

# VAT shock in the middle of the fiscal year

VAT, SD on nearly 100 goods and services raised from today

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN, MAHMUDUL HASAN and SUKANTA HALDER

The National Board of Revenue went ahead with its plan to hike value-added tax and supplementary duty on goods and services despite widespread concerns that the move will stoke inflation and slow down economic activities.

Yesterday, it issued the notification for the new rates of VAT and SD on nearly 100 goods and services. The new rates will take effect today. The hike in VAT and tax in the middle of the fiscal year is

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TAX HIKE (IN %)		
VAT	BEFORE	NOW
Biscuit, cake	5	15
Pickle, tomato ketchup	5	15
Restaurant	5	15
Non-AC hotel	7.5	15
Kitchen towel, tissue	7.5	15
Clothes	7.5	15
Sweet	7.5	15
Tailoring shop	10	15
SD	BEFORE	NOW
Nuts	30	45
Grape, apple, melon	20	30
Juice, fruit drink	10	15
Mobile phone use	20	23
Internet	0	10
Imported detergent	20	30
Imported soap	45	60

## Businesses concerned over VAT, gas price hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Businesses yesterday expressed concern over the government's move to hike the gas price for industrial and captive users and the income tax for consumer durables as those would further decelerate economic activities and fuel inflation.

Both decisions will also have a negative impact on the already subdued investment scenario, said the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, an association of industrial conglomerates, manufacturers and small and medium enterprises.

The proposal to increase the price of gas by more than double without ensuring uninterrupted gas supply will increase the cost of doing business manifold and create inflationary pressure, it said in a statement.

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## BNP files two ICT complaints against Hasina

Accuses AL leaders, law enforcers of killing 2,276 BNP activists in crossfire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday lodged two complaints with the International Crimes Tribunal against Sheikh Hasina, Awami League leaders and law enforcers over the killing of 2,276 BNP men by crossfire and the enforced disappearance of 153 others.

Md Salauddin Khan, a Krishak Dal leader and coordinator of the BNP's case data information cell, submitted the complaints to the tribunal's prosecution wing over the incidents that occurred between 2008 and Hasina's ouster on August 5, 2024. Lawyer Nurul Islam, another member of the case cell, was also present.

They did not disclose the identities of AL leaders and law enforcers named in the complaint.

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## JULY PROCLAMATION Talks with political parties next week

Says Mahfuj; 'govt will facilitate, not issue it'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will sit with political parties and other stakeholders next week to discuss what should be in the proclamation of the July uprising, Adviser Mahfuj Alam said yesterday.

They will also discuss whether the constitution should be reformed or repealed, he said.

He also said the government itself would not issue the proclamation, but facilitate a broad national consensus over the matter.



The Students Against Discrimination and the Jatiya Nagorik Committee had earlier threatened to demonstrate if the proclamation is not prepared by January 15. Mahfuj urged patience among the students, saying the process would take a few more days.

"The government wants the proclamation to be based on consensus among all parties," he told a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy.

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Families of sacked members of Bangladesh Rifles, now Border Guard Bangladesh, blocked the Shahbagh intersection yesterday afternoon to press home their demands, including freeing those who are in jail in connection with BDR mutiny and the reinstatement of dismissed personnel. The gathering caused traffic congestion in the area.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Government debt now in uneasy territory

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

Government debt increased 13.3 percent last fiscal year to a record Tk 18.3 lakh crore, raising concerns about repayment amid the low revenue mobilisation.

Domestic debt accounted for 55.7 percent of the total debt stock and foreign debt the rest, according to the quarterly debt-bulletin report of the finance division, which was released yesterday.

This takes the debt GDP ratio to 36.3 percent, still in the safe territory as per the International Monetary Fund's calculations.

However, economists said the total volume of debt is concerning when compared with the revenue earnings and dollar stockpile.

The main concern now is the liquidity shortage in both local and foreign currency, said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

On one hand, the government's revenue collection is weak while the interest payment has increased significantly.

"On the other hand, the government is getting fewer foreign loans, which has become an issue for interest repayment and some outstanding bills from those loans. As a result, the government is in trouble," he said.

The white paper on the state of the Bangladesh economy, submitted to the chief adviser last month, echoed the same.

"The trends in debt intensity appear much less comfortable. Debt distress can arise even at low levels when debt servicing competes for domestic and foreign currency liquidity in a shortage situation. Such an experience is still not in the rearview in Bangladesh. A spike in already increasing debt servicing burden is imminent," the report said.

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### GOVERNMENT'S DEBT SITUATION (Taka in crore)

JUNE 2021	11,44,296
JUNE 2022	13,43,723
JUNE 2023	16,17,313
JUNE 2024	18,32,282

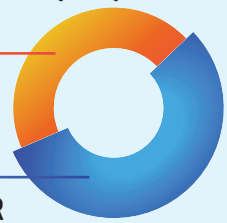
**TOTAL DEBT TK 18,32,282CR**

FOREIGN DEBT

TK 8,12,077CR

DOMESTIC DEBT

TK 10,20,205CR



## 3 MINISTRIES Committees to oversee transfer of senior officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday formed three separate committees for public administration, home and foreign ministries to oversee the transfer of officials holding the posts of deputy secretaries and above.

Advisers will lead the committees of which secretaries will be members.

The cabinet division published three separate notifications in this regard.

The move will curb lobbying for transfers, said the notifications.

Usually, secretaries transfer officials up to deputy secretaries. Ministers transfer officials above that.

According to a notification regarding the committee on public administration, a six-

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## Bangabandhu's Homecoming Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the historic Homecoming Day of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the architect of the country's independence.

Bangabandhu returned to a liberated Bangladesh via London and New Delhi on this day in 1972, after 290 days of confinement in Pakistan jail.

On March 25 night

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## 35<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary

DEATH: 10<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 1990

We deeply mourn the death of our beloved mother "Late **Masuda Begum** wife of Late Mr. Abul Khair, founder of Abul Khair Group (Abul Co.)". Today with due respect, we remember her works, ideals and memories and pray to Almighty for His divine blessings.

We request all our relatives and well-wishers to pray for her eternal peace.

**BELOVED SONS & DAUGHTERS**

বাংলাদেশ বিমান বাহিনীতে  
**অফিসার ক্যাডেট  
হিসেবে যোগ দিন**

**৯২ বিএএফএ কোর্স  
(92 BAFA COURSE)**

যোগদানের সম্ভাব্য তারিখ: ২৩ জুন ২০২৫

অনলাইনে আবেদনের সময়সীমা:  
০১ নভেম্বর ২০২৪ থেকে ০৫ এপ্রিল ২০২৫। \* শর্ত প্রযোজ্য

২০২৫ সালের এইচএসসি পরীক্ষার্থীগণও আবেদন করতে পারবেন।

বিস্তারিত তথ্য ও অনলাইন আবেদনের জন্য: <https://joinairforce.baf.mil.bd>, Help Desk: 01769-990880 (8 AM-2.30 PM)  
Email: [helpdesk@baf.mil.bd](mailto:helpdesk@baf.mil.bd), Follow us: [facebook.com/BDAirForceOfficial](https://facebook.com/BDAirForceOfficial)

আই এফ পি আর/বিমান/২০২৪/৯০  
২৯/১০/২৪

GD-1100



## Swechchhasebak League leader shot dead at Cox’s Bazar beach

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox’s Bazar

Golam Rabbani Tipu, vice president of Swechchhasebak League’s Khulna city unit, was shot dead at Cox’s Bazar sea beach last night.

The killing took place at the Seagull point of the beach around 8:00pm, said Ilyas Khan, officer-in-charge of Cox’s Bazar Sadar Model Police Station.

Tipu, son of Golam Akbar of Khulna city’s Daulatpur area, was a former councillor of Ward-4 of Khulna City Corporation.

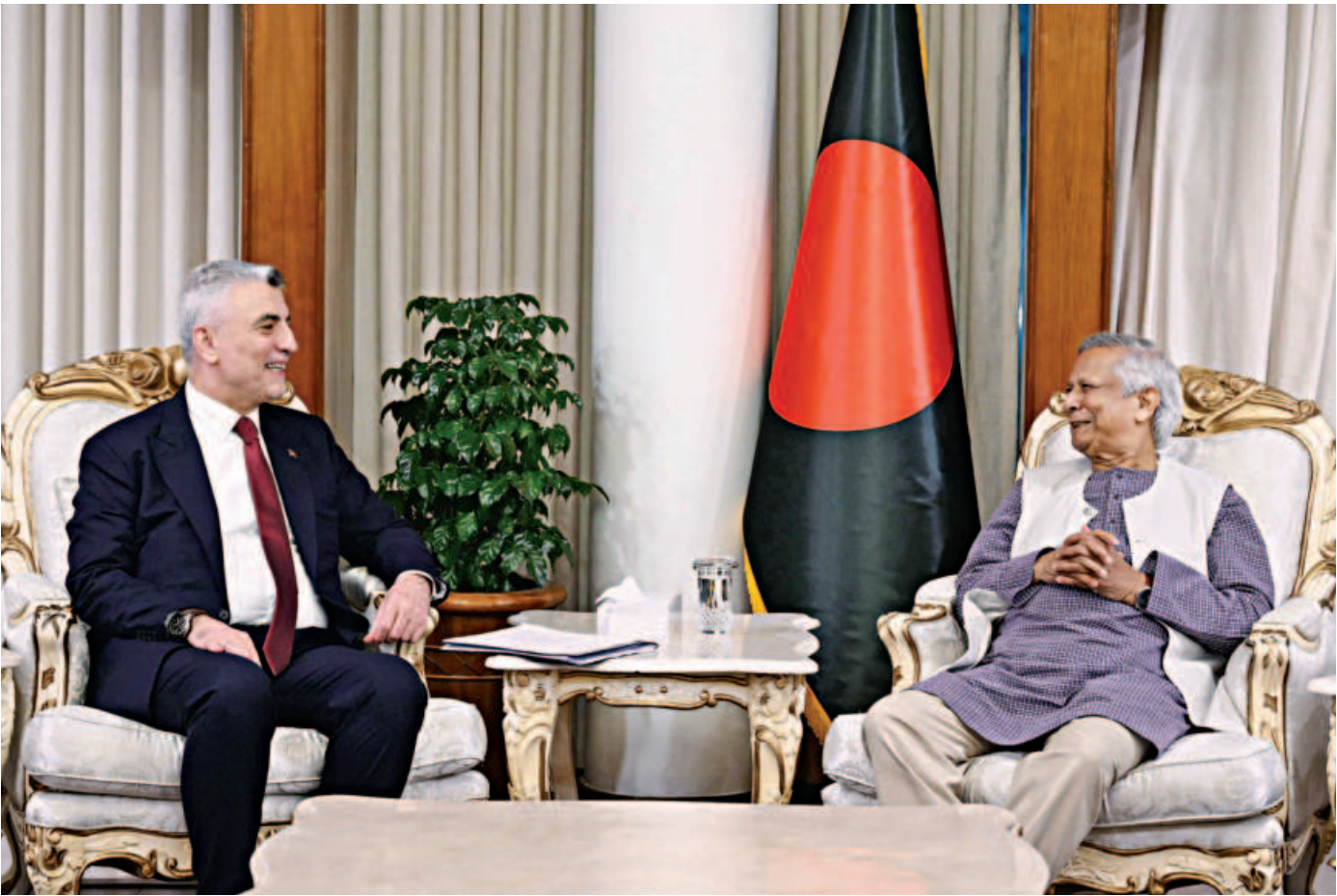
Abdus Salam Babu, an auto-rickshaw driver who took Tipu to a hospital, said he heard a loud bang near the wooden bridge on Seagull Point.

“I saw a person collapse after the bang, but I did not see anyone else there,” he added.

Tipu was declared dead when brought to the hospital, police said.

Police confirmed the victim’s identity by the national identity card found in his pocket.

The killing of Tipu could be a planned murder due to previous enmity, said Jasim Uddin Chowdhury, additional superintendent of police in Cox’s Bazar district. Several police teams and intelligence agencies started working on the matter, he added.



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at a meeting with Türkiye Trade Minister Prof Ömer Bolat at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: PTD

## Talks with political parties

FROM PAGE 1

The students and the Nagorik Committee on December 30 said they would formally proclaim the uprising the next day. Student leaders also said the “Mujibbadi” constitution would be invalidated.

Initially, the Chief Adviser’s Press Wing said the government had no involvement in the event. However, that very night it said the government would take the initiative to prepare the proclamation based on national consensus.

Later that night, the student group and the Nagorik Committee announced their support for the government initiative and decided to hold a “March for Unity” programme instead of the event to announce the proclamation.

Asked about the students’ thoughts on the constitution, Mahfuj said many, including some political parties, are critical of the 1972 constitution.

“If we can reach a point of consensus, then the question arises: What will we do about the constitution? There are proposals from students, but there might also be opposition from other political parties.

“Since this is a contentious matter, we need to keep this in discussions [with the parties]. We will document it and formalise our decisions.”

Discussions on the proclamation would also be held with cultural and social organisations and other stakeholders, he said.

Mahfuj also said the government decided to prepare the proclamation after realising that a proclamation by the students alone would hamper existing wider consciousness and unity.

He said that there is a consensus among political parties and others on opposing Sheikh Hasina’s fascism. The continuity of this issue may also be described in the proclamation.

The second part of the proclamation will outline how the state will be governed. On these matters, there might be some disagreements.

The adviser said that the BNP has stated they want their 16-year-long democratic struggle, to be recognised in the proclamation, along with the struggles of all other political parties, cultural organisations, and individuals who have fought for their rights and suffered oppression. “We want to make it inclusive and no one will be left out.”

Asked about the next national election, Mahfuj said the matter depends on the political parties: how much reform they want. This will be discussed during consultation on the reports of the reform commissions.

He said a decision on local government polls will also be taken following consultation with the political parties. Many services are being disrupted since the interim government removed local government representatives.

Regarding attacks on shrines and cultural activities after August 5, Mahfuj said they feel sorry that they cannot take clear steps against many attacks.

“But from now on, we will take stern action if there is an attack on shrines, qawwali concerts or cultural activities”, he said, urging all the victims and aggrieved to file cases.

Chief Adviser’s Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam said at the press conference that Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday directed the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to resolve the waterlogging problem in Chatogram. Quick measures will be visible in the coming days to improve the traffic situation, he said.

He also said that all students of primary and secondary levels will get textbooks within February.

