression, and a lack of trust. For many years, particularly during military and pseudo-democratic rule, successive regimes used law enforcement as a tool to suppress people instead of protecting their rights. People began seeing the police not as protectors but as possible threats because of this historical backdrop. This view weakened the

Real change means a complete shift in how the leaders of this institution think, work, and guide their team. It is important to dismantle rigid systems that block accountability and allow corruption to thrive. Following orders without question is at the root of these problems. The top-down approach forces lower-ranking police officers to follow orders without reasonable queries, which can hinder their ability to make ethical decisions. Workers who are not paid well might view bribery and corruption as ways to get by, making these issues even worse. This cycle hurts public trust and lowers police morale.

By sticking to antiquated enforcement techniques and ignoring community engagement, conflict resolution and respect for human rights, police training often exacerbates problems. Law enforcement personnel and the communities they are supposed to protect are at odds because of this military-style mentality—which was carried over from colonial

internal disciplinary structures lacking real control. Deficient responsibility erodes public trust in law enforcement and undermines the ethics of police work. A shift from an authoritarian approach to one based on human rights would be significant, recognising past wrongdoings and envisioning a future system based on citizens'

Training programmes should shift from traditional military methods to community-based policing, incorporating in-depth human rights, dispute resolution, cultural awareness, and constitutional safeguards, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of police operations.

Independent groups can play an important role in monitoring

and citizens, fostering a stronger relationship.

New technologies like video evidence, digital complaint systems, and accessible performance records can enhance accountability in law enforcement. These tools protect citizens from misconduct and officers from false claims, promoting a clearer system where accountability

within police organisations is crucial for ethical conduct and the spread of democratic ideals. Senior leaders should demonstrate ethical behaviour and focus on understanding social processes. The hiring process should focus on ethics, empathy, and a commitment to community service, in addition to skills and education, to create a more reliable and dedicated law enforcement agency. External oversight is important for maintaining checks and balances as independent groups help ensure transparency and accountability. These institutions should set clear guidelines, implement serious consequences for wrongdoing, and promote a culture of honesty in law enforcement.

Culture change in the police force requires long-term dedication and patience. Collaboration is key to improving conditions gradually, rather than relying on immediate solutions. Building trust requires a commitment to moral standards, genuine concern for community issues, and clear organisational changes. Public narratives should portray the police as essential partners in promoting social harmony, rather than distant entities. This shift requires continuous media engagement, educational initiatives, and transparent communication regarding institutional reforms.

Change takes time. Reconnecting police and citizens in Bangladesh will be difficult. Established authority, limited funding, and strong cultural attitudes will hinder reform. We need patience, dedication, and a long-term objective to make this journey successful. Small victories will progressively dispel suspicion. This allows institutions to change significantly.

Building a better relationship between police and citizens is not just something institutions should do—it's a shared responsibility. It requires everyone—law enforcement, political leaders, community members, and citizens—to come together and commit to the cause. The way ahead may be tough, but it needs bravery, understanding, and a strong faith in the possibility of positive change within our institutions.



Building a better relationship between police and citizens is not just something institutions should do—it's a shared responsibility.

FILE PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Police in Bangladesh face complex challenges due to a colonial system that used to focus more on control than on serving the community. Real change means a complete shift in how the leaders of this institution think, work, and guide their team. It is important to dismantle rigid systems that block accountability and allow corruption to thrive.

basic elements of community safety and harmony, making citizens suspicious of the police.

Police in Bangladesh face complex challenges due to a colonial system that used to focus more on control than on serving the community.

times—and sees people as possible enemies rather than friends. For the contemporary police to succeed, these problems must be resolved.

The system for holding the police force accountable remains generally weak, with unclear

rights, privileges and respect. Rethinking the police's role from enforcing state will to protecting people's rights necessitates a strong commitment to transparency and accountability.

The disorder and confusion in the aftermath of the student-led people's uprising in July and August 2024 sparked a new push for police reform. At the head of this important effort is now a reform body, whose job is to bring new life to the correctional services. It's crucial to monitor a few key areas as the police force undergoes changes.

police misconduct, but they need proper authority and clear guidelines. By providing avenues for public reporting and guaranteeing equitable disciplinary actions, we can rebuild trust. Whistleblowers can share information about wrongdoing without worrying about facing consequences. Getting involved in the community through things like town hall meetings and youth programmes can help police officers become more relatable and build better connections with citizens. These activities aim to alleviate doubt and suspicion between police

is a standard practice rather than just a goal.

A careful strategy that considers the relationships between police and residents at several levels—including institutions, culture, and individuals—is necessary to address cultural concerns. Service must come before control to respect everyone's basic humanity and rights. Officers who get psychological training may enhance their emotional intelligence and communication abilities, which are essential for fostering relationships in the community.

Reconceiving leadership

The timeless art of translation



Dr Faridul Alam
writes from New York City, U.S.

FARIDUL ALAM

The theme for International Translation Day (ITD) last year—"Translation, an art worth protecting"—under the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, first adopted in 1886, underscores the enduring importance of recognising translation not merely as a craft, but as an art form in its own right. Translation, while derived from another origin, emerges as an "original" creative work, standing independent in its artistry. In anticipation of the 2025 ITD theme, to be announced by the International Federation of Translators (FIT), this reflection highlights the timeless resonance of the 2024 appellation, transcending any afterthought. Translation assumes an "afterlife" (Benjamin, 1923) of the original text, with an "always already" inequivalent textuality embedded in a distinct linguistic and cultural context. Reimagining a text for new audiences demands not only linguistic expertise but also a creative vision and artistic sensibility. It involves breathing new life into the original, seamlessly interweaving the sights, sounds, and silences of the foreign with those of the domestic.