## VAT shock in the middle of the fiscal year

FROM PAGE 1

unprecedented, said SM Nazer Hossain, vice president of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh.

Although Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed on January 2 said the VAT and SD hike would not fuel inflation as the items account for an insignificant part of the basket for consumer price index, the NBR notification indicates a host of goods and services that are used widely in day-to-day life such as mobile phone and broadband internet use, LP gas, spectacles and clothes.

“People are already grappling with high inflation, and this move will only add to their burden,” Hossain said.

The VAT and SD increase aligns with the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund as part of a \$4.7 billion loan it approved for Bangladesh in January last year.

The IMF advised the government to rationalise tax exemptions, improve compliance with laws and bring about reforms in tax measures to bolster domestic revenue collection in Bangladesh, which has one of the lowest tax-to-GDP ratios in the world.

The hike in indirect taxes comes as overall revenue collection fell by 2.62 percent in the first five months of the fiscal year, increasing pressure on the government to borrow from domestic and foreign sources.

“If the government aims to increase revenue, it should prioritise curbing tax evasion. That would eliminate the need for such measures and prevent further public suffering,” Hossain said.

From today, consumers will be required to pay up to 15 percent VAT on restaurant bills, biscuits, cakes, pickles, tomato sauce, clothes, tailoring, toilet paper, napkin, towel, sweets, driving licence, non-AC hotel, spectacles, sunglasses, motor workshop and lubricant oil. Previously, the VAT was as low as 5 percent.

The VAT on certain industrial items such as electric transformer,

electric pole and steel products such as cold rolled coil, limestone and dolomite, was also hiked to 15 percent from 5 percent.

People are also expected to pay more for medicine as the tax collector raised VAT at the trading stage to 7.5 percent from 5 percent.

The cost of printing, cinema ticket, repair and servicing and cleaning services will also rise because of a VAT hike to 15 percent from 10 percent.

The cost of mobile phone and internet services will rise as well. The NBR increased SD on mobile phone use to 23 percent from 20 percent. Now, mobile phone users will face over 42.45 percent in SD, VAT and surcharge, up from 39 percent.

Broadband internet users will face a 10 percent SD, which is likely to push up internet bills.

“This will have a detrimental impact. We are uncertain how we will survive with such extreme measures,” said Emdadul Hoque, president of the Internet Service Provider Association of Bangladesh.

The quality of ISP services will deteriorate, he said.

“We urge the government to reconsider such actions as they will not only harm businesses but also undermine services and increase the costs for customers,” he added.

The NBR increased excise duty on domestic flights from Tk 500 to Tk 700 per ticket. It raised the excise duty for travel to SAARC countries from Tk 500 to Tk 1,000.

For trips outside SAARC countries but within Asia, the excise duty has been hiked from Tk 2,000 to Tk 2,500.

The excise duty on tickets to Europe and America has been increased from Tk 3,000 to Tk 4,000.

The NBR hiked the SD on the import of certain dry and fresh fruits such as nuts and betel nuts to 45 percent from the previous 30 percent, and grapes, apples, melons, fresh fruits and juices to 30 percent from 20 percent.

Additionally, unmanufactured

tobacco importers will have to pay 100 percent SD during import, up from the previous 60 percent. Imported paints, soap and detergent will also become costlier.

Consumers will also feel the pinch of increased SDs on juice, fruit drinks, and flavoured and electrolyte drinks as SD on the drinks went up by up to 30 percent.

Smoking will become costlier since the NBR hiked SD on all types of cigarettes and tobacco. Liquor served in bars will be more expensive due to an increase in SD to 30 percent from 20 percent.

At the same time, the revenue collector reduced the annual turnover limit for VAT registration for firms to Tk 50 lakh from the previous Tk 3 crore. It also cut the enlistment threshold for turnover tax limit for businesses from Tk 30 lakh to Tk 50 lakh.

The move means that a good number of businesses will come under the net of VAT, the main source of revenue, accounting for nearly 38 percent of total taxes collected by the NBR.

The indirect tax hike was necessary as the government’s fiscal space has reached a critically low level, said MA Razzaque, chairman of Research and Policy Integration for Development.

“Without any improvement in revenue mobilisation, the government will have to rely on excessive borrowing, which will be difficult this year given the contractionary policy in place.”

More importantly, since the interest rates are now high, the cost of borrowing for the government will be extremely high, he said.

Given the historically low revenue situation, more than one-third of the revenue was being spent on interest payments.

“And this year, the burden could be even higher. Therefore, given the tight fiscal space, the government might not be able to borrow to meet the fiscal deficit.”

country.

M Masrur Reaz, chairman of the Policy Exchange of Bangladesh, a think-tank focusing on private sector economic policy and markets advisory, endorsed the DCCI’s position.

“Doubling the gas price for industrial and captive users will compound several challenges facing businesses in Bangladesh,” he said.

The private sector has seen a sharp and continued increase in the cost of business over the last two years due to a large devaluation of the taka and the hike in interest and wage rates.

Secondly, firms have been hit by sluggish demand due to erosion in purchasing power from inflation and reduced output due to import compression.

“A sudden large increase in both energy and taxes will likely hit the business, particularly small businesses, very hard, creating risks of retrenchment and even closure or default.”

Subsequently, he urged the government to engage in a dialogue with businesses on the impact, approach and timing of such price and tax adjustments.

## Myanmar junta air strike kills 40 in Rakhine

Say ethnic armed group, rescue worker

AFP, Yangon

A Myanmar junta air strike killed at least 40 people in a village in western Rakhine state, a rescue worker and ethnic minority armed group told AFP yesterday.

The Arakan Army (AA) is engaged in a fierce fight with the military for control of Rakhine, where it has seized swathes of territory in the past year, all but cutting off the capital Sittwe.

The Rakhine conflict is one element of the bloody chaos that has engulfed Myanmar since the military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi’s civilian government in a 2021 coup, sparking a widespread armed uprising.

AA spokesperson Khaing Thu Kha told AFP a military jet bombed Kyauk Ni Maw, on Ramree island, around 1:20 pm (0650 GMT) on Wednesday, starting a fire which engulfed more than 500 houses.

“According to initial reports, 40 innocent civilians were killed and 20 were wounded,” he said.

A member of a local rescue group whose team was helping people in the area told AFP that 41 people were killed and 52 wounded.

“At the moment, we don’t even have enough betadine and methylated spirit to treat them as the transportation is hard,” the rescue worker said on condition of anonymity to protect their safety.

Photos of the aftermath of the bombing showed dazed residents walking through charred, smoking ruins, the ground littered with corrugated metal, trees stripped bare of leaves and buildings reduced to a few scraps of walls.

AFP has attempted to contact the junta for comment on the incident, but calls have not been answered.

## Government debt

FROM PAGE 1

The debt-bulletin report showed government expenditure in interest payment increased by 21 percent in the last fiscal year to Tk 1.1 lakh crore, which is one-sixth the national budget.

In fiscal 2023-24, foreign interest payments increased by 60 percent and domestic interest payments by 17 percent.

The then-government could not bear the huge expenditure and they had to pay Tk 36,586 crore arrear bills to some power, energy and fertiliser supplying companies through special treasury bonds, the report added.

“If that much interest payments were not needed, the government could spend the money on welfare sectors like health or education,” Hussain said.

The domestic debt is no less problematic as the revenue growth is weak, interest rates higher and budget deficits have crawled up, said the White Paper.

“The cost of domestic debt is rising,” it said.

Interest payments on such debt relative to revenue increased from 17.6 percent in fiscal 2017-18 to 22.5 percent in fiscal 2022-23, thus shrinking fiscal space.

“It may shrink even more as tighter monetary policy necessitated by high

inflation is increasing interest rates on treasury bills and bonds,” it said.

About the foreign loan, the principal and interest payments are projected to expand in the near term. Grace periods of several big loans have ended and many more will end in the near future.

“Maturity of new loans, including grace periods, has become shorter. An examination of active loans to assess the increase in amortisation payments shows sharp increases are imminent.”

These include repayments for 213 loans, including the Rooppur nuclear power plant, the Padma Bridge rail link, the Karnaphuli Tunnel and the Dhaka Mass Transit projects.

The white paper said the politicians in charge of the government have used the government’s borrowing power recklessly for their own benefits in the past.

They tended not only to take whatever foreign currency loans were on offer but also to incur even larger implicit obligations via unfunded, off-balance sheet liabilities.

“Our most living nightmares of such borrowing are in, but not limited to, energy, transport and banking. Both external and domestic borrowings add to macro vulnerabilities when they do not come with value for money,” it added.

## Bangabandhu’s Homecoming

FROM PAGE 1

In 1971, Pakistan army arrested him from his Dhanmondi residence and sent him to a West Pakistani jail the following day.

In the jail, he had been counting days to the execution of the death sentence he was handed down in a farcical trial.

“I was a prisoner in the condemned cell awaiting hanging. Since the day I went to jail, I didn’t know whether I would be alive or not. I was mentally ready to die, but I knew Bangladesh would be liberated,” Mujib spoke emotionally about his ordeal in Pakistani prison at a news conference in London.

On arrival at Dhaka (Tejgaon) airport in the afternoon of January 10, Bangabandhu was greeted by tens of thousands of jubilant people who had been eagerly waiting to see their beloved leader since the victory on December 16.

## Govt expands OMS programme

FROM PAGE 12

Yesterday, coarse rice was sold at Tk 54-58 per kg. A week ago, it was Tk 50-55.

Meanwhile, medium-grain rice was sold at Tk 60-65 per kg yesterday, while it was Tk 58-65 last week.

TCB data further showed that in the past year, the price of fine rice has increased by 14.07 percent, medium-grain by 19.05 percent, and coarse by 14.29 percent.

In December 2024, inflation eased slightly – to 10.89 percent from 11.38 – the month prior. It remained above the 10 percent threshold throughout October and November, as per Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

Majumder also said the government has sufficient rice in stock to keep this programme running, and at least 175,000 tonnes of rice will be added to the market this month.

He also spoke of the damage that many agriculture lands endured due to the recent floods.

A US Department of Agriculture report, published in the third week of December, said two consecutive floods in August and October damaged around 3 lakh hectares of cropland.

It added that rice production in Bangladesh may fall in the current marketing year of 2024-25, which began last May, due to the reduction in the acreage of Aman season paddy.

Earlier, OMS activities were

conducted through a total of 908 centres across the country, and these will continue.

From July-December 2023, the government has distributed 5.74 lakh metric tonnes of rice and wheat.

In the same period last year, it has increased to 6.10 lakh metric tonnes, according to the Directorate General of Food.

Under this situation, the government is going to import rice from Myanmar, Pakistan, and India, the food adviser said on January 8.

Replying to a query about the price hikes during harvest season, Majumder told reporters at an event at the ministry earlier this week that the flash floods in several districts in the southeastern parts of the country have reduced Aman paddy production, causing the price of rice to be higher than the government expected.

“To address this shortfall, the government has arranged for rice imports and has also encouraged private traders by withdrawing import duties.”

He added, “Discussions are underway to import 50,000 tonnes of rice from Pakistan. The process of importing 100,000 tonnes of rice from Myanmar on a government-to-government basis has also been finalised. Additionally, we will import another 50,000 tonnes from India.”



## 250-bhori gold stolen from mall in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Sylhet

Gold ornaments worth Tk 3.5 crore were stolen between Wednesday evening and yesterday morning from a jewellery shop at a Sylhet shopping mall.

Nurani Jewellery is on the third floor of Al Hamra Shopping City in Sylhet city's Chowhatta area. Its proprietor Md Javed Chowdhury said when he came in the morning to open the store, he saw a new lock in the shutter.

He then broke the lock to get in and found that around 250 bhoori of gold jewellery had been stolen from the store along with the storage box containing CCTV camera.

Md Mohosin, security in-charge of the mall, said, "The entire shopping mall was locked down and there was no trace of anyone entering or exiting the mall. However, we are checking all CCTV footage

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A goods-laden pickup crosses a rickety Bailey bridge over the Turag river beneath a flyover in Tongi, Gazipur. Although the bridge is designed only for lighter vehicles, it is frequently used by the heavy ones. This practice led to the collapse of a nearby Bailey bridge last week, yet drivers continue to use this one amid risk. The photo was taken at Abdullahpur recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## ZIA ORPHANAGE TRUST

## No money was embezzled

## ACC lawyer tells apex court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Md Ashif Hassan yesterday told the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court that no money of the Zia Orphanage Trust has been embezzled.

Relevant funds of the trust have been moved but the money was deposited in bank accounts, he said.

He said this while presenting arguments before a five-member bench headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed during the third day's hearing on BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's appeals against a 2018 High Court verdict that increased her jail sentence from five to ten years.

The apex court fixed January 14 for resuming the hearing. Earlier in the day, Khaleda's lawyers placed arguments before the same court, saying that the prosecution could not produce any document signed by Khaleda regarding formation of the Trust.

The prosecution couldn't even show where the money came from, they said, adding that the money of the trust has been kept in the bank accounts and the amount has increased much more.

The lawyers said the relevant provisions of the constitution and the law were not followed in the trial of this case, as Khaleda and others have been convicted in this politically motivated case.

## Jamaat could've apologised, but they're justifying it

## Says BNP leader Maj Hafiz on its role in 1971

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member Maj (ret'd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmed yesterday said they had thought an opportunity had arisen for Jamaat-e-Islami to apologise to the people for their role in 1971, instead, the party is justifying its role in 1971.

"Today, a certain group is attempting to place the concept of a mass uprising above the struggle for freedom. We cannot compare anything with the Liberation War. It will always remain supreme. We will not allow anyone to tarnish the struggle for freedom," he said.

He made these remarks at a rally titled "The Liberation War of '71 is the greatest pride of the nation", organised by the Bangladesh Nationalist Freedom Fighters' Party at Jatiya Press Club.

"Some days ago, a statement caught our attention. It was said by Jamaat-e-Islami that in this country, only the military [army] and Jamaat-e-Islami are patriots. This statement has hurt us. The Bangladesh Army fought in the Liberation War; it was a force built through the Liberation War.

"It was formed under the leadership of Maj Ziaur Rahman with soldiers and officers from the then East Bengal Regiment and EPR, and they fought the war to gain independence for the country. The army doesn't need a certificate from anyone to prove they are patriots. Their role in 1971 and beyond proves they have always stood by the people and will continue to do so in the future. But I am shocked by Jamaat's statement," he said.

"We have always regarded them [Jamaat] as allies. When the fascist forces tortured and persecuted them, we expressed solidarity. When their party was dissolved, we gave them a chance to participate in elections under the 'Sheaf of Paddy' symbol. Khaleda Zia gave them a place in her cabinet." He added that many of his party leaders did not like this decision, but they accepted it for the sake of party discipline.

"Was this statement from them appropriate in return? We do not expect such statements from them. The strong unity that has been formed among political parties today could be fractured by this. They need to be more careful about this in the future," he said.

## When students become guinea pigs

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Let us begin with a generic scenario to explain the quandary of a 10th grader in Bangladesh in 2025. Due to take the SSC examinations in a year, this student will have to choose between science, humanities and commerce streams.

The same student in 2024 had a generalised education without having to choose from any stream and instead

preparation. Students are caught in the middle, forced to adapt to frequent, poorly implemented changes.

The National Curriculum 2022 aimed to modernise education with a unified system for grades 1 through 10, moving away from rigid streams and traditional exams. The government claimed this shift would help transition students from rote learning to a more practical, real-world education. It



of year-end finals, was graded on the basis of continuous assessments under the 2022 curriculum. A year earlier, in 8th grade, the same student was made to follow the long-standing 2012 curriculum, which used traditional exams and mandated stream selection.

This rapid succession of reforms reveals a core problem: education has become an elaborate experiment, lacking long-term vision or adequate

removed traditional year-end exams, replacing them with continuous assessments and a greater emphasis on practical activities.

While the curriculum initially seemed promising, its implementation was flawed. Even months after the start of the academic year in 2024, the assessment system remained unclear. The situation was clear — teachers were unprepared, parents were

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## People suffer hours of gridlock amid protests

## Dismissed BDR personnel block Shahbagh while madrasa students protest makeshift courtroom on its premises

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

City dwellers endured hours of traffic gridlock yesterday as dismissed BDR (now BGB) personnel and their families blocked the Shahbagh intersection, while students of Government Madrasah-E-Alia staged a protest in Bakshibazar.

The dismissed BDR members began their protest in the morning at the Central Shaheed Minar, demanding justice for the 2009 Pilkhana massacre victims, reinstatement of dismissed personnel [who are innocent], and the release of those they claim were wrongly imprisoned.

Around 1:30pm, they marched to Shahbagh, blocking the intersection for two and a half hours before returning to the Shaheed Minar.

Meanwhile, Alia Madrasa students in Bakshibazar protested the presence of a makeshift courtroom on their premises, calling for its relocation, citing disruption to their academic activities.

**SHAHBAGH PROTEST** Hundreds of dismissed members of the paramilitary force and their families gathered at the Shaheed Minar yesterday morning, where protests had been ongoing since Wednesday.

Anwar Hossain, a dismissed

BDR personnel, said, "We want justice for the innocent, both the victims of the massacre and those dismissed unfairly. We are demanding the unconditional release of those who were not involved in the killings, rather than arrested based on suspicion."

He also demanded job reinstatement and proper

3:30pm and announced their next course of action.

Mahin Sarker, a coordinator of the Students Against Discrimination platform, who joined the protesters, said they would hold mass contact programmes in their respective areas on Friday and Saturday.

On Sunday, they plan to organise human chains in



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

compensation.

Monira Parveen, the wife of a detained BDR man, said, "My husband has already spent 16 years in jail in a case filed under the Explosives Act. The case is still ongoing. How long will he stay in jail? We want his release now."

The protesters returned to the Shaheed Minar around

front of district press clubs.

He said before the next hearing, they would return to Dhaka and resume their protest in the capital.

**FIRE AT ALIA MADRASA COURTROOM**

In Bakshibazar, students of Government Madrasa E-Alia gathered early in the day to

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## US EMBASSY

## Tracey Jacobson to join as new Chargé d'Affaires

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Tracey Ann Jacobson, a career member of the senior foreign service in the US, will join US embassy in Dhaka as Chargé d'affaires (CDA), ad interim, on January 11.



She has served as US ambassador three times — to Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kosovo. Most recently, Jacobson served as a senior adviser in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs.

After US Ambassador Peter Haas left Bangladesh after three years of stay in July last year, Helen LaFavre, deputy head of the US mission, was the CDA of the US embassy Dhaka. She then also left Dhaka late last year.

Currently, the CDA of the US embassy is Megan Bouldin, who assumed duties as the deputy chief of mission in August 2024. Bouldin will be replaced by Jacobson.

US President Joe Biden in May last year had nominated diplomat David Slayton Meale as the new US ambassador to Bangladesh. However, his name has been sent to the Senate and approval is needed before the appointment.

## In grip of bitter cold

## Mild cold wave sweeps parts of country, winds intensify difficulties

STAR REPORT

A mild cold wave is currently sweeping across the districts of Rajshahi, Pabna, Naogaon, Panchagarh, and Chuadanga and is expected to spread further, according to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD).

The country recorded its lowest temperature of 9.1 degrees Celsius in Naogaon's Badalgachhi yesterday.

The mild cold wave has slowed daily life in the northern districts, as the chilly winds from the Himalayas continue to sweep over the area. Despite the harsh weather, clear skies brought some relief yesterday, as bright sunshine made outdoor conditions slightly more bearable.

In Tentulia, the northernmost point of the country, the lowest temperature was recorded at 9.5 degrees Celsius in the morning,



with a wind speed of 8.9 kilometres per hour, said Jitendra Nath, assistant officer at the Tentulia Weather Observatory Centre.

Nomita Bala, 40, who works in a corn field in Yakubpur village in Thakurgaon, described the difficulty of continuing work amidst the icy wind.

"It is tough to continue work

in the crop field as the wind is flowing from the northern side constantly," she said. Rickshaw-van puller Amirul from Farabari shared similar experiences, saying, "My daily income dropped as I am working half of the day due to the adverse weather."

The Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) has urged farmers to follow its directives to protect their crops during the cold wave.

Additionally, the cold wave has

led to a significant rise in cold-related illnesses.

Rakibul Alam, resident medical officer at the 250-bed Thakurgaon Modern Hospital, confirmed an increased influx of patients suffering from respiratory and other cold-induced ailments.

District administrations in Thakurgaon and Panchagarh have begun distributing warm clothing to cold-affected individuals.

Top officials in the districts have also urged affluent residents to assist the cold-stricken population alongside government efforts.

In Dhaka, the minimum temperature in the morning was 14.5 degrees Celsius, with the maximum temperature recorded at 21 degrees Celsius.

Bangladesh Meteorological Department forecasts dry weather with a temporarily partly cloudy sky during the 24-hour period. Moderate to dense fog is also likely to occur in various parts of the country, particularly from midnight to morning.

## Ensuring justice, accountability key to national unity

## 2 int'l jurists tell event

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Reconciliation and national unity cannot be achieved without ensuring justice and accountability. Ensuring justice in a corrupt political system, however, is very challenging but not impossible.

The statement was made by two internationally acclaimed jurists during an event at the Supreme Court Bar Association Auditorium in the capital yesterday.

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust and South Asian Institute of Advanced Legal and Human Rights Studies organised the event, titled "Truth, Justice, Accountability and Reparations for Crimes against Humanity: Comparative Experiences from Africa and Latin America".

BLAST Honorary Executive Director Sara Hossain said Bangladesh is going through a critical time when ensuring justice and reconciliation is very important.

Yasmin Sooka, chair of the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, said every human being has the right to justice and reparation, but the problem starts when politicians of a country capture the institutions through corrupt practices. Even, the judiciary

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## When students become guinea

FROM PAGE 3  
confused, and students were left without clear guidance.

This was proven in a survey by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) among 2.53 lakh teachers in January 2024, which found that 37.6 percent of teachers “roughly” understood the assessment system, while the rest struggled with its practical application.

This lack of preparedness led to widespread dissatisfaction. Protests erupted nationwide, with parents, educators, and students demanding changes.

Then in August 2024, after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government, the interim government discarded that curriculum and reinstated the 2012 curriculum.

While this decision restored some familiarity, it created additional challenges. Current grade

10 students, who had studied under the 2022 framework in grade 9, were left to compress two years of stream-based study into one year, further straining the academic environment.

Despite these adjustments, the cycle of instability persists. As 2025 begins, plans are already underway for another reform in 2026.

According to Bangla daily Prothom Alo, the proposed system will once again eliminate streams for grades 9-10, replacing them with a mix of mandatory and optional subjects. While this approach promises flexibility, it raises questions about the readiness of schools and teachers to handle yet another overhaul.

In a system already destabilised by frequent changes, can such reforms be implemented without further compromising education quality?

More importantly, are these reforms truly in the best interests of students, or are they turning education into a series of poorly executed experiments?

The consequences of this instability are far-reaching. Students face not only disrupted academics but also a loss of confidence in a system that seems directionless. Teachers, too, are left struggling to adapt, often without adequate training or resources. The frequent changes also place parents in a state of confusion, unsure of how to support their children in an ever-shifting landscape.

The students deserve a stable, supportive education system that helps them blossom and realise their potential in life.

Policy makers would do well to address the fundamental flaws in their approach to education reform. Instead of treating students as test subjects for policy experiments, reforms should be evidence-based and implemented with care.



**Belal, a farmer, lets his flock of ducks graze this open field. After the Aman rice harvest, most fields in the area remain vacant and are used by farmers to raise ducklings seasonally. The photo was taken from the Pagla area of Shantiganj upazila in Sunamganj yesterday.**

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## Zajira OC found dead at police station

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of the officer-in-charge (OC) of Zajira Police Station in Shariatpur from his rest room yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Al-Amin, said Nazrul Islam, superintendent of police in the district.

“Initially, police suspect that it is a case of suicide. The exact cause of his death will be confirmed after the post mortem,” he said.

The SP said the body was hanging from the window bar with a scarf in his rest room inside the police station.

“We are investigating the incident,” he added.

## 250-bhori gold

FROM PAGE 3

to find out clue.”

Mohammad Saiful Islam, additional deputy commissioner (media) of Sylhet Metropolitan Police, said, “We are looking into the incident.”

On January 3, burglars made off with gold (159 bhori) and diamond ornaments, estimated to be worth around Tk 2.5 crore, from a jewellery shop at a mall in Dhaka.

**Rent/Lease**

**Commercial Space** available for Rent/Lease at challenger Tower, Plot # 35, Sonargaon, Janopath Road, Uttara, Dhaka.

**Key Features:**

- \* Floor 2nd to 13th Floor
- \* Floor Area - 4300 sft / Floor, Total-51,600sft
- \* Utility: 3 Lift, Generator & Sub-Station

**Seekings For:**

Bank, Insurance, University, Corporate office, Gyms, Residential Hotel.

**Contact: 01841-155351, 01841-155350**

**PRAYER TIMING**

**JANUARY 10**

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:30	12:30	4:00	5:36	7:00
JAMAAT 6:05	1:15	4:15	5:40	7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Ensuring justice, accountability key

FROM PAGE 3

cannot operate without fear in such circumstances.

Sooka, who served on the truth and reconciliation commissions in South Africa and Sierra Leone, said lack of evidence remains a big challenge in ensuring justice. Thus, there is a serious need for training prosecutors to collect and maintain evidence using digital technologies.

She said sometimes corrupt individuals cannot

be tried domestically. In such cases, international courts can be used.

Dr Carlos Castresana Fernández, UN Commissioner for Human Rights in South Sudan, said trials cannot correct past mistakes, but can ensure crimes are punished and that institutions function properly.

Fernandez previously served as commissioner of the International Commission Against

Impunity in Guatemala.

Democracy is not all about elections, but also about abiding law. There are disagreements over the definition of terrorism, which is also used for political abuses. However, the definition of torture is well accepted and the

criminals of torture can be tried in the international courts, he added.

BLAST Vice Chairman Dr Shamsul Bari said the international jurists' experiences can help them understand the ways of justice and reconciliation in Bangladesh.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD  
Road Division, Sirajganj  
Tel: 02588831039, Fax No. 02588830242  
Email: eeshid@rhd.gov.bd/eerhdsirajganj@gmail.com

**Invitation for e-Tendering**

Invitation Reference No.	Memo No. 35.01.8800.471.07.001.25-47	Date: 09/01/2025
Tender ID	Work description	Publication date & time
1041197 e-GP/24/EE/SR D/2024-2025	Pavement repairing and Single Bituminous Surface Treatment (SBST) work at Ch. 6+000 to 8+500 of Saydabad-Enayetpur (Khaja Yunus Ali Medical College Hospital) (Z-5409) Road under Sirajganj Road Division during the year 2024-2025.	09 Jan- 2025 14:10 Hrs
		Opening date & time
		26-Jan- 2025 15:00 Hrs

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline and hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches for 26.01.2025 Up to 14:30 Hrs. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)) (+8809609112233, +8801762625528-31).

**Md. Imran Farhan Sumel**  
Identity No. 602280  
Executive Engineer, RHD  
Road Division, Sirajganj

GD- 100

**Janata Bank PLC.**  
Head Office  
IT Procurement, Security, Compliance and Maintenance Department  
110, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000  
Tel: +02223356514, Fax: 88-02-9564644, Telex: 675840 JBD BJ  
Website: www.jb.com.bd

**Invitation for e-Tender**

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

Tender ID	Invitation Reference No.	Tender Description	Tender Publish Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time
1061129	JBPLC/ITPSCM/Proc-14/e-GP/OTM/UPS-80/2024	Tender for Procurement of Off-Line UPS (650 VA) (Supply, Installation & Commissioning) for Janata Bank PLC following Open Tendering Method	09/01/2025 04:00 PM	27/01/2025 12:00 PM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders 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 (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP portal and e-GP Help Desk (Email: [helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

(Mohammad Shakhawat Hossain)  
Deputy General Manager

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## People suffer hours

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demand the relocation of the makeshift courtroom used for trials related to the BDR carnage. Their protest followed a fire at the courtroom on the madrasa grounds at around 4:22am.

Fire service officials extinguished the blaze, but the courtroom was completely destroyed. Court proceedings, including a scheduled hearing in an explosives case related to the carnage, were cancelled.

“The courtroom has been burnt. At this stage, conducting trials here is not possible without major

renovations,” said special public prosecutor Md Borhan Uddin.

Chawkbazar Police are investigating the cause of the fire. Members of the army and police were deployed to manage the protests. Vehicular movement in the affected areas gradually resumed after the demonstrators dispersed.

**INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH**  
Purchase & Procurement Department  
Plot 16, Block B, Aftabuddin Ahmed Road, Bashundhara Residential Area, Dhaka 1245  
Hotline: 09612 939393, Extension: 1652 and 1653

**RE-TENDER FOR NETWORKING EQUIPMENT (ACTIVE & PASSIVE)**

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) invites sealed quotations from the reputed manufacturers/bona-fide dealers/suppliers for supplying, installation, testing & commissioning of active networking equipment along with passive networking and cabling works. The detailed specifications, quantity of the products and other terms & conditions are mentioned in the tender schedule. Interested bidders are requested to purchase tender schedule from the Purchase & Procurement Department (Admin Building, Level 1, Room no. 2031) on cash payment of **Tk.2,000/-** (non-refundable) to the Finance & Accounts Department between the office hrs. 9:30 am to 4:00 pm. (Sunday through Thursday) till **January 16, 2025**.

The sealed bids (technical and financial) will be submitted by the bidders in two separate envelopes to the Purchase & Procurement Department. **The bids will be received up to February 5, 2025.** The financial bid must accompany an earnest money (2.5% of the quoted amount) in the form of Pay Order/Bank Draft from any scheduled bank in favor of Independent University, Bangladesh. The university authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids without assigning any reason.

**WEST ZONE POWER DISTRIBUTION CO. LTD.**  
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Dev. Board)  
Office of the Chief Engineer  
Bidyt Bhaban, 35 Boyra Main Road, Khulna  
Ph: 02477-730484, Fax: 02477-730484

Memo No: 27.22.4785.010.74.001.25/60 Date: 08.01.2025

**e-Tender Notice (NCT)**

e-Tender for the office of the Superintending Engineer (P&S) invites in the National e-GP system Portal([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of following goods:

Sl	Tender ID	Name of Tender	Last Selling and Closing Date & Time
1	1054044	Supply and Delivery of 1000 Nos. 09 m (200daN) and 1500 Nos. 12m (350daN) SPC pole at different Store in WZPDCL area	10-Feb-2025 12:00;BST 10-Feb-2025 13:00BST

This is an Online Tender, Where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)). The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

(Engr. MD. Mamunur Rahman)  
Superintending Engineer (P&S),  
WZPDCL, Khulna.

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**Dhaka South City Corporation**  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
Zone- 03 (Azimpur), Dhaka.  
E-mail: [dsczone3@gmail.com](mailto:dsczone3@gmail.com)  
Phone: 02-41061381

Ref No: 46.207.014.09.23.2025.100 Date: 08/01/2025

**e-Tender Notice**

e-Tenders are invited through e-GP portal by Executive Engineer, Zone-3 (Azimpur), Dhaka South City Corporation for the procurement of following packages which will be available at e-GP website (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) from 08/01/2025 17:00.

S.L No	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of Work	Last Selling date and Time	Tender Closing date & Time
1.	Tender ID: 1053247 Package No: W10/Z3/2024-25/Cut-Kha	Repairing works of roads excavated by different Organizations and Institutions at different ward under zone-03 of DSCC (Group-Kha).	23-Jan-2025 14:00	23-Jan-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>).

(Mithun Chandra Shil)  
Executive Engineer  
Zone- 03  
Dhaka South City Corporation

ডিসেসিসি/পিআরডি/২১৪৯/২০২৪-২০২৫

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Local Government Engineering Department  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
District: Sunamganj  
[www.lged.gov.bd](http://www.lged.gov.bd)

**e-Tender Notice Number: 32/2024-2025**

Memo No. 46.02.9000.000.99.049.24.88 Date: 09/01/2025

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the following Packages

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of work	Date and time of last selling	Date and time of closing
<b>Santiganj, Jagannathpur &amp; Chatak Upazila Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project Under Sunamganj District [SJC]</b>				
1054315	SJC/Santi/W-002	690932008-Construction of 3-vent RCC Box Culvert size 3x4.50x4.50m on RHD (Soyhara)-Banglabazar GC via Amria GPS road at 1680.00m. under Shantiganj upazila, Dist: Sunamganj.	02-Feb-2025 12:00	02-Feb-2025 14:00

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 (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for more details please contact support desk contact numbers. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to (Time specified in online Notice). Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and e-GP help desk or e-mail: [xen.sunamganj@lged.gov.bd](mailto:xen.sunamganj@lged.gov.bd) or call to +880 871-61426/ 0871-61639. Interested persons can communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

**Md. Anower Hossain**  
Executive Engineer  
Tele: 02996600990  
Mob. 01708-123240  
E-mail: [xen.sunamganj@lged.gov.bd](mailto:xen.sunamganj@lged.gov.bd)

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## BNP issues strict directives to prevent infiltration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday issued strict directives to prevent infiltrations from other political parties and non-political individuals into the party during the formation of various committees.

This directive was conveyed in a press release signed by BNP's Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi.

Members of any other political parties or non-political individuals should not be included in the committees of BNP and its associate bodies -- from ward to the national levels, Rizvi said in the press release.

He also expressed concerns that members of various political organisations affiliated with the ousted Awami League are attempting to infiltrate the BNP and its affiliate and associate organisations.

"For instance, a group called 'Zia Cyber Force' has recently announced a committee at Pabna University of Science and Technology under the banner of BNP's student wing, Chhatra Dal, including several leaders of Chhatra League. This is entirely fraudulent. Similarly, collaborators of the autocratic regime are engaging in such deceptive activities," the release read.

All leaders and activists of the BNP and its affiliate and associate organisations were urged to strictly adhere to this directive.



Fishermen along the Cox's Bazar seashore use large nets to catch fish, but these nets often trap other marine creatures such as jellyfish, pufferfish, and turtles. While turtles are usually able to survive, many other aquatic animals are left stranded instead of being returned to the sea, posing a threat to marine biodiversity. The photo was taken at Shamnapur Ghat recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## SI hacked to death in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A sub-inspector was hacked to death by miscreants in Netrakona's Durgapur upazila yesterday evening.

Md Shafiqul Islam, 43, of Bagichapara area of Durgapur municipality, was an SI at the radio department of Jamalpur Police Lines, said police.

Quoting locals, Officer-in-Charge of Durgapur Police Station Bachchu Mia said a group of miscreants attacked Shafiqul with sharp weapons at Ukilpara while he was going to a local market around 6:30pm.

Hearing his screams, locals rushed to the spot and took him to Durgapur Upazila Health Complex.

As his condition deteriorated, he was referred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. The doctors declared him dead at the hospital.

Police recovered the body and sent it to morgue for autopsy.

Quoting family members, the OC also said Shafiqul, a father of three children, reached home from Jamalpur on a vacation yesterday.

The family members said Shafiqul had no dispute with anyone and they could not say why the incident took place, said the OC.

"We have got a video of the incident and drives are on to arrest the killers," said the OC.

No case was filed and no one was arrested as of filing this report around 11:50pm.



### Sylhet City Corporation

Nagar Bhaban, Sylhet

[www.scc.gov.bd](http://www.scc.gov.bd)

#### Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Services of Preparation of Master Plan (Structural Plan, Urban Area Plan, Detail Area Plan) for Extended Area of Sylhet City Corporation

The details of EOI are shown in the table below-

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of The Local Government, Rural Development & Co-operatives/ Local Government Division.
2.	Agency	Sylhet City Corporation
3.	Name of the procurement entity	Superintending Engineer, Sylhet City Corporation
4.	Procurement entity district	Sylhet
5.	Expression of Interest for Selection of	Consulting firm for Preparation of Master Plan (Structural Plan, Urban Area Plan, Detail Area Plan) for Extended Area of Sylhet City Corporation.
6.	EOI Ref No. and date	46.07.0000.018.14.111.23.50, Date: 09/01/2025.
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>		
7.	Procurement method	Fixed Budget Selection (FBS)
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>		
8.	Source of funds	GOB
9.	Development partners	N/A
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>		
10.	Project/programme code	224404600
11.	Project/programme name	Preparation of Master Plan (Structural Plan, Urban Area Plan, Detail Area Plan) for Extended Area of Sylhet City Corporation.
12.	EOI submission date, time & place	23/01/2025, Time- 1.00pm at Chief Engineer Office Room, Sylhet City Corporation.
13.	EOI opening date & time	23/01/2025, Time- 2.00pm
14.	EOI receiving office	Office of the Chief Engineer, Room No-401, Level- 03, Nagar Bhaban, Sylhet City Corporation.
<b>INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT</b>		
15.	Brief description of the assignment	<p>Sylhet City Corporation is undertaking a project entitled 'Preparation of master plan (Structural Plan, Urban Area Plan, and Detail Area Plan) for its extended area''</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Preparation of comprehensive master plan- short-term (2025-30), mid-term (2030-2035) &amp; long-term (2035-2050) periods.</li><li>Mouza map and all project-relevant secondary data collection and acquisition</li><li>Conduct existing land use survey, topographic survey, physical feature survey, transport survey, and other relevant survey work.</li><li>Generate GIS database &amp; preparation of ward &amp; land use zone maps.</li><li>Strategies for the best use of land and its control.</li><li>Development of standard design for different types of roads, footpaths, and intersections</li><li>Development of the Primary and secondary drainage network with standard design and modeling (if required)</li><li>Consider environmental, Social, and waste management issues</li><li>Preparation of implementation plan of development works considering short-term, mid-term, and long-term priorities.</li><li>Preparation of Structural Plan, Urban Area Plan, and Detail Area Plan for the study area till 2050.</li><li>Financial assessment of the master plan includes cost estimates for implementation in different phases according to priority works, funding sources, and economic and financial evaluations.</li><li>Inception &amp; interim report, draft Master Plan &amp; final Master plan, GIS map &amp; workshop &amp; Consultation with key personnel of SCC.</li></ul>
16.	Capacity, resources, experience required	<p><b>Related Professionals:</b> Team Leader Urban Planner, Water &amp; Drainage Expert /Drainage Modeler, Transport Planner, Solid Waste Management Expert, GIS Specialist Environmental Specialist, Structural Analyst, Architect, Survey Specialist, Sociologist &amp; Financial Expert, institutional Specialist, Junior Urban Planner, Junior Engineer.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> Office Space, Financial and Managerial Strength, Hardware and Software (Computer, Survey Equipment -UAV drone, RTK, Hand GPS, Total Station, Leveling machine, Large Plotter, SPSS, Arc GIS, HEC-RAS compatible, and Photogrammetric workstation, latest version Arc GIS licensed software.</p> <p><b>Experience of Firm:</b> The firm should have 10 years of experience in conducting topographical, physical features, and other relevant surveys in master plan preparation for urban and regional areas.</p>
17.	Other details	The firm will be selected following the Public Procurement Act 2006 and Public Procurement Rules 2008. Interested Consultancy firms are hereby invited to submit EoI containing print brochures (showing organizational identity and background) and legal documents for bank solvency with statements for the last 01 year (according to PPA 2006 and PPR 2008), Firms Turnover for three (03) year, up-to-date Trade License, Income Tax Certificate & VAT Clearance Certificate, valid TIN certificate, memorandum of understanding of article (if applicable), NID card of authorized person, staffing and inventory of resources and logistics confirming the firm capabilities to provide the required services. Interested consultancy firms will submit 01(one) original and 01(one) true copy of the EoI in sealed envelopes marked with the "title" with an electronic copy.
18.	Name of official inviting EOI	Engr. Md. Ali Akbar
19.	Designation of official inviting EOI	Superintending Engineer, Sylhet City Corporation
20.	Address of official inviting EOI	Nagar Bhaban, Sylhet City Corporation.
21.	Contact detail of official inviting Expression of Interest (EOI)	+8802 996 640 486
22.	The Expression of Interest (EOI) in two sets (one original & one duplicate) shall be submitted in sealed envelope.	
23.	Interested consulting firms may obtain further information in all working days from the address mentioned above.	
24.	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EOIs without assigning any reasons.	



Engr. Md. Ali Akbar  
Superintending Engineer  
Sylhet City Corporation

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## LAST 2 DAYS !

Visit the Largest Apparel Technology, Garment Accessories, Packaging & Allied Products tradeshow in Bangladesh

- 8 Halls ●
- 20 Countries ●
- 300+ Exhibitors ●
- 900+ Booths ●
- 20000+ Sq.mts ●



22nd International Tradeshow on Apparel Machinery & Allied Products.

# GTB

**GARMENT TECHNOLOGY BANGLADESH 2025**

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**08 09 10 11 JAN 2025**

International Convention City, Bashundhara, Dhaka.

Jointly Organised by :  

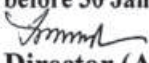
Expo Timings 11.00am to 7.00pm (Entry Free)



## Institute of Modern Languages University of Dhaka Teacher Recruitment Notice

Applications in prescribed form, obtainable on Working days from the office of the Registrar, University of Dhaka are invited from Bangladeshi nationals for the following posts:

- Lecturer in French Language and Culture (FLC)** (Permanent Lecturer against vacant post of Lecturer)-01 (One)  
**National Pay Scale 2015:** Tk. 22,000-53,060/- (with other allowances according to University rules).  
**Minimum Qualifications:** Candidates must have a first class/a minimum CGPA 3.50 out of 4.00 in Honours and Master degrees in French Language and Culture (FLC) with a first division/a minimum GPA of 4.25 out of 5.00 in both SSC and HSC Examinations. Candidates having a Ph.D. in the relevant field and research publication(s) in a quality journal may get preference. Requirements for either the SSC or HSC examinations may be relaxed for candidates who have obtained the first position/the highest CGPA in both Bachelor and Master degrees.
- Lecturer in Japanese Language and Culture (JLC)** (Temporary Lecturer against vacant post of Professor)-1 (one)  
**National Pay Scale 2015:** Tk. 22,000-53,060/- (with other allowances according to University rules).  
**Minimum Qualifications:** Candidates must have a first class/a minimum CGPA 3.50 out of 4.00 in Honours and Master degrees in Japanese Language and Culture (JLC) from any recognized University with a first division/a minimum GPA of 4.25 out of 5.00 in both SSC and HSC Examinations. Candidates having a Ph.D. in the relevant field and research publication(s) in a quality journal may get preference. Requirements for either the SSC or HSC examinations may be relaxed for candidates who have obtained the first position/the highest CGPA in both Bachelor and Master degrees.
- Lecturers in English Language and Chinese Language and Culture (CLC)** (Temporary Lecturers against the study leave vacancy of Assistant Professors) -02 (two)  
**National Pay Scale 2015:** Tk. 22,000-53,060/- (with other allowances according to University rules).  
**Minimum Qualifications:** Candidates must have a first class/a minimum CGPA 3.50 out of 4.00 in Honours in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)/ Chinese Language and Culture (CLC) and in Master degrees in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)/Chinese Language and Culture (CLC) from any recognized University with a first division/a minimum GPA of 4.25 out of 5.00 in both SSC and HSC Examinations. Candidates having a Ph.D. in the relevant field and research publication(s) in a quality journal may get preference. Requirements for either the SSC or HSC examinations may be relaxed for candidates who have obtained the first position/the highest CGPA in both Bachelor and Master degrees.  
Eight copies of application together with attested copies of certificates, testimonials and mark sheets along with a Pay Order/Bank Draft of the value of Tk. 750/- (seven hundred fifty) (non-refundable) payable to the Registrar, University of Dhaka should be submitted to the Director, Institute of Modern Languages, University of Dhaka on or before 30 January, 2025. Candidates already in service must apply through proper channel.