Ezra Pound's translation of the German poet Heinrich Heine serves as an example of translation as art. Burton Raffel (1993) insightfully observed that "Pound seems instinctively to have understood that the translation of poetry is an art, but at its best, it is only a partial and inevitably somewhat derivative art." This brings us to a crucial aspect: genuine translation does not simply reproduce the original; it reinterprets it, transposing its essence into a new form for a different audience. In this sense, translation is an act of transformation—beyond the purely technical exercise and the merely linguistic shift—that requires a leap of "dialogic imagination" (Bakhtin,

1981). It transforms the act of reading, requiring the translator to reimagine the text and bring it to life within a new cultural and linguistic world. In his preface to the translation of Eusebius, St Jerome, the "patron saint of translators," claimed, "I have at once translated and written a new work" (Jerome, 395/1965).

If "genuine poetry communicates before it is understood" (Eliot, 1933), then genuine translation reinterprets this communicative act (in line with Gadamer, 1975, who viewed translation as the essence of communication). Translation demands "writery" rather than "readerly" (Barthes, 1970) engagement with the text, transcending mere comprehension. Translation, therefore, should be seen as a performative act—actively reshaping meaning—rather than a constative one, which would merely report or describe the original text. In J.L. Austin's terms, translation is not simply about transmitting content, but about recreating the experience of the original in a new cultural and linguistic world (Austin, 1962). As André Lefevere (1992) notes, the translator becomes a co-creator, shaping the text's impact and ensuring its survival across cultural boundaries.

Historical role of translation

Historically, translation has been pivotal in fostering multilingualism, cultural exchange, and the spread of knowledge across borders. Luis Kelly (quoted in Raffel, 1993) asserts, "Western Europe owes its civilisation to translators, and to a considerable extent, we owe what civilisation we embody to them." The Renaissance, which marked the intellectual zenith of Western Europe, was made possible by the revival of classical knowledge—especially from Greek, Roman, and Islamic sources—through the Graeco-Arabic and Arabo-Latin translation

movements (Gutas, 2001). Translation bridges linguistic and cultural divides, blurring boundaries and forging connections across people and ideas. It also has the power to challenge and negotiate unequal power structures, as Tejaswini Niranjana (1992) points out, highlighting translation as a site for interrogating representation, power, and historicity, especially in postcolonial contexts.

Translation's historical contributions also include facilitating religious and philosophical exchanges. The translation of sacred texts, such as the Bible, into vernacular languages not only democratised access to spiritual knowledge but also spurred literary and cultural revolutions. Similarly, the transmission of Indian, Chinese, and Islamic philosophies to the

anything but endangered. Its inherent agonism—constantly confronting challenges—demonstrates its resilience and enduring significance. As a living art, it evolves with its context, surviving in the face of institutional and cultural resistance.

In addition to economic and institutional marginalisation, translation faces cultural devaluation. Translators are often perceived as invisible, their creative contributions overshadowed by the original authors (Venuti, 1995). Yet, as Venuti reminds us, the translator's role is both derivative and authoritative, encompassing the dual responsibilities of fidelity to the source text and adaptation for the target audience. This duality not only highlights the translator's indispensable role, but also

In an era marked by globalisation and transnational flows, translation remains a pivotal tool for bridging linguistic and cultural divides. However, it continues to face significant challenges, from marginalisation in cultural and academic contexts to the delicate balancing act between domestication and for eignisation. By embracing an 'ethics of difference,' translators assert their role as co-creators, enriching global culture while preserving the complexity and depth of the original text.

West through translation enriched global intellectual traditions (Pollock, 2006). These examples underscore how translation serves as a cultural and intellectual catalyst, propelling societies towards new horizons of understanding.

Marginalisation of translation

Despite its profound significance, translation has often been relegated to the margins. Lawrence Venuti (1998) argues that translation is stigmatised as a lesser form of writing, facing discouragement from copyright law, depreciation by academic institutions, and exploitation by publishers and other institutions of power. This marginalisation reveals how translation exposes institutional asymmetries, inequities, and power relations. However, translation is

challenges the reductive notion that translation is merely secondary to original creation.

Authority and allegiance of translators

Venuti (1998) attributes a unique "authority" to translators, one that diverges from the traditional prestige of original authors. This authority, while derivative, is not subservient. Translation embodies a nuanced form of authorship, serving both foreign and domestic communities. Translators find themselves in a constant negotiation between the source text and the target culture, balancing domestication (adapting the text to align with target cultural norms) and foreignisation (preserving the text's "foreignness"). The tensions between these choices underscore

the agonistic nature of translation. Venuti's concept of "double allegiance" emphasises this delicate balancing act, where translators navigate the competing demands of both source and target cultures. This dual allegiance highlights the inherent instability of interpretation, reminding us that no act of translation can ever be definitive or final.

Relevance of Grice, Deleuze and Guattari, Spivak, and Derrida

Paul Grice's (1989) theory of implicature suggests that meaning can be implied rather than explicitly stated. However, Venuti (1998) critiques such pragmatic approaches for their tendency to domesticate the text, suppressing its foreignness. Instead, Venuti advocates for an "ethics of difference" that strives to preserve the foreign essence of the text. This aligns with Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1987) view of language as inherently conflictual and rhizomatic, where meanings emerge from a multiplicity of linguistic exchanges. Gayatri Spivak (1992) emphasises the instability of language and challenges translation to confront the inherent contingency of meaning. Her notion of "dissemination" demands that translation engage with meaning's scattering beyond linguistic control, a concept echoed in Jacques Derrida's (1979) theory of différance, where meaning is always deferred, never fully encapsulated. Translators must acknowledge this deferral, resisting simplifications and emphasising the gaps and differences between languages and cultures.

These theoretical frameworks underscore the complexity of translation as both an intellectual and artistic endeavour. By engaging with the inherent instability of language and the multiplicity of meanings, translators can elevate their work beyond mere technical accuracy, embracing the tensions and contradictions that define intercultural exchange.

Berne Convention and legal protections

The Berne Convention (1886) and its subsequent revisions have strengthened copyright protections for translators, affirming their rights as authors of original works.