**Director (Acting)**

GD- 93





## Arnob brings out a special surprise

Shayan Chowdhury Arnob — best known as a musician penning lyrics, composing music, and performing songs — is embarking on a new creative journey by stepping into the realm of literature. For the first time, he will appear as an author at this year's Ekushey Boi Mela

The book he authored is titled after one of his popular songs, *Hok Kolorob*, and has been published by Legend Publication. The cover has been illustrated by Arnob's father, artist Swapan Chowdhury.

The book includes songs composed by Arnob with the stories behind their creation. For international audiences, each song is accompanied with its English translation alongside the original Bangla lyrics.

# SIAM

## credits 'Jongli' as a transformative journey

Siam Ahmed, known for his breakout roles in *'Damal'* and *'Poramon 2'*, is all set to return to the silver screen with his highly anticipated film, *'Jongli'*. Directed by M Raahim, the film is scheduled for release this Eid-ul-Fitr.



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Siam, who has won two Bangladesh National Film Awards for Best Actor, opened up about his journey and dedication to *Jongli* in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star yesterday, on the occasion of the film's official motion poster release.

"I'm thrilled to mark my silver screen return with *Jongli* as it has proved to be a transformative journey in my career. The film's strong story is likely to win over the audience," he said, expressing full confidence in its success.

The actor then mentioned that he had to maintain the same shaggy look for seven

months by avoiding fake hair or beards to ensure realism in his role. "I didn't see it as a sacrifice. It was my dedication to the craft," Siam noted.

Hinting at major surprises, Siam assured, "Everyone will see a new side of me in *Jongli*. Moreover, the film has unexpected twists that viewers will enjoy."

As excitement builds for his return to the big screen, Siam praised the cast and director for their hard work, stating, "Our ensemble cast delivered outstanding performances. Now, we simply await Eid."

With *Jongli*, Siam is all set to once again captivate audiences and bring something fresh to the table, the actor affirmed.

### WHAT'S THE HAPS?

## 'Dhyan'

Shohojia's inaugural solo concert, *Dhyan*, is set to offer an intimate journey through the band's evolving soundscape today. Audiences will be able to immerse themselves in a dynamic mix of the band's past hits and the debut of its new track, *Abhinoy*. With Eventholic on board as the organiser, it will be a night of powerful music and emotion. Tickets are available at Acoustica and Get Set Rock.

**DATE:**  
Friday, January 10, 2025

**TIME:**  
6pm onwards

**VENUE:**  
Bangladesh Shishu Academy

# FDC FILM DIRECTORS' ELECTION

## today amidst no festivities



The Bangladesh Film Directors' Association election for the 2025-26 term is set to take place today at FDC, but the usual pre-election festivities has been absent.

Initially scheduled for December 28, it was postponed a day before voting and later rescheduled for January 10 after discussions with the election commission and both panels.

The election contest is between two panels: the Mushfiqur Rahman Gulzar-Shafi Uddin Shafi panel and the Shahin Shumon-Kabir Tutul panel. Abdul Latif Bachchu is set to serve as the chief election commissioner, with AJ Rana and BH Nishan as assistants.

Assistant Commissioner AJ Rana confirmed to The Daily Star that the decision was made in consultation with all stakeholders.

## 'Saba' continues festival run, headed to Sweden



The Mehazabien Chowdhury starrer much-anticipated film *Saba* is set to have its European premiere at the 48th Göteborg International Film Festival in Sweden.

Following its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), the Maksud Hossain directorial debut made its Asian debut at Busan International Film Festival and was also selected for Saudi Arabia's Red Sea International Film Festival.

The Göteborg International Film Festival, which is set to commence on January 24, will feature *Saba* in its Voices section, a category dedicated to honouring the works of emerging filmmakers.

The film depicts the aftermath of a tragic accident two decades ago, leaving a 12-year-old girl with psychological trauma and her mother wheelchair-bound.

# NEWS

## Rohingya crisis, trade gap

FROM PAGE 12

in Beijing on January 21.

Additionally, official sources have indicated that Touhid will also engage with senior officials of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and is likely to visit Shanghai as part of the trip.

During the bilateral meetings, key issues such as agriculture, education, trade, and the progress of the Rohingya issue will be discussed prominently.

Highlighting the economic aspect of the visit, Alam noted that trade between Bangladesh and China currently stands at USD 25 billion, though the balance heavily favours China.

"The adviser's trip aims to address trade imbalances and explore avenues for increased Chinese investment in

Bangladesh," he said, adding that the full agenda for the visit is still being finalised.

Alam said the relationship between Bangladesh and China has evolved into a "Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership," reflecting its multifaceted nature.

"This upcoming visit, as the first bilateral trip by the adviser following the formation of Bangladesh's interim government in August, presents a valuable opportunity to further strengthen and deepen the bilateral ties between the two nations," said the spokesperson.

Bangladesh and China are set to celebrate the golden jubilee of their diplomatic relations in 2025, and both

countries have undertaken various programs to mark the milestone.

"The visit will also provide an opportunity to outline the future roadmap for Bangladesh-China bilateral relations, focusing on enhancing economic cooperation, expanding trade and investment, and reviewing progress in ongoing collaborations," he added.

The foreign adviser is also expected to deliver speeches at the "China Institute of International Studies" and the "Shanghai Institute of International Studies" during the visit.

Besides, he will meet business representatives in Shanghai to encourage increased Chinese investments in Bangladesh, Alam said.

## Unhealthy competition

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in the "false" Zia Orphanage Trust case against her, was unveiled at the event.

Fakhrul further said, "Some individuals seem to have become very desperate to divide the nation and the people. They're making various statements to incite others. I request all political leaders and activists, 'please don't create divisions.'"

He stressed the need for collective efforts to restore democracy and save the country.

"We deeply respect the students and are grateful to them and the young persons who sacrificed their lives during the movement. But let us not engage in the politics of division."

He added that reforms are certainly needed, but they must be backed by an elected parliament and government. "Otherwise, we cannot legitimise the reforms."

Recalling the contributions of BNP founder Ziaur Rahman, the party's secretary general said Zia was the first person to introduce state reforms by

dismantling the one-party rule and establishing a multi-party democratic system.

"Those who are considered highly intelligent, who engage in intellectual practices, and make various comments, they never bring these things to light, because they have not been able to connect with the grassroots people."

Fakhrul also mentioned that the party's acting chairman Tarique Rahman would return to the country soon.

"Our acting chairman Tarique Rahman will soon be completely free from all charges ... He'll also be with us again, Insha'Allah.

"The sacrifices made by us, our leaders, activists, students, youth, and women, have not gone in vain, will never go in vain."

He also expressed gratitude to the Emir of Qatar and the British government for facilitating the party chief's medical trip to London. "Khaleda Zia went abroad with state honours and faced no obstacles anywhere.

## ACC sues Nixon

FROM PAGE 12

transactions of Tk 1,402.51 crore through 55 bank accounts under his name and various affiliated organisations.

The transactions were made to launder illegal funds and conceal their sources, the statement said.

In the second case, Nixon's wife Tarin Hossain was named as the primary accused, while Nixon

Chowdhury was an accomplice.

With her husband's direct assistance, Tarin acquired Tk 8.05 crore beyond her known sources of income, the statement said.

She also conducted suspicious transactions worth Tk 1,760.34 crore via 17 bank accounts linked to her and affiliated entities.

The accounts were allegedly used to transfer, shift, and conceal

illegal funds, according to the statement of the case filed by ACC Assistant Director Mohammad Shihab Salam.

Earlier, a three-member team, led by ACC Deputy Director Md Salahuddin, investigated the allegations against Nixon. On October 23, following an ACC request, a court imposed a travel ban on Nixon and his wife.

## BNP files two ICT complaints

FROM PAGE 1

According to Salauddin, among the 153 individuals who were subjected to enforced disappearance, the notables include former BNP leaders Ilias Ali and Chowdhury Alam.

Many of the victims of enforced disappearance were killed, Salauddin said. The BNP attached a 20-page list to the complaint over enforced disappearance.

The other complaint over the killings had a 245-page list of victims, their addresses, and short details of the incidents.

"On the orders of the head of Awami League government, Awami League-affiliated criminals and certain overzealous members of law enforcement agencies carried out heinous murders under the guise of crossfire," reads the complaint over the killings.

It alleges that the killings of the BNP leaders and activists were part of an attempt to eliminate the party by forcing its members and supporters to flee the country and instilling widespread fear to deter public support and participation in BNP activities.

Faisal Mahmud, son of local BNP leader Mahbub Alam, told The Daily Star his father's killing took away all the joy the family had. He alleged

the Rapid Action Battalion killed his father in a so-called crossfire incident.

"Our life was once filled with joy, living in Laxmipur with three brothers and our parents. But everything changed in 2013 when my father was killed," he said.

He said his mother, who was then in her 30s, had to move to Chattogram, seeking work in a garment factory to earn a living. Due to financial hardship, Mahbub's three sons aged seven to 15 at the time dropped out of school, Faisal added.

He said they had thought they would never get justice, but the ouster of the Hasina government and the lodging of the complaint with the ICT ignited their hope for justice.

Mahbub's killing is among 88 incidents listed by the BNP in the complaint. Cox's Bazar topped the list with 200 killings, followed by 104 in Chattogram, 88 in Jashore and 73 in Cumilla.

Dhaka city saw 52 such killings, Kushtia 62, Jhenidah 59, Mymensingh, Noakhali and Khulna 54 each, Feni 57, Satkhira 51, Pabna 44, Rajshahi city 43, and Sirajganj 42.

The incidents of killing mentioned by the BNP on the list also included 15 in Narayanganj, 21 in Gazipur, eight in Dhaka district, 11 in Narsingdi, 15 in Tangail, 26 in Munshiganj, 27

in Faridpur, five in Netrakona, 11 in Jamalpur, eight in Shariatpur, seven in Kishoreganj, 11 in Rajbari, 16 in Chuadanga, 37 in Meherpur, 11 in Magura, eight in Narail, 28 in Bagerhat, 21 in Natore, 33 in Rajshahi, 26 in Joypurhat, 29 in Chapainawabganj, 17 in Bogura, 19 in Chattogram city, five in Khagrachhari, seven in Rangamati, 38 in Chandpur, 26 in Rangpur, 18 in Dinajpur, 28 in Gaibandha, nine in Nilphamari, 10 in Lalmonirhat, 17 in Thakurgaon, six in Kurigram, 11 in Sylhet, four in Sunamganj, six in Habiganj, five in Moulvibazar, nine in Patuakhali, 12 in Bhola, eight in Barguna, 11 in Barishal, 28 in Brahmanbaria, two in Jhalakathi, six in Madaripur and one in Sherpur.

According to a report by rights body Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), 1,952 people died by crossfire involving law enforcement agencies from 2009 to June 2024.

Among these deaths, 705 were attributed to the Rab, 913 to the police, 40 to joint operations by the Rab and police, and 294 to other law enforcement agencies.

The ASK report also shed light on enforced disappearances, with a total of 608 individuals having gone missing between 2010 and 2023, and 365 of them remained missing as of 2023.

## Intel reports

FROM PAGE 12

even though it was stated that negative remarks had been received about them from intelligence agencies.

In a recent explanation provided by the ministry, it was stated that the Public Service Commission (PSC) had initially recommended 2,163 candidates for various cadres under the 43rd BCS. Following the publication of the notification on October 15, questions were raised regarding the transparency and credibility of this recruitment process.

To ensure that only candidates with a "clean image" are selected and to restore trust and confidence in the government recruitment process, a decision was made to conduct further extensive background verification of the recommended candidates. This verification was carried out by the National Security Intelligence (NSI) and the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI).

## No room

FROM PAGE 12

is no reason to fear and favouring anyone. In the past, you faced trouble if you did not favour any particular party. But the situation has changed. Now, your job will be at risk if you favour anyone. You will have to remain firm and strict in discharging duties neutrally."

## Committees

FROM PAGE 1

member body has been formed to advise on the transfer of divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners, joint secretaries and above.

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed will chair the committee and Information Adviser Nahid Islam will be the member secretary.

The other members are Power and Energy Adviser Fawzul Kabir Khan, Environment Affairs Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan, cabinet secretary and

public administration secretary.

The committee on home ministry will be headed by Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury and Shipping Adviser M Sakawat Hossain will be the member secretary. Other members include Law Adviser Asif Nazrul and Local Government Adviser Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan.

Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain has been made the chairman of the committee on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its member secretary will be Adviser Mahfuj Alam.



# Ring of fire tightens around LA

5 killed; over 100,000 forced to evacuate; Hollywood Hills burn

REUTERS, Los Angeles

A terrifying wave of wildfires squeezing Los Angeles on multiple fronts pushed closer to the symbolic heart of the US film industry yesterday after a new blaze ignited in the hills overlooking Hollywood Boulevard and its Walk of Fame.

The crescent of flames squeezing Los Angeles – including a huge fire between Santa Monica and Malibu on the city’s western flank and a conflagration in the east near Pasadena – was so expansive that it was visible from space as a huge pincer.

More than 100,000 people have been ordered to evacuate as dry, hurricane-force winds spread flames across parched ground that has seen no rain for months. At least five people have died since the fires erupted on Tuesday.

The homes of movie stars and celebrities were among those consumed by flames, which tore through some of the world’s most lavish real estate, and in the case of the Hollywood Hills fire, above showbiz landmarks instantly recognizable around the world.

“This firestorm is the big one,” Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass told a press conference after rushing back to the city, cutting short an official trip to Ghana.

At least six separate wildfires were burning in Los Angeles County yesterday morning. Three of them were listed as “0% controlled,” including the Palisades fire in the west, the Eaton Fire in the east and the smaller Sunset Fire in the Hollywood Hills.

On the west side of Los Angeles, the Palisades fire consumed 17,234 acres (6974 hectares) and hundreds of structures in the hills, racing down Topanga Canyon until reaching the Pacific Ocean on Tuesday.

Red Flag warnings from the National Weather Service for Los Angeles and Ventura counties were extended through 6:00 pm today due to extremely low humidity and strong winds.

Los Angeles Fire Department spokesperson Captain Adam VanGerpen yesterday told “CBS Mornings” that erratic winds were a concern, with gusts blowing embers.

Many film stars, celebrities lose homes  
Palisades fire consumes over 17,234 acres



The remains of former US President Jimmy Carter arrive at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, DC, for a state funeral service yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## PRO-TURKEY, KURDS FORCES CLASHES 37 killed in north Syria

AFP, Damascus

Battles between Turkish-backed groups, supported by air strikes, and Kurdish-led forces killed 37 people yesterday in Syria’s northern Manbij region, a war monitor said.

The latest reported fighting comes despite the United States saying Wednesday that it was working to address Turkey’s concerns in Syria to dissuade the Nato ally from escalating an offensive against Kurdish fighters.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor reported “fierce battles in the Manbij countryside... in the past hours between the (Kurdish-led) Syrian Democratic Forces and the (Turkish-backed) National Army factions... with Turkish air cover”.

“The attacks killed 37 people in a preliminary toll,” mostly Turkish-backed combatants, but also six SDF fighters and five civilians, said the

British-based Observatory with a network of sources inside Syria.

The monitor said at least 322 people have been killed in fighting in the Manbij countryside since last month.

On Wednesday, Mazloum Abdi, who heads the US-backed SDF, said his group supported “the unity and integrity of Syrian territory”. In a written statement to AFP, he called on Syria’s new authorities “to intervene in order for there to be a ceasefire throughout Syria”.

Abdi’s comments followed what he called a “positive” meeting between Kurdish leaders and the Damascus authorities late last month.

Turkish-backed factions in northern Syria resumed their fight with the SDF at the same time as Islamist-led rebels were launching an offensive on November 27 that overthrew Syrian president Bashar al-Assad just 11 days later.

## Biggest flu outbreak in 25 yrs hits Japan

AFP, Tokyo

Japan in the last week of December experienced the biggest influenza outbreak since comparable data became available 25 years ago, health authorities said yesterday.

The latest health ministry analysis of data gathered from 5,000 medical clinics showed that from December 23-29, 317,812 people were diagnosed with flu.

Cases of flu often rise in the winter in Japan and elsewhere, but some countries have seen large jumps in cases recently including in France and Britain.

Australia logged over 350,000 confirmed flu cases last year.

## Taliban calls India a ‘significant regional partner’

REUTERS, Kabul

The Taliban’s foreign office said they saw India as a “significant regional and economic partner” after meeting with its most senior foreign ministry official, the highest level talks with Delhi since their takeover of Afghanistan in 2021.

India’s Foreign Secretary (FS) Vikram Misri met acting Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai on Wednesday.

Afghanistan’s foreign ministry said in a statement that they had discussed expanding relations with Afghanistan and to boost trade through Chabahar Port in Iran, which India has been developing for goods to bypass the ports of Karachi and Gwadar in its rival Pakistan.

“In line with Afghanistan’s balanced and economy-focused foreign policy, the Islamic Emirate aims to strengthen political and economic ties with India as a significant regional and economic partner,” the statement from Afghanistan’s foreign ministry said late on Wednesday. India’s foreign ministry said after the Dubai meeting that India was considering engaging in development projects in Afghanistan.

## Biden says he could have defeated Trump

AFP, Washington


Joe Biden thinks he could have won reelection if he had stayed in the White House race, he said in an interview published Wednesday – while conceding he was unsure if he would have served another full term.

The 82-year-old Democrat, who leaves office on January 20, was asked by USA Today if he believed victory over Republican Donald Trump was a realistic prospect last November, and he pointed to unspecified polling and said: “I think yes.”

“I really thought I had the best chance of beating him. But I also wasn’t looking to be president when I was 85 years old, 86 years old. And so I did talk about passing the baton,” Biden said.

“But I don’t know. Who the hell knows? So far, so good. But who knows what I’m going to be when I’m 86 years old?”





## জাহাঙ্গীরনগর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

সাভার, ঢাকা

### “বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় দিবস-২০২৫” উদযাপন সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি

কর্তৃপক্ষের নির্দেশক্রমে সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, আগামী ১২ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫ রোজ রবিবার “বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় দিবস-২০২৫” উদযাপনের সিদ্ধান্ত গৃহীত হয়েছে। “বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় দিবস-২০২৫” এর কর্মসূচি নিম্নরূপ :

তারিখ	সময় ও স্থান	কর্মসূচিসমূহ
১২-০১-২০২৫	সকাল ৯:৩০টা	: জমারোত
রবিবার		স্থান- বিজনেস স্টাডিজ অনুযদ চত্বর
	সকাল ১০:০০টা	: জাতীয় পতাকা এবং বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় পতাকা উত্তোলন, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় দিবস-২০২৫ এর শুভ উদ্বোধন ঘোষণা
	সকাল ১০:৩০টা	স্থান- বিজনেস স্টাডিজ অনুযদ চত্বর
	সকাল ১১:১০টা	: শোভাযাত্রা
	সকাল ১১:১৫টা	স্থান- বিজনেস স্টাডিজ অনুযদ চত্বর থেকে সেলিম আল-দীন মুক্তমঞ্চ
	সকাল ১১:৪৫টা	: বৈষম্যবিরোধী আন্দোলনে আহত এবং শহীদদের জন্য দোয়া
	সকাল ১১:৪৫টা	স্থান- সেলিম আল-দীন মুক্তমঞ্চ
	সকাল ১১:৪৫টা	: রক্তের গ্রুপ নির্ণয় কর্মসূচি উদ্বোধন
	সকাল ১১:৪৫টা	স্থান- ছাত্র-শিক্ষক কেন্দ্রের চত্বর
	সকাল ১১:৪৫টা	: স্মৃতিচারণ- প্রাঙ্গন ও বর্তমান শিক্ষক ও শিক্ষার্থীবৃন্দ
	সকাল ১১:৪৫টা	স্থান- সেলিম আল-দীন মুক্তমঞ্চ
দুপুর ১:০০-২:৩০টা		: যোহরের নামাজ ও মধ্যাহ্ন ভোজের (স্ব-উদ্যোগে) বিরতি
		কেন্দ্রীয় ক্যাফেটেরিয়া হতে নিজ খরচে কপন সপ্তাহপূর্বক খাবার গ্রহণ করা যাবে
বিকাল ৩:০০-৪:০০টা		: পুস্তক নাচ ও কলতান বিলা নিকেতনের শিক্ষার্থীদের পরিবেশনায় সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান
		স্থান- সেলিম আল-দীন মুক্তমঞ্চ
বিকাল ৩:০০-৪:০০টা		: প্রাঙ্গন ও বর্তমান শিক্ষার্থীদের মধ্যে প্রীতি ফুটবল ম্যাচ
		স্থান- কেন্দ্রীয় খেলার মাঠ
বিকাল ৪:০০-৪:৩০টা		: প্রাঙ্গন ও বর্তমান নারী শিক্ষার্থীদের মধ্যে প্রীতি হ্যান্ডবল ম্যাচ
		স্থান- কেন্দ্রীয় খেলার মাঠ
সন্ধ্যা ৬:০০ টা থেকে রাত ৯:০০টা পর্যন্ত		: ছাত্র-শিক্ষক কেন্দ্র এবং শিক্ষার্থী কল্যাণ ও পরামর্শদান কেন্দ্রের উদ্যোগে সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান ও বৈষম্যবিরোধী আন্দোলনের স্মৃতি চারণ
		স্থান- সেলিম আল-দীন মুক্তমঞ্চ
সকাল ৯:৩০টা থেকে বিকাল ৫:০০টা পর্যন্ত		: ক. পিঠা মেলা, আরোজনে- ছাত্র-শিক্ষক কেন্দ্র, স্থান- কেন্দ্রীয় ক্যাফেটেরিয়া চত্বর
		খ. বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ক্যাম্পাসের বিভিন্ন স্থানে বৈষম্যবিরোধী আল্লাহ ও গ্রাহিত প্রদর্শন, আরোজনে- চারুকলা বিভাগ

**বিশেষ জ্ঞাতব্যঃ**

- বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় দিবস-২০২৫ উদযাপন করতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বর্তমান ও সাবেক শিক্ষার্থী, শিক্ষক, কর্মকর্তা, কর্মচারী এবং তাদের পরিবার পরিজনকে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আমন্ত্রণ জানানো হলো।
- জাবি স্কুল ও কলেজের শিক্ষক, কর্মকর্তা, কর্মচারী ও শিক্ষার্থীরা তাদের ব্যান্ডলসহ ১২-০১-২০২৫ তারিখে শোভাযাত্রায় অংশগ্রহণ করবেন।
- অতিথি পাখিদের অবস্থান নির্বিঘ্ন করার জন্য শোভাযাত্রায় টেরঙ্গী মোড় হতে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় শহীদ মিনার পর্যন্ত ড্রাম বাজানো যাবে না। তবে এসময় খালি গলায় দেশাত্মবোধক ও জ্বলাই-আন্দোলন ভিত্তিক কোরাস গান গাওয়া যাবে।
- সকল বিভাগ/হলসমূহ রেজিস্ট্রার অফিস থেকে সংগৃহীত স্ব-স্ব ব্যানার নিয়ে বিভাগের/হলের শিক্ষক, কর্মকর্তা কর্মচারী ও শিক্ষার্থীসহ ১২-০১-২০২৫ তারিখে শোভাযাত্রায় অংশগ্রহণ করবেন। বিভাগ ও অফিস থেকে অন্য কোনো ধরনের সাজসজ্জা করতে চাইলে লাল-সাদার প্রাধান্য দিতে হবে।
- সকল অফিস প্রধানগণের নেতৃত্বে সংশ্লিষ্ট অফিসের কর্মকর্তা-কর্মচারীগণ ১২-০১-২০২৫ তারিখে শোভাযাত্রায় নিজ নিজ ব্যানার ও ফেস্টুন (যদি থাকে) নিয়ে সুশৃঙ্খলভাবে দুই লাইনে সারিবদ্ধভাবে অংশগ্রহণ করবেন।
- বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় দিবসে সাবেক শিক্ষার্থী এবং অতিথিদের অংশগ্রহণের সুবিধার্থে ঐ দিন সকাল ৭:৪৫টায় নিম্নে বর্ণিত রুটে ৪টি বাস ঢাকা থেকে ছেড়ে ক্যাম্পাসে আসবে।

মিরপুর রুটঃ আগারগাঁও মোড়→শেওড়াপাড়া→কাজীপাড়া→মিরপুর-১০→মিরপুর সাড়ে এগারো নম্বর→দুয়ারীপাড়া→মিরপুর-৬নং রোড→স্টেডিয়াম মোড়→মিরপুর-২→মিরপুর-১→টেকনিক্যাল→গাবতলী→ক্যাম্পাস।

উত্তরা রুটঃ মহাখালী ফ্লাই ওভারের নীচ থেকে→গুলশান-১→গুলশান-২→বনানী (কাবজী)→ঝিলফেত→এয়ারপোর্ট→আজমপুর→মার্কটপ্রাঙ্গণ→আব্দুল্লাহপুর→কামারপাড়া→আওলিয়া→ক্যাম্পাস।

মালীবাগ রুটঃ বঙ্গবাজার→পল্টন মোড়→বিজয়নগর মোড়→রাজমনি→শান্তিনগর→মালিবাগ মোড়→মৌচাক মোড়→মগবাজার→বাহালামটর→ফার্মগেট→আসাদগেট→টেকনিক্যাল→গাবতলী→ক্যাম্পাস।


জিয়াতলা রুটঃ বঙ্গবাজার→শাহবাগ→টিএসসি→পলাশী→কাঁটাবন→সোয়েল ল্যাব→ধানমন্ডি-২ হয়ে জিয়াতলা রোড→ধানমন্ডি ২৭→আসাদগেট→টেকনিক্যাল→গাবতলী→ক্যাম্পাস।

উল্লেখ্য, অনুষ্ঠান শেষে একই রুটে বাস ক্যাম্পাস হতে ঢাকায় ফিরে যাবে।

বিশেষ দ্রষ্টব্য: বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় দিবস উপলক্ষ্যে কালামপুর, সাভার ও ঢাকার বাস যথারীতি চালু থাকবে।

স্বাক্ষর/-  
এ বি এম আজিজুর রহমান  
রেজিস্ট্রার (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)