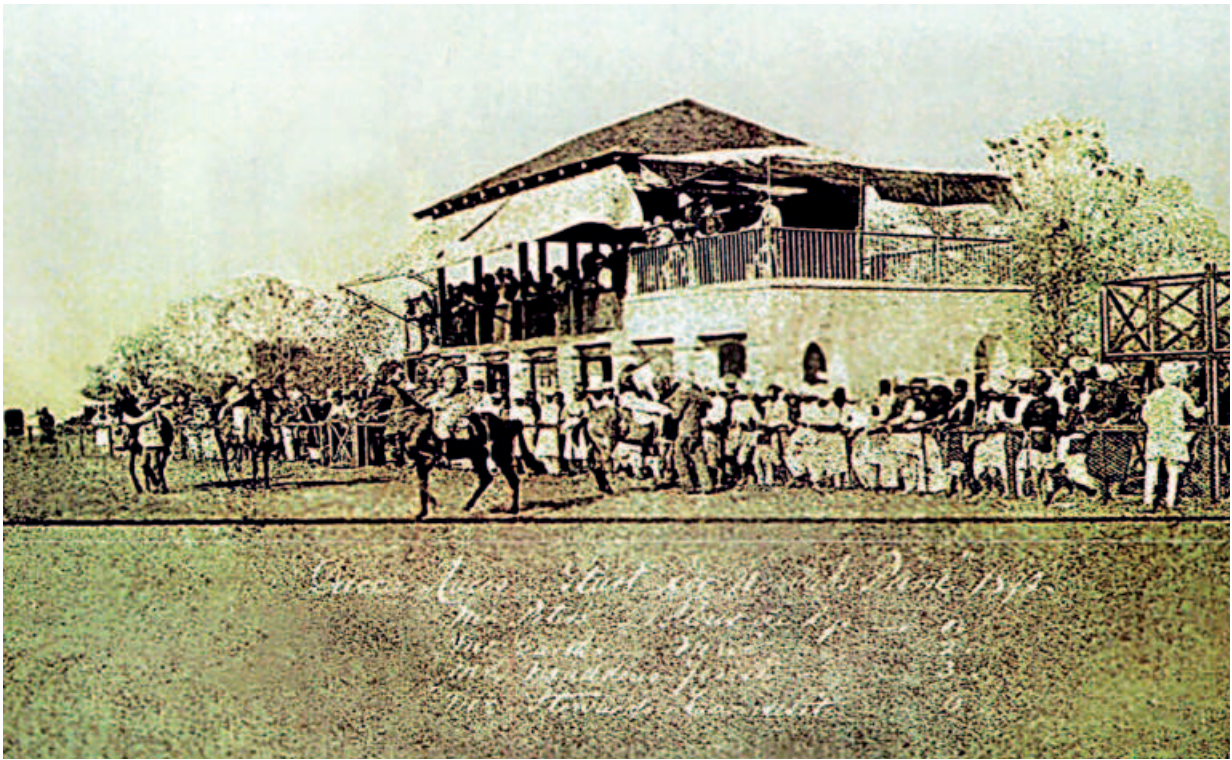
However, the widespread practice of "work-for-hire" translations—where translators receive flat fees without royalties—undermines these protections, relegating translators to mere service providers rather than cultural creators. Despite the legal recognition of translators' rights, the concept of "droit moral" (moral rights) often prevails, overriding translators' claims to derivative works and disadvantaging them both economically and culturally. Bangladesh's accession to the Berne Convention in 1999 marked a significant step forward in recognising translators' rights. Yet, challenges persist in ensuring fair treatment. These legal complexities highlight the need for more robust protections and a greater recognition of translators as essential contributors to cultural production. Ethical considerations—such as fair compensation, acknowledgment of intellectual contributions, and legal safeguards—are crucial to fostering a culture that truly values the art of translation.

In an era marked by globalisation and transnational flows, translation remains a pivotal tool for bridging linguistic and cultural divides. However, it continues to face significant challenges, from marginalisation in cultural and academic contexts to the delicate balancing act between domestication and foreignisation. By embracing an "ethics of difference," translators assert their role as co-creators, enriching global culture while preserving the complexity and depth of the original text. Lefevere's concept of translation as "a culture's window on the world" underscores its potential to foster genuine intercultural dialogue, resist homogenisation, and protect linguistic diversity. Translation, as both an artistic and intellectual endeavour, is not only a form of cultural preservation but also a transformative act of intercultural exchange.

Recognising translation as a performative, dialogic, and agonistic art ensures its continued significance in a world that increasingly depends on the richness and diversity of human expression. Protecting translation is, ultimately, a commitment to fostering empathy, understanding, and creativity in a globalised yet divided world.



Patrons of the Ramna Horse Race, the Dhaka Race Group (1845), formed by Nawabs and English civilians, Watercolour, Artist: Unknown, Courtesy: Khaja Mohammad Halim.



Preparation for the race at the Ramna Racecourse, 1892, Photographer: Fritz Kapp.

GALLOPING THROUGH HISTORY

The Tale of Ramna Racecourse

HOSSAIN MUHAMMED ZAKI

In 1825, Charles Doves, the then Magistrate of Dhaka, initiated the clearing of the Ramna jungle using prison labour. He enclosed an oval-shaped area with wooden railings and introduced horse racing competitions. From that time, the white colonial officials and residents of Dhaka found a source of recreation at the racecourse.

Horse racing became particularly popular as a significant form of entertainment for Dhaka residents during the time of Khwaja Alimullah, Nawab Abdul Ghani, and Nawab Ahsanullah. Khwaja Alimullah organised an annual horse racing competition every January, evidence of which is found in a painting (Image 1) by an unknown artist from 1845.

The painting depicts Khwaja Alimullah and his son, Nawab Abdul Ghani, dressed in Western attire and hats, along with other notable figures such as Cooper, Captain Hanshon, Hume, Lusani, Husni, Sarkis, Baker, Robin Hood, and James Wise. This rare artwork is currently in the possession of Khwaja Mohammed Halim, a relative of Nawab Abdul Ghani.

Horse Race Holiday

Following in his father's footsteps, Abdul Ghani began hosting horse races in 1848. His first horse, named *Sir Henry*, was a light brown Arabian stallion. Abdul Ghani bred high-quality foreign horses for racing, which was his favourite pastime and one he pursued with significant financial investment.