GD-101



## MILITARY ENGINEER SERVICES

### DIRECTOR OF WORKS & CHIEF ENGINEER (ARMY)

### INVITATION FOR TENDER

	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Defence		
2.	Agency	:	Military Engineer Services		
3.	Name of Procuring Entity	:	DW & CE (Army) Dhaka Cantt		
4.	Tender Name	:	Different E/M Works of Bangladesh Army for the Financial Year 2024-2025 (As per ser no. 15).		
5.	Invitation for Tender No	:	08 of 2024-2025/E-4 Dated 31 December 2024		
6.	Procurement Method	:	Open Tendering Method (OTM)		
7.	Source of Funds	:	GOB		
8.	Tender Publication Date	:	10 January 2025		
9.	Tender Last Selling Date	:	22 January 2025 upto 1430 hours.		
10.	Tender Submission Date & Time	:	23 January 2025, 1200 hrs.		
11.	Tender Opening Date & Time	:	23 January 2025, 1230 hrs.		
12.	Name & Address of the office(s)	:			
	Selling of Tender Documents	:	a. Tender Selling & Information Centre of DW & CE (Army) at GE (Army) Central, Dhaka Cantt. b. DW & CE (Army), Dhaka Cantt.		
	Receiving Tender Document	:	Tender Selling & Information Centre of DW & CE (Army) at GE (Army) Central, Dhaka		
	Opening Tender Document	:	Tender Selling & Information Centre of DW & CE (Army) at GE (Army) Central, Dhaka		
13.	Place/Date/Time of Pre-Tender Meeting	:	23 January 2025, 1000-1100 hours.		
14.	Eligibility of Tenderer	:	For Serial No. 15 (a, b, c & d) MES enlisted Contractors Class 'C' or 'D' & 15 (e & f) MES enlisted Contractors Class 'D' in other Govt/Semi-Govt/autonomous organizations in similar capacity having necessary security clearance from DGFI.		
15.	Description of Works	:	LocationPrice of Tender Document (Non refundable)Amount of Tender Security (Taka) (In the shape of Bank Draft/ Pay Order in favour of DW & CE (Army) (Taka)Time of Completion of Wks		
a.	Renovation/Replacement/Modification of Low Pressure Domestic Gas line with Cathodic Protection from CMH to SMH area through abnormal repair under GE (Army) Cumilla at Cumilla Cantt.	Cumilla Cantt.	2 000.00	1,58,000.00	06 (Six) Months
b.	Renewal/Replacement of unserviceable Ceiling Fan for Officer's/JCO's/OR's Residential Bldg through abnormal repair under GE (Army) North Dhaka at Dhaka Cantt.	Dhaka Cantt.	2 000.00	1,38,000.00	06 (Six) Months
c.	Renewal/Renovation/Modification of internal Electric wiring, internal decoration work including ancillary works through abnormal repair of Bldg No-156 (SMBK) for AMCC&S Bldg No. 220 & 223 (SMBK) for 23 Fd Regt Arty at Shaheed Salahuddin Cantt.	Ghatail Cantt.	2 000.00	1,38,000.00	06 (Six) Months
d.	Renewal/Renovation/Modification of 1x20 HP & 4x10 HP Centrifugal Pump Motor set with external water supply line for OR's, JCO's Qtr & different unit area through abnormal repair at Momenshahi Cantt.	Momenshahi Cantt.	2 000.00	1,18,000.00	06 (Six) Months
e.	Repair/Replacement & Renovation of Internal Electric, Water, Sanitary & Gas line with fitting/fixtures & Ancillary Works to existing Bldg. no. 124/1-10,125/1-10 & 127/1-10 (Officer's Qtr) Shaheed Bashir Road area through abnormal repair under GE (Army) North at Dhaka Cantt.	Dhaka Cantt.	1 000.00	1,00,000.00	06 (Six) Months
f.	Renovation/Modification/Alteration of external water supply line with fitting/fixtures for Shaheed Mostofa Kamal line area through abnormal repair under GE (Army) North at Dhaka Cantt.	Dhaka Cantt.	1 000.00	1,00,000.00	06 (Six) Months
16.	Contact details	:	Phone : 9832680 Extn 2680, Fax : (02) 9833284 Web Site : www.army.mil.bd		
17.	Special Instructions	:	a. Tenderer shall submit copy of letter of valid enlistment & security clearance with application when purchasing tender. b. Detailed requirements are mentioned in Tender Data sheet of Tender documents. c. The Procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all Tenders.		

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/০৭  
০৯/০১/২৫

DW & CE (Army)

GD-95



## When should student union polls be held?

That should be determined by the needs of university students

We see no valid reason for the divisions among student bodies regarding the timing of student union polls at public universities. Reportedly, the Students Against Discrimination (SAD) platform and Chhatra Shibir favour holding elections without delay, as they are confident of winning. However, Chhatra Dal prefers postponing the elections until after the national polls, as its leaders are reportedly not yet “fully active” on campuses. Meanwhile, most left-leaning student parties also support delaying the elections, citing the need to reform the structure of student unions.

Although most student bodies united during the July uprising that brought down Sheikh Hasina’s autocratic regime, divisions began to emerge after Dhaka University authorities formed a special committee on November 14 to conduct the Ducus elections. These divisions are concerning as they appear to prioritise political interests over the needs of students.

Student union polls, not just at DU, must be held based on the needs of university students—not external factors like national elections. Chhatra Dal’s push for postponement until after national polls seems to hark back to the old system where ruling parties granted undue advantages to their student wings. This system cultivated political dominance on campuses, disregarding the welfare of the broader student community.

It is crucial to remember that such politics of dominance caused immense suffering for students, degraded the quality of education, and undermined universities and colleges over the 15 years of Awami rule. During this period, Chhatra League’s reign of terror reached unprecedented levels, with the tragic death of Abrar Fahad at BUET becoming a rallying point for the July uprising against the fascist regime and its oppressive student wing. Although not on the same scale, previous governments also misused student wings to achieve political ends. In post-uprising Bangladesh, the people reject any return to these practices—a message that political and student parities must take to heart.

At the same time, it is important to ensure that all student bodies are given a level playing field for fair elections at different universities. Therefore, the elections should not be rushed either.

Public universities have mechanisms to form their own election commissions, and they should follow timelines that best serve their students. In addition, necessary reforms should be considered to ensure these elections properly reflect student interests. Prospective candidates and student bodies must recognise that the only purpose of these elections is to serve the general student population. Both students and the public expect a new kind of student politics—one that fosters learning and leadership, not domination, criminality, or terrorisation.

## End the brick kiln menace

### 984 kilns operating in breach of regulations in Rangpur

The number is staggering, and it’s frustrating that such numbers exist despite there being a pro-environment government in place. According to a report citing the departments of environment and agricultural extension in Rangpur, the division has 984 brick kilns—set up on farmlands across its eight districts—operating in violation of government regulations. These kilns use fertile topsoil to make bricks in a process that causes significant damage to the local environment, livelihoods, and health. While the proliferation of such kilns, owned or operated mostly by people with political connections, was understandable under the Awami League regime, their continued operation now questions the ability and sincerity of the interim administration.

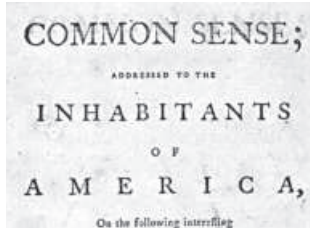
The situation is by no means unique to Rangpur. Similar operations also continue in many other areas, ravaging topsoil and burning bricks with impunity. Not long ago, we highlighted the case of Brahmanbaria where, according to a *Prothom Alo* report, 56 kilns operate illegally. Many of them, including one set up by a former Awami League lawmaker, have no valid documents such as environmental clearance or the permit for brick burning. Many were set up on agricultural lands and even wetland areas. In Lalmonirhat, according to another recent report, 36 brick kilns are operating without a clearance certificate. Although there is no central database on the number of illegal or non-compliant brick kilns in the country, the above reports portray a grim picture.

The question is, what is the interim government doing? To be fair, the environment ministry did take some encouraging steps, including the development of a National Air Quality Management Action Plan in early November to tackle sources of air pollution and enhance enforcement mechanisms. More recently, it has overseen a number of drives through mobile courts targeting illegal kilns, shutting down quite a few by demolishing their chimneys while ordering the closure of multiple others. These measures, however, are proving to be inadequate to address the menace of brick kilns.

We, therefore, urge the government to step up its efforts. Given the massive impact of brick kilns, having legal papers or not, it is no longer enough to just go after a few illegal ones without enforcing compliance across the sector or addressing the heavy reliance on topsoil or traditional bricks. What’s at stake here is not just the health of our environment or local communities. The livelihoods of farmers, and by extension the nation’s food security, are also at risk. So, the government must explore options to replace traditional brick-making in a way that eventually reduces topsoil and fuel consumption.

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

#### ‘Common Sense’ published



On this day in 1776, Thomas Paine published *Common Sense*, a 50-page pamphlet that sold more than 500,000 copies within a few months and called for a war of independence that would later become the American Revolution.



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

# Bangladesh’s eunomia problem

### THE GRUDGING URBANIST

Dr Adnan Zillur Morshed  
is an academic and a public thinker.

ADNAN ZILLUR MORSHED

Let us ask an elusive question against the current political situation in Bangladesh: what creates a good nation? An ambitious constitution? Honest and accountable leaders? Effective policies? People themselves? We begin by discussing the idea of the constitution. You may not have noticed that you don’t have to sign the constitution to pledge your allegiance to it or abide by it. The state assumes that you as a citizen are going to accept the constitution as a social contract and respect and follow it. In this assumption, the state imagines a nation with common beliefs and aspirations, and a shared interest in history, language, and culture. The constitution places a lot of trust in people to see, understand, and approve how it seeks to create a good nation with a common purpose. By championing a national mission, the constitution supposes that it can provide some consistency to people’s public lives.

Yet, the idea of the constitution is tricky. It is a deeply idealistic instrument of the state in the sense that it is broadly based on people’s collective trust and willingness to accept it as the nation’s guiding principles. When that trust is not there, the constitution is fragile, becoming merely a book that catches dust on the shelf of a dimly lit office. Furthermore, as legal scholars have argued, the constitution presents a larger moral quandary. Even if it is ratified by the national assembly, it may not be just. It may only reflect the aims and machinations of an exclusive power-wielding group. When the US constitution was ratified in 1788, enslaved people in the country were considered three-fifths of a person and women didn’t have the right to vote. The point is that a ratified constitution may not guarantee a fair society. To add to the complexity, there are nations—such as the UK, Canada, Saudi Arabia, and Israel—that do not have a single or full written constitution, rather various laws, conventions, principles, and judicial decisions.

Despite the inherent limitations in the ways the constitution is conceived, the image, purpose, and identity of a nation that it seeks to articulate are essential for the nation to function as a unit. But the problem is this: for people to collectively believe in the constitution as a social contract, there must be broad agreement on some “fundamentals” that take shape organically from within society over a period. In an ideal world, the constitution has already embodied these fundamentals to flesh out the details. Only when the public accepts the fundamentals wholeheartedly does the constitution begin to make sense.

But what may the fundamentals be? They may include: i) that all people—irrespective of their race, gender, ethnicity, and religion—are equal before the law; ii) peaceful coexistence even while in disagreement; iii) free and fair election as the basis of democratic governance; iv) a tyranny-proof system of checks and balances in power; v) respect for the natural environment; vi) independent institutions; and vii) some historical happenings that galvanised the nation in the first place.

In the absence of public trust in the fundamentals, the constitution does not and cannot make good sense. On January 6, 2021, the US constitution became dangerously brittle until then Vice President Mike Pence certified

**Athenian legislator Solon came up with the idea of *eunomia*, an ideal political order that served the interests of all feuding parties. In addition to creating the social framework for a sound distributive justice, *eunomia* outlined, most importantly, how things *should be* in an ideal society. In other words, Solon created some fundamentals that brought people together, enabling them not only to transcend their narrow selfish interests, but also to believe in the virtues of citizenship and democracy.**

the 2020 US presidential election results. The constitution is not—has never been—enough to create a good nation. Let me make two crucial points here. First, what is most important in creating a good nation is a reasonable and civil historical process, powered by inclusive institutions, that produces reasonable people with the prudence to value some fundamentals as the cement of their national formation. Second, fundamentals are not God-given, and what is needed is a dynamic and quality public debate about their significance in building a good nation. In other words, a reasonable nation must know how to debate what is in their best collective interest.

A good nation is, of course, a utopian aspiration or even a myth—perhaps a necessary myth with which to articulate an acceptable national purpose. One way or the other, a nation’s polity, stability, and sense of justice often depend on how maturely it deploys its ideas of fundamentals in

the project of nation-building.

The Greeks first understood this political riddle. At the precipice of a civil war, circa 600 BCE, raging between a landed aristocracy and the peasants who owed it vast debts, Athenian legislator Solon came up with the idea of *eunomia*, an ideal political order that served the interests

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of all feuding parties. In addition to creating the social framework for a sound distributive justice, *eunomia* outlined, most importantly, how things *should be* in an ideal society. In other words, Solon created some fundamentals that brought people together, enabling them not only to transcend their narrow selfish interests, but also to believe in the virtues of citizenship and democracy.

With this long preamble, allow me to turn to current Bangladesh. The country’s political class, unfortunately, has not been able to resolve its *eunomia* challenge. It did not convincingly determine what its historical fundamentals are or *could be* that would remain above fractious political bickering in the years to come.

The political project of what is known in Bangla as *oikyomot* has remained forever elusive. If *oikyomot* points to figuring out the nation’s fundamentals, then it is, of course, not about the end product in the form of untouchable “truths,” but rather about a continuous process of civil discourse with which to reason why some foundational ideas are necessary as a continuous political thread. Consider this example: by the time he was in his second term of presidency, George Washington endured vicious press attacks, questioning his integrity and his administration’s “monarchical” style. But nobody ever set Mount Vernon, Washington’s personal property, on fire. Today, people can write a scathing book on Washington’s treatment of enslaved people in his estate, but nobody burns down the Washington Monument rising from the centre of the US capital. There is no historical dilemma in considering George Washington’s pivotal role in the Constitutional Convention in 1787, a historical fundamental in the idea of the United States of America. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s March 7 speech is one such fundamental in the

idea of Bangladesh. The achievement of 1971 is a foundational concept for this country. The whole point of the planned killing of the country’s intellectuals by anti-liberation forces on December 14, 1971 was to defeat that concept. Ironically, the last regime’s over-Mujibification of the country’s political landscape spawned the wrong kind of debates on 1971.

While fundamentals can be debated across historical eras, they should be neither dismissed nor desecralised in the name of renewal or with the intention of political erasure. The problem in Bangladesh has been that political parties created their own “party fundamentals” that collapsed or were erased with their departure from the government. They weaponised history in their favour. While one party colonised 1971 as its exclusive turf, others showed a peculiar discomfort towards it (even when indulging in its sartorial celebration) or secretly denied its legitimacy. Thus, Bangladesh’s political history has been a history of biased histories that created permanent political fault lines, weakening the promise of developing the nation’s human capital. One cannot expect a mature nation when a misguided culture thrives, one in which people become accustomed to seeing the world from the lens of their narrow self-interests, ignoring the transcendental values of fundamentals in nation-building.

An insurmountable roadblock in Bangladesh has long diminished the possibility of establishing fundamentals as national unifiers. Since independence, the country has carried on with a peculiar birth defect, that is, the secret guilt-ridden binary of 1971 and religion. Despite the euphoria of liberation, in post-independence Bangladesh, many people, beyond the Islamist parties, secretly considered the secession from Pakistan a betrayal of Islam. Even though false—the Liberation War was fought against economic and political marginalisation—this binary continued to influence politics in Bangladesh with different artifices and under different circumstances. In many ways, August 15, 1975, the debate of Bangalee vs Bangladeshi, and partisan debates on secularism, among other examples, are different manifestations of this false binary, which seems to have become entrenched in the national psyche. It has become a culture even though its expression in recent times has become shrouded in mystical and indeterminate pronouncements.