The widespread impact of gambling associated with horse racing on the general public is evident from a report published in *Dhaka Prakash* in 1891. It stated:

"During the horse racing event, all offices and courts in Dhaka were closed once again. On Saturday, operations were completely halted, and on Tuesday and Thursday, they were open only nominally for a brief period, with no work being done. Residents of distant towns, who travelled great distances and incurred substantial expenses to attend court for their cases, found the courts suddenly closed and returned home in frustration, cursing the government.

If instead of closing the courts unpredictably, the government announced a '*Horse Race Holiday*' in advance, much inconvenience and harm to the public could have been avoided."

The 'Dhaka Races' in Civilian Memoirs and Nawab Diaries

The memoir *Leaves from a Diary in Lower Bengal* by British civilian Arthur Lloyd Clay provides significant insights into horse racing in Dhaka. Writing about events in 1865, Clay noted:

"The Dacca Races were now on,—an annual event of some importance on the Turf in Eastern Bengal, liberally supported by Guni Mya and his son Ahsanulla, and other sporting residents, European and native, amongst whom our lively Collector figured conspicuously. A good deal of money was given in prizes, and one or two owners kept European jockeys."

In another entry from 1866, he recorded, "*The Dacca Races followed in December,*" indicating that horse racing had become an established annual event by that time. The Ramna-based races gained fame as the "Dhaka Races."

References to the "Dhaka Races" are also found in Anupam Hayat's book *Nawab Poribarer Diaryte Dhakar Shomaj o Shongskriti (Society and Culture of Dhaka in the Nawab Family Diaries)*. A diary entry dated 5 January 1904 mentions:

"Today, Nawab Bahadur, Mr. Garth, and others have arrived in Dhaka for the inauguration of the 'Dhaka Races.'"

On that day, Nawab Sir Khwaja Salimullah returned to Dhaka from Kolkata, accompanied by D.L. Garth, the manager of the Nawab Estate. Garth tragically passed away in June 1904 during the races due to a fall. He was so well-regarded that his personal belongings were later auctioned at the racecourse by Kolkata's Mackenzie & Lyall Company. A lane in Dhaka's Kumartuli area is named after him.

The racecourse was marked as "Race Course" on an 1859 map of Dhaka. However, 19th-century photographs identify it as the Gymkhana Ground or Gymkhana Pavilion. Researcher Walker Khan's book *Dhaka Club Chronicles* offers further clarification. On page 64, he writes: "On its inception, the Dhaka Club Limited at Ramna took over the management of the Old Gymkhana Club and its lucrative weekly racing events, reorganising and naming it as Dhaka Club Gymkhana Races (DCGR)."

The *Diary of the Nawab Family (1793–1903)* records that in 1851, Khwaja Abdul Ghani donated land in the Ramna area to the Dhaka Club. However, the club was officially registered much later, in 1911.

Corporate Social Responsibility by Dhaka Club Gymkhana Races

The primary source of income for the Dhaka Club Gymkhana Races was horse racing. The revenue generated was used not only for the club's development but also for corporate social responsibility initiatives. Donations were made to various hospitals and charitable institutions in the city.

Evidence of these contributions can be found in the *Triennial Report on the Working of Hospitals and Dispensaries in the Presidency of Bengal for the Years 1938, 1939, and 1940*. The 1940 report lists the *Dhaka Club Gymkhana Races* in fifth and ninth place among major philanthropic contributors. That year, it donated ₹2,500 to Dhaka Mitford Hospital and ₹1,500 to the Narayanganj Dispensary.

Despite these expenditures, the profits from the races continued to rise. This led members to demand reduced subscription fees and subsidies in other areas.

'Queenie' Case

In the fourth chapter of J. C. Galstaun's *Racing Reminiscences*, an extraordinary incident related to the *Dhaka Race* is described. It took place in January 1896. The Armenian Galstaun's horsemanship was unparalleled. He was the best jockey in Kolkata at the time and also the largest horse owner of the era.



Race Ticket. Source: 'Kreeralok-er Dhaka,' by Sad ur Rahman.

His stable was in England and was legendary. His bay-colored pony named Queenie won three consecutive races in Dhaka over three days. On the first day, in the Cooch Behar Cup, he earned 1000 rupees; on the second day, he earned 1000 rupees from Nawab Ahsanullah, and on the third day, in the Merchant's Cup, he earned 750 rupees. During this time, the jockey for the horse was a man named Stephen. One common condition for these races was that "the participating horses must be the true property of residents of Dhaka and certain neighboring districts." However, Stephen forgot to inform Galstaun about this condition. Instead, he only sent a written copy of the race prospectus to Galstaun, and after a series of correspondence regarding betting with Galstaun, Stephen died.

Stephen's death led to a major issue. Galstaun was accused of winning the races by violating the condition and using Stephen unethically. The Stewards of the races did not believe Galstaun's response that he was unaware of the betting-related condition. Additionally, Galstaun failed to provide the written prospectus sent by Stephen as evidence. Galstaun couldn't find it at the time. Consequently, on December 10, 1896, an announcement was posted in the Racing Calendar:

"The Stewards confirm the decision of the Dacca Stewards disqualifying the pony 'Queenie' for the Cooch Behar Cup, the Nawab

of Ashanolla's Purse, and the Merchant's Cup, at the Dacca races, in January, 1896, and awarding the two first mentioned races to 'Nelly II', and the last mentioned race to 'Free Lance'. Under rule 81 of the rules of racing, Mr. J. C. Galstaun is warned off the Calcutta course and other places where the Calcutta rules are in force. Under rule 82, the pony 'Queenie' is perpetually disqualified for all races."

Feeling aggrieved, Galstaun sought the intervention of the High Court and obtained an injunction to suspend the Stewards' decision. Over three years later, on February 28, 1900, the issue was resolved, and an announcement was made in the Racing Calendar: "The notice in connection with the 'Queenie' case, which appeared in the racing



The prize distribution ceremony of the horse racing competition, featuring Justice S. M. Morshed (then President of the Dhaka Club) and Major General Umrao Khan (then GOC of East Pakistan), 1958. Source: *Dhaka Club Chronicles* by Waqar A Khan.

calendar, No. 43, of 10th December 1896, is now withdrawn."

In a cruel twist of fate, in 1908, Galstaun discovered the written copy of the Dhaka race prospectus sent by Stephen among some insurance-related documents. On July 13, he wrote a two-page letter to the highest authority at the Calcutta Turf Club (C.T.C.), C.T.C. The response from the Secretary of C.T.C. on July 15 was as follows:

J. C. Galstaun Esq.,
1, Sukeas Lane,
Calcutta

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 13th instant with accompanying copy of the prospectus in writing of Dacca races, I am directed by my Stewards to say that they regret they cannot re-open the question of your disqualification twelve years ago but your letter has been noted and filed with the other papers.

Yours,
J.Hutchison
Secy., C.T.C.

Galstaun's case became a significant part of the history of the racing industry, not just for the Dhaka Club Gymkhana race but as a case study in racing history.

Insights from the 1945 Official Race Book of the 'Dhaka Club Gymkhana Races'

A review of the *1945 Official Race Book* of the 'Dhaka Club Gymkhana Races' reveals several noteworthy details. The cover states: Monsoon Meetings, Saturday 30th June 1945 Commencement at 2.30 PM Second Day. The booklet was priced at four annas.

On the first page, the names of the stewards and officials are listed. Another page, titled "Notice," systematically lists the dates for the *Monsoon Meetings 1945*: July 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, and August 4th. Notably, all of these dates fall on Saturdays. The time for the first race is mentioned as 2:30 PM. Under the heading "*The 'Cannaught' Stakes*," the prize

structure for the first race is as follows:

- First Prize:** 90 rupees
- Second Prize:** 55 rupees
- Third Prize:** 40 rupees
- Fourth Prize:** 15 rupees

The booklet also specifies the type of horse eligible for the race, with a distance of four and a half furlongs. Additionally, the names of 11 jockeys, brief descriptions of their attire, as well as the names, weights, and ages of the horses, are included.

The book details eight races, with descriptions provided until 6:00 PM. Another page outlines 14 rules regarding the races. The final page provides information about the band program scheduled to take place at the racecourse in the evening.

called punters. Even before the race began, one could see these hardcore punters at the stables, gathering information about the horses for the day's race from the caretakers, and collecting tips from the jockeys."

Challenges of Horse Racing

In 1943, a question arose in the *Bengal Legislative Assembly* regarding whether any official from the Dhaka Collectorate or the Dhaka Divisional Commissioner's office was assigned part-time responsibilities at the Dhaka Gymkhana Races. In response, Khwaja Nazimuddin, who was in charge of the Home Ministry, stated that specific government officials had been permitted to work at the Dhaka Gymkhana Races based on recommendations from local authorities. He further clarified that if local officials were satisfied with their work and there was no disruption to their primary duties, he would not propose withdrawing them from this assignment.

The topic of horse racing was debated again during the Second Session of the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly in 1963. Questions were posed to the minister about whether any measures had been taken in the past to ban horse racing in Dhaka, why it was resumed, and whether the government had any plans to ban horse racing in the future.

An analysis of the responses revealed that horse racing was conducted under the Bengal Public Gambling Act of 1867. The Act had been amended once, making betting on horse racing a punishable offence. As a result, horse racing was halted from 2 June 1948 to 25 December 1954. However, a subsequent amendment to the Act on 26 December 1954 legalised horse racing again, allowing betting to resume.

The Assembly discussions also revealed that the government earned an annual revenue of 1.2 million rupees from horse racing, and 644 individuals were employed in this sector to sustain their livelihoods.

'Dacca Races Suspended'

In 1967, the *Illustrated Weekly of Pakistan* published a news article titled "*Dacca Races Suspended*." A review of the article reveals that the authorities responsible for Dhaka races were actively addressing malpractice in horse racing. Unregistered bookies were not paying taxes to the government, while the authorities operating the races had to pay a 20% tax to the Gymkhana. Measures were taken to discourage the presence of unregistered bookies at the Racecourse ground.

At that time, Mr. Mapara served as the secretary of the Dhaka Race Club. Efforts by the stewards to run the popular Sunday races in a transparent and successful manner continued. Stewards, respected members of the racing industry, oversaw all aspects of betting during races to ensure that all parties adhered to rules and guidelines. They were often compared to law enforcement at the racecourse.

To improve the environment of horse racing and ensure long-term benefits for bettors, measures were introduced, such as simplifying ticket purchases and designating specific areas for paying betting money. Seating arrangements for third-class spectators were merged with the second-class section. Additionally, the entry fee was increased from 18 paise to 50 paise.

Horse racing was a form of leisure for the British officials but often brought misfortune to the impoverished residents of Dhaka. This led to a mosque-based social movement against horse racing and gambling. The Chawkbazar Shahi Mosque became a centre for this movement, led by renowned scholar Mufti Deen Mohammad. Through his Tafsir sessions and sermons, he sought to educate the general public about the harmful effects of horse racing.

As a result, after independence, the government enacted laws banning horse racing, gambling, and alcohol consumption. The Ramna Racecourse was renamed Suhrawardy Udyan, marking the end of Dhaka's beloved Ramna horse races.

Hossain Muhammed Zaki is a Researcher. He can be contacted at zakiimed@gmail.com

A Test series etched in memory

“It was a well fought series, a lot of good learnings for us ... being in the game for longer, creating pressure and sometimes absorbing pressure when the wickets are difficult and sometimes playing to the situation.”

Player-of-the-series
Jasprit Bumrah

“Obviously in the context of this series, it’s been a massive series,” he said after his 20th win as captain. It is one that a few of us didn’t have. The boys have had their eye on it and it has lived up to the hype.”

Australia captain Pat Cummins

AGENCIES

Australia completed a six-wicket win in Sydney to clinch the fifth Test against India.

The home side rebounded from losing the opening Test against India to clinch the series 3-1 on Sunday and win the Border-Gavaskar Trophy for the first time in a decade.

The series was a real treat for cricket loving fans all over the world as there was no shortage of twist and turns in the five-match series.

Here there are some talking points from the series:

ALIVE AND KICKING
Bumper crowds turned up to watch the first-ever five-Test series between the two teams, swelling as the showdown intensified.

Drawn in by fine weather, the holiday period and knife-edge action, attendance records were smashed to prove the red-ball game remains hugely popular.

The peak came in the fourth Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, where a staggering 373,691 spectators streamed through the turnstiles, beating the previous record of 350,534 at the same ground during the 1936-37 Ashes series against



England.

BRILLIANT BUMRAH
Prodigious seamer Jasprit Bumrah reinforced his reputation as not only India’s most potent bowler, but one of the best the world has seen.

He put in a mammoth effort to help carry the team and keep them in the hunt for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, with his 32 wickets at an average of

13.06 the most by an Indian in a series in Australia.

Bumrah sent down 53.2 overs in the Boxing Day Test alone – more than he has bowled in any match of his career – and the toil took its toll in Sydney when a back issue restricted his input.

His pivotal role was further highlighted by the decision to hand him the captaincy in Perth and

● The win in front of a packed house at a Sydney Cricket Ground bathed in pink for Glenn McGrath’s cancer charity yesterday ensured Australia will defend their World Test Championship title against South Africa at Lord’s in June.

● With the Border-Gavaskar Trophy safely in the cabinet, Australia now hold all the bilateral titles they play for in the longest format as well as the WTC crown they won by beating India in 2023.

impacts. A fearless Konstas slammed a whirlwind 60 in his first Test innings in Brisbane, taking on Bumrah with little respect, to position himself as a potential long-term opener for Australia.

Reddy was equally impressive, proving able support to the frontline attack while crunching a maiden century in the fourth Test.

END OF THE ROAD
Both sides face a transitional period and the series could have been the last for some of their ageing, and underperforming, veterans.

Australian opener Usman Khawaja, 38, hit 41 in the second innings at Sydney but never really got going. In his favour, Australia have no obvious successor.

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma is similarly under pressure, with a horror run of form seeing him dropped from the last Test in Sydney.

Rohit, 37, insisted he “rested” for the good of the team and would be back, but his days could be numbered.

Superstar Virat Kohli, 36, is also in the twilight of an incredible career.

He has almost certainly played his last tour of Australia and while he scored an unbeaten 100 at the first Test in Perth, he failed to make another big score.

‘Not facing Rana in the nets, he is too quick for me’

Amid the handful of foreign stars featuring in this year’s Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), former England batter Alex Hales is definitely one to look at. The hard-hitting opening batter, who recently turned 36, has been roped in by Rangpur Riders for six matches and will be available until the Sylhet phase before heading to Dubai for ILT20. On Sunday, Hales talked to *The Daily Star’s Samsul Arefin Khan*, sharing his experience of playing in different T20 franchise-based tournaments, including this BPL, and the teams that he deems favourite in the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy. The excerpts of the interview are as follows:

The Daily Star (DS): There were talks of you joining Dhaka Capitals in the BPL. But you are eventually playing for Rangpur Riders. What’s the story?

Alex Hales (AH): That’s the first time I heard about it. I don’t know anything about signing for Dhaka.

DS: You have played for Rangpur before. How’s the new stint with the team so far?

AH: I think I played in 2018 for a full season. I loved it and it was really great fun. To get a chance to come back to play for a successful franchise, it’s really a great honour.

DS: It’s your third time in the BPL. How much are you enjoying?

AH: I like this year’s BPL. The wickets in Dhaka were nice. Earlier, sometimes it was slow and low but this time, they had good pitches. I think Sylhet is quite nice as well.

DS: You must be very happy to see your side leading the points table after the Dhaka phase.

AH: I’m here for six games. We won three out of three. I think we bowled really well. Our seamers and spinners have been brilliant. It’s a good enough start you can hope for in any competition.

DS: Do you see any changes in this BPL?

AH: There are definitely some better bowlers around. There are some good pace bowlers around now which is great to see. And more and more batters are clearing the ropes and hitting sixes. I think Bangladesh’s T20 cricket is heading in the right direction.

DS: You must have played Nahid Rana in the nets. How good is he?

AH: No, no, no. I’m not facing him in the nets. He is too quick for me (laughs). I think I faced him last year when I played for Khulna



Tigers [in the nets], I’m now too old and in the nets, I usually just face throwers.

DS: Do you think you could have given England cricket more service as you decided to retire early?

AH: It was my time. My last game was the World Cup final that we won [in 2022 in Australia]. I wanted to go out on my terms and celebrate the World Cup win. Now I focus on franchise cricket. I’ve been away from cricket for some time as well to enjoy family time. So I’m happy with my decision.

DS: You have played in almost all franchise-based leagues across the globe. How do you see BPL compared to other franchise leagues?

AH: It’s just as good as all the other leagues. It’s challenging as an overseas player. You often get challenged a lot by the spinners. There are a lot of skillful spinners here and that’s a tough challenge as an overseas player. But the guys are bowling at good pace as well and the pitch is carrying.

DS: There are fewer foreign recruits in BPL this year. Why do you think BPL is not attracting as many foreign stars as other leagues?

AH: I think four tournaments are running at the same time. SA20, ILT20, and Big Bash along with the BPL. There’s too much cricket during January-February. So, it’s the same for almost all the leagues as they don’t have as many overseas players as they wanted. Also, the Champions Trophy is in February, so, the tournaments are being cramped into the calendar during this period. Next year, hopefully, it will be different and there will be lots of foreign players [in BPL], and I want to be one of them.

DS: Regarding Champions Trophy, which teams do you see as favourites?

AH: India are always up there, especially in the sub-continent conditions. Probably India, Australia, and South Africa. No one talks about South Africa but they are always in the final.

DS: Coming back to BPL, you must want similar good wickets [as the Dhaka phase] in Sylhet as well.

AH: I played may be two or three games in Sylhet and it’s usually been good pitch to bat on. So hoping for more of the same.

BPL aims to satisfy fans in Sylhet phase

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN FROM SYLHET

The Sylhet phase of the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) gets underway today at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium with organisers aiming to make it a bigger success both on and off the field than the opening phase in Dhaka.

The Dhaka phase provided high-scoring matches and quality on-field cricket, however, the off-field fiasco over the ticketing system, with angry fans vandalizing the main gate of the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium after not getting tickets, left a sour taste.

So far, there have been no complaints over tickets in terms of availability and process of procurement ahead of the Sylhet phase. There are sufficient number of tickets available for fans at three designated areas and they can also purchase their tickets online.

“We always have to pay attention towards the quality of cricket... But this time, we are also thinking about our fans and how to satisfy them. We are all but ready. I hope we can satisfy the Sylhet fans,” BPL governing council member secretary Nazmul Abedeen Fahim told reporters in Sylhet yesterday.

On the opening day, home side Sylhet Strikers will face table-toppers Rangpur Riders in the first match which will be followed by Durbar Rajshahi taking on Fortune Barishal.

Sylhet lost their opening match against Rangpur on December 31 and arrived in Sylhet the next day to get a head start on their preparation for this phase, in which they will play five games in eight days.

“We had a good preparation in the last couple of days. We will get support from the crowd. Hopefully, the players will deliver and we hope to start winning from this phase,” Sylhet’s fielding coach Dollar Mahmud said.

Kyle Mayers, Barishal all-rounder, also hoped for a turnaround after the eight-wicket defeat to Rangpur in their previous game. “It’s okay to make mistakes in a tournament, especially at the beginning. As the captain said, we are still trying to find our best combination... We just need to find the balance, try to find the best eleven and play the best cricket that we can.”



BFF wants BPL outfits in women’s league

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite the nonappearance of top clubs like Bashundhara Kings, Mohammedan SC and Abahani in yesterday’s view-exchange meeting on the Women’s Football League (WFL), Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) women’s committee chairperson Mahfuza Akter Kiran remained hopeful about holding a competitive WFL this year.

Kiran had invited the 10 clubs of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) along with clubs who took part in last year’s WFL for the meeting but officials from only four BPL clubs – Brothers Union, Rahmatganj MFS, Bangladesh Police FC and Chittagong Abahani – turned up.

In the last edition, none of the BPL outfits participated in the WFL which also included hattrick champions Bashundhara Kings.

“We need to include the country’s top clubs to make it better. The clubs you mentioned did not turn up maybe because they were busy. But I think those who turned up are also capable to make the women’s league stronger,” said Kiran after the meeting at the BFF House.

Kiran informed that the federation wants to introduce the double-league format in the WFL in order to get FIFA recognition.

She also informed that the BFF is thinking of introducing ‘players’ pool system’ to make the league competitive



Fast bowler Kwena Maphaka, South Africa’s youngest Test debutant at 18 years and 270 days, had a day to remember as he claimed his maiden Test wicket during Day 3 of the second Test against Pakistan in Cape Town yesterday. The left-arm pacer dismissed star batter Babar Azam for 58 and sent back Khurram Shahzad later in the day to bundle out Pakistan for 194 in response to the Proteas’ 615. South Africa enforced the follow-on and the visitors were 152-0 after 35 overs in their second innings.

PHOTO: AFP

Real hope Vinicius won’t face suspension

REUTERS

Real Madrid are hopeful Vinicius Jr will avoid suspension after the club appealed his straight red card during their 2-1 comeback win over Valencia last week, manager Carlo Ancelotti said on Sunday.

The Italian coach confirmed Vinicius is travelling to Cartagena for Monday’s Copa del Rey match against Deportiva Minera.

The Brazilian striker was sent off for slapping Valencia goalkeeper Stole Dimitrievski during Friday’s LaLiga match and Ancelotti is confident that the 24-year-old will escape even the minimum two-game suspension for his red card.

“It wasn’t a red, it was a yellow, and that’s why we hope he will not face any suspension,” the 65-year-old manager told reporters.

Ancelotti also said that Vinicius is under immense mental stress due to previous incidents of racist abuse directed at him in Spain.





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Questioning settled issues not wise

Says Dr Kamal Hossain on Liberation War; urges unity to end political instability

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Acknowledging the need for constitutional changes, Gono Forum leader Dr Kamal Hossain has said questioning the settled issues of the Liberation War will hinder Bangladesh's progress.

"Amending or updating the constitution to meet public aspirations, as time necessitates, is an ongoing process for the state today," said Dr Kamal, chairman of the committee that drafted the 1972 constitution.

"However, if the achieved and settled Liberation War issues are questioned, it will hinder the establishment of an advancing Bangladesh. It is all of our duty to act responsibly on this matter," he added.

He made these remarks in a statement read out on his behalf at a press conference organised by the Gono Forum yesterday to announce its full central committee and discuss the current political situation.

Dr Kamal said political unity is the only way to end the ongoing political instability in Bangladesh. The foundation of this unity is rooted in the national

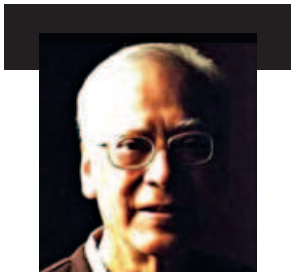


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Bangladesh Railway yesterday conducted a trial run with trains running at full speed -- 120km per hour -- on the Jamuna Railway Bridge from the east end (Bhuapur, Tangail) to the west end (Sirajganj Sadar upazila). The authorities said the bridge would be inaugurated soon if everything goes well with the trial.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL



Economist Prof Anisur Rahman no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Anisur Rahman, economist and member of the country's first Planning Commission formed after independence, died at a hospital in the capital yesterday at the age of 91.

He passed away at around 1:15pm while undergoing treatment for pneumonia at United Hospital, said MM Akash, a former professor of economics at Dhaka University.

"He was our role model," said Prof Akash, a student of Prof Anisur. "He used to tell us that Bangladesh's

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Prabir Mitra passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Legendary actor Prabir Mitra passed away at 10:15pm last night at the capital's Square Hospital. He was 81.

The news of his demise was conveyed to The Daily Star by his son, Sifat Islam.

The veteran actor, whose career spans more than 400 films, had been suffering from multiple health complications.

Battling oxygen deficiency and other ailments, Prabir was admitted to a private hospital on December 22. His health had continued to decline over the past two weeks.

His first namaz-e-janaza will be held today after Zuhr prayers at the premises of Bangladesh Film Development

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Tulip lived in flat gifted by Hasina ally

Reports The Sunday Times

AGENCIES

UK's Treasury Minister Tulip Siddiq, responsible for tackling financial crime, lived in a Hampstead flat gifted to her family by an ally of her aunt Sheikh Hasina, the recently ousted prime minister of Bangladesh, reports UK-based newspaper The Sunday Times.

The development came as Tory MPs renewed the pressure on the MP from Hampstead and Highgate to quit after allegations emerged that she had lied about receiving a London flat as a gift.

The Sunday Times found that Moin Ghani, a Bangladeshi lawyer who represented Hasina's government, transferred the property on Finchley Road to Tulip's younger sister, Azmina, in 2009. Land Registry documents show the transfer was made "not for money or anything that has a monetary value."

Azmina, who was 18 in 2009, sold the flat in 2021 for \$650,000.

Tulip used the property as her address on official documents during her time as a director of the Working Men's College and a trustee of various non-profits between 2012 and 2014. Her husband, Christian Percy, also listed the flat as his address until 2016. By then, Tulip had become the Labour MP for Hampstead & Kilburn, reported The Sunday Times.

Tulip's spokesperson told The Sunday Times that she



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Rokeya univ suspends 56 students

Their links to Abu Sayed killing, attacks on demo cited as reason

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The authorities of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) yesterday suspended 56 students for various terms over alleged attack on fellow students and involvement in the killing of Abu Sayed during the quota reform protests in July last year.

Additionally, the university also endorsed a recommendation by its disciplinary committee for legal action against 15 former students for their role in the violence.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Shawkat Ali announced the decisions at a press conference after presiding over the 109th syndicate meeting of the BRUR.

Out of the 56 students, 33 were suspended for two semesters, while 23 others for one semester.

VC Shawkat said the

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Six banks send MDs on leave

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six crisis-hit banks are sending their managing directors (MDs) on three-month leave as the central bank commissions forensic audits into the lenders.

The banks are: First Security Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank, Global Islami Bank, Union Bank, Exim Bank and ICB Islamic Bank.

The lenders, except for ICB and Exim Bank, were heavily controlled by S Alam Group, a big beneficiary of the Awami League regime. Exim Bank was led by Md. Nazrul Islam Mazumder, a close ally of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The move to send the MDs on leave came in a meeting yesterday between the Bangladesh Bank and representatives of the six Shariah-based banks at the BB headquarters. BB Governor Ahsan H Mansur presided over the meeting.

The move to send the managing directors on leave came in a meeting between the Bangladesh Bank and representatives of the six Shariah-based banks at the BB headquarters yesterday.

The issue was first discussed in a meeting between the central bank and the board members of the six banks on January 2.

The decision was taken centring the forensic audit that started yesterday, The Daily Star has learnt from BB officials informed with the proceedings.

The forensic audit is being conducted on more than a dozen banks with the help of the Asian Development Bank.

Initially, six banks that are saddled with huge loan irregularities and scams following the 15 years of Awami League rule would be looked into.

Ernst & Young would be conducting forensic audits into Exim,

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EXTORTION CHARGES SC upholds scrapping of 4 cases against Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday upheld the High Court verdicts that scrapped four extortion cases filed against BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman during the rule of the military-backed caretaker government in 2007.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division led by Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam dismissed four separate leave to appeal petitions filed by the state challenging the HC judgements.

A section of pro-BNP lawyers, including Zainul Abedin, AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, Md Bodruddoza Badal, Kayser Kamal, and Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal, appeared for Tarique while Additional Attorney General Aneek R Haque represented the state during hearing of the petitions.

After the SC passed the orders,

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BGB detains 36 Rohingyas for trespass

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Border Guard Bangladesh yesterday detained 36 Rohingyas, who illegally entered Bangladesh through the Bay of Bengal.

The Rohingyas arrived at the Teknaf shore in Cox's Bazar yesterday afternoon after crossing the Bay of Bengal on a fishing boat, BGB officials said, adding that they are now in custody and will be sent back to Myanmar.

Among the Rohingyas are five women, 10 children and 21 men, they said.

Lt Colonel Ashiqur Rahman, commanding officer of BGB Battalion-2 in Teknaf, said the 36 Rohingyas illegally entered Bangladesh through the Munderdale beach around one kilometre north of the BGB Khurermukh checkpoint around 1:40pm yesterday.

"The process of sending them back is underway."

Mohammad Salim,

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A BGB official stands guard next to 36 Rohingyas, who were detained after illegally entering Bangladesh through the Bay of Bengal yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: MOKAMMEL SHUVO

Broadband tariffs set to drop 20pc

Telecom ministry okays BTRC proposal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The broadband internet tariffs at the consumers' end are set to decline by up to 20 percent after the telecom ministry recently signed off on the internet regulator's proposal to that end.

On December 3 last year, Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission sent the proposal to bring down the internet tariff at the end-user level to the telecom ministry for the preapproval, a prerequisite for the commission to approve key decisions, documents show.

"We have sent the proposal to the finance ministry for final approval," Nahid Islam, the adviser for Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology to the interim government, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Approval from the finance ministry is necessary to change tariffs.

Now, a 5Mbps broadband internet connection would cost Tk 400 a month, down from the Tk 500 fixed by the BTRC in 2021.

For 10 Mbps, the rate would be Tk 700, down from Tk 800. For 20 Mbps, the tariff would be Tk 1,100 instead of Tk 1,200.

BTRC Chairman Emdad ul Bari, who assumed the role in September last year, repeatedly emphasised the need to bring down the internet prices. Accordingly, the BTRC began a comprehensive analysis of the entire internet supply ecosystem.

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