Binaries that entrap us in a black-and-white belief system harm our social and cognitive evolution. What I propose is that some foundational concepts are necessary to anchor a good nation and its ability to live a richly hybrid life. More importantly, to be able to believe in unifying fundamentals, a nation needs maturity, courage, and a willingness to debate its purpose with civility. For that, we need to robustly invest in public education, civic programmes, and social campaigns.



# Challenges to media freedom in post-Hasina Bangladesh



**Rahat Minhaz**  
is assistant professor of mass communication and journalism at Jagannath University. He can be reached at minhaz.uddin\_du@yahoo.com.

RAHAT MINHAZ

After the student-led mass uprising in July-August 2024, a lot of expectations emerged within society, which was normal. The media sector is no exception. During Sheikh Hasina's 15-plus years of hybrid regime, standard journalism practices declined drastically due to certain actions of a group of pro-Awami League journalists. It would be more appropriate to call them activists of the regime. The press wing of the ousted prime minister and a particular intelligence branch exerted a kind of pressure on our media outlets. That's why, after the Awami League's fall in August, people expected major changes in this sector. However, these expectations, under the interim government led by Prof Muhammad Yunus, have already experienced setbacks for many reasons. It is unfortunate that professional journalists who played a pivotal role in ousting Hasina are now facing unfortunate situations.

After the massive fire at the secretariat on December 26, another controversial decision related to journalism was made. Due to security concerns, the interim government suspended accreditation cards for journalists, including visitor and other passes. Barring others from

the secretariat may be necessary, but restricting journalists from performing their daily duties is not acceptable. Although the press wing of the chief adviser clarified the issue and a temporary pass-issuance process was put in place, this decision ultimately did not bode well for media freedom. The Editors' Council and other journalists' rights-based organisations issued statements saying that such decisions are a threat and an obstacle to independent journalism. By observing the situation closely, I can assume that this particular decision did not help journalism at all. However, I strongly agree with the authorities that many unprofessional journalists are holding accreditation cards for purposes other than journalism. These should be cancelled as early as possible.

Another burning and unfortunate issue is the firing of five senior journalists from Somoy TV. No doubt, this media outlet was one of the notorious propaganda machines of Sheikh Hasina. It systematically spread the regime's disinformation. On the other hand, this channel also targeted individuals who were critical of the ousted fascist regime.

That said, firing journalists through "mob justice" is not acceptable. The information ministry and the press wing of the chief adviser failed to address this issue. This was undoubtedly done through the misconduct of student leaders. The press wing and the government should have taken proper action

different media outlets under Sheikh Hasina became almost party propaganda cells. However, after her fall, intervening in TV channels and newspapers is not acceptable either. Alongside the spin doctors of these outlets, many professional journalists have also lost their jobs in recent months. These decisions were

Bangla authorities fired him. The government did nothing in these journalists' aid. At the very least, it could have issued a strong statement against this malpractice.

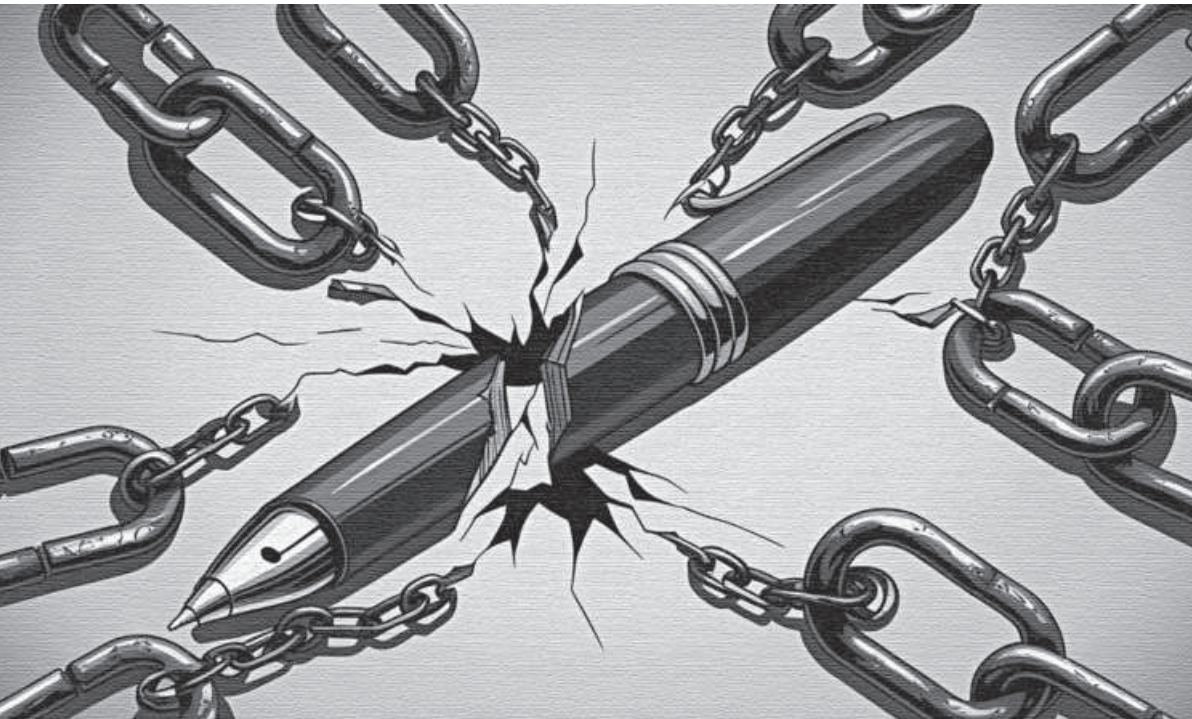
Though Sheikh Hasina has fled, and her press and intelligence wings have been dissolved, has the sense of fairness in free journalism

think pressure groups—including some anti-discrimination student activists, government members, powerful political parties, and others—are already acting against media freedom.

I want to conclude with the example of journalist Khaled Muhiuddin, a renowned journalist who faced severe backlash on social media mainly for criticising student leaders. He also became a target after inviting a leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League, student wing of the Awami League, as a guest on his show. Hasnat Abdullah, convener of the anti-discrimination student movement, and Sarjis Alam, secretary of the July Shaheed Smriti Foundation, said Khaled Muhiuddin was "betraying the blood of the martyrs" by promoting Chhatra League. Though the proposed show was not conducted supposedly due to legal reasons, this issue has certainly cast a shadow over media freedom.

According to a report published by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) in May last year, Bangladesh ranks 165th out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom Index. Moreover, RSF identified Bangladesh as one of the most dangerous countries for journalists in their 2024 round-up report.

We don't want Bangladesh to be labelled as a dangerous country for journalism. We don't want further degradation of press freedom, and we don't want to lose the sense of fairness in professional journalism again. Hopefully, the interim government will take prompt and necessary steps in this regard. A new Bangladesh certainly deserves it.



FILE VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

against it, but they did nothing. It has already become an international issue, which does not align with the reputation of Prof Yunus at all.

Yes, we are well aware that

made under pressure and without following due process. A journalist of ATN Bangla is one of them; as far as I know, he had supported the students' movement. Yet, the ATN

disappeared? Not at all. Senior journalist and editor of the daily *Manab Zamin*, Matiur Rahman Chowdhury, pointed out this issue during a public discussion. I

## A crossover episode with my depression



**Mahiya Tabassum**  
is a member of the editorial team at The Daily Star.

MAHIYA TABASSUM

Picture this: it's an ungodly hour of the morning, and I'm stumbling out of my building after pulling an all-nighter for an exam. The gloomy morning sky and cold snaps are having this fascinating interaction with the circadian rhythm of my body, and the coffee in my empty stomach is doing the cha-cha. Just as I'm having one of those "What even is this life, man?" moments...

"Hey, that's life," draws a familiar voice—one belonging to everyone's favourite depressed, self-loathing, alcoholic horse. Classic BoJack Horseman, appearing like an existential crisis personified, ready to drag you into the depths of contemplation on just another weekday morning.

Ten years after its debut, *BoJack Horseman* remains less of a TV show and more of a gut punch wrapped in animal puns. In an era where talking animals could've been just another gimmick, this series chose violence—emotional violence, that is. It's the kind of show that makes you laugh, then makes you question why you're laughing, and then makes you question everything else about your life choices.

But more than that, it has become a lighthouse for those of us navigating the stormy seas of depression. Addressing the mental health struggles, the series chose authenticity—raw, uncomfortable, yet deeply validating.

The show's brilliant stroke was mixing humans and animals in a world where a horse can be a washed-up sitcom star and, somehow, that's the least bizarre thing about it. But here's the kicker: behind the cartoon facades and animal jokes lies a mirror so clear, it's uncomfortable. Every character is carrying enough emotional baggage to fill a cargo hold, yet they're still somehow functioning—just like us!

Through the characters, the show portrayed the symptoms we often try to hide—the random crying spells, the inability to get out of bed, the constant fatigue that no amount of sleep seems to fix—and none of these

are character flaws. They're shared experiences, even if they're wrapped in fur and feathers.

Take Princess Carolyn, the feline agent whose life is a masterclass in "Iake it till you make it," while simultaneously having an internal meltdown. Her perpetual hustle culture mentality isn't just a character trait, it's a perfect illustration of high-functioning depression, where we keep spinning plates while feeling completely hollow inside. When she tells herself, "You gotta get your shit together," it's the same mantra many of us repeat, thinking we're somehow failing at life while everyone else has it figured out.

**Mental health struggles are part of the journey, and they're definitely not character flaws or personal failures. Life can be messy, people are complicated, and sometimes the best we can do is keep swimming, or galloping, or whatever movement applies to you.**

Well, that would be me too!

Then there's Diane Nguyen, the writer who can't seem to fit into the "rainbow muffin" version of happiness that society, especially her romantic partner Mr Peanut Butter, prescribes. Her journey with depression hits particularly close to home. When she sits in her flat, unable to write her "fun" book because the weight of existence feels too heavy, and ends up with a heavy memoir instead, it also serves as a validation. It's the show saying, "Hey, sometimes depression makes basic tasks feel impossible, and that's not your fault." Her struggle with medication, her resistance to accepting help, and her fear that treating her depression might change who she is—these aren't just plot points. They're real fears that many of us grapple with while suffering from depression.

But let's talk about our protagonist, the horse himself. BoJack Horseman isn't just another lead character of

a show, he's the personification (or should I say horsification?) of our collective mess. He's that voice in our head that says, "Let's sabotage this perfectly good thing we have going," the 3am thoughts that keep us awake, and the endless cycle of trying to do better while being utterly terrified of change. This is where it gets truly personal to me.

BoJack is the embodiment of depression's most insidious lies: that we're fundamentally broken and that we don't deserve happiness. His cycles of self-destruction feel painfully familiar because depression isn't just sadness, it's a constant battle with self-worth, with motivation, with the very idea that things could get better.

What sets *BoJack Horseman* apart is how it normalises the full spectrum of depression's manifestations. The show tells us it's okay if your depression doesn't look like the commercials, where people just stare sadly out of windows in grayscale. Sometimes it's angry outbursts, sometimes it's numbness, and sometimes it's throwing yourself

while somehow maintaining its sense of humour. Depression, addiction, trauma, toxic relationships—it's all there, wrapped in animal puns and visual gags. It's like getting therapy, but your therapist is a cartoon horse who's probably more messed up than you are.

Made in the early 2010s, when streaming platforms were willing to take risks on quirky ideas, *BoJack Horseman* became more than just another adult animation. It pioneered a new kind of storytelling that proved animation could tackle serious issues without losing its comedic edge. In today's landscape, a show about a depressed talking horse dealing with existential dread might sound like a hard sell, but BoJack made it work. It showed us that depression isn't always dramatic breakdowns; sometimes it's just getting through another day, trying your best even when your best feels inadequate. The show's greatest gift might be its message that healing isn't linear. Some days you're Princess Carolyn, getting yourself together. Other days you're BoJack, floating in your pool, questioning everything. Both are valid, both are normal, and most importantly, both are temporary states, not permanent identities.

A decade later, the show's message still rings true: mental health struggles are part of the journey, and they're definitely not character flaws or personal failures. Life can be messy, people (and animals) are complicated, and sometimes the best we can do is keep swimming. Or galloping. Or whatever species-appropriate movement applies to you.

The genius of *BoJack Horseman* lies in its ability to make us laugh at our darkest moments while acknowledging their weight. As BoJack himself put it, "Life is just one hard kick in the urethra." But sometimes, watching a show about messy characters trying their best is exactly the comfort we need. In a world that often demands we put on a happy face and pretend everything's fine, *BoJack Horseman* stands as a mirror to the beauty of acknowledging our struggles, our failures, and our continuous attempts to do better, even when we keep messing up. And isn't that, after all, the way life is?

Back to that morning after my all-nighter, maybe hallucinating a conversation with BoJack Horseman isn't the worst way to start the day. At least he gets it. That's just, like, life, man—and I'm not alone in it.

## CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**

1 Convincing  
7 Track shape  
11 Dense  
12 Flaring star  
13 Good name  
14 Marina spot  
15 Provinces  
16 News summary  
17 Endure  
18 Take turns  
19 Final, for one  
21 Silent assent  
22 Alcor's constellation  
25 Sauna site  
26 TV warrior  
27 Genesis
- 29 Physics amount  
33 Lucy's brother  
34 Fire starter  
35 Rara —  
36 "The Naked and the Dead" author  
37 Minimal change  
38 Mysterious  
39 Hence  
40 Poked fun at

**DOWN**

1 Pink shade  
2 Met performance  
3 Stares stupidly  
4 Considers comparable  
5 Squirrel's cache  
6 Kicker's aid
- 7 Start  
8 Kilauea, e.g.  
9 Ace, e.g.  
10 Passed on the track  
16 Caesar subject  
18 Japanese noodles  
20 Cartesian line  
22 Away from the mouth  
23 Drizzly  
24 Reggae's birthplace  
25 Comfort  
28 Relish  
30 Travel aid  
31 Public outburst  
32 Tatter  
34 Foal's mother  
36 Yoga need

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4-22

### SATURDAY'S ANSWERS

S	H	A	R	D		F	L	O	S	S
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E	V	E		D	O	C		E	R	A
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L	A	M	E	R		A	N	G	E	L
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Write for us. Send us your opinion pieces to [dsopinion@gmail.com](mailto:dsopinion@gmail.com).





YEAR-END JUDGMENT REVIEW

# Notable decisions of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh

Throughout the year, the High Court Division and the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh handed down several significant judgments of immense constitutional importance.

RAFID AZAD SAUMIK AND KHALID KHAN

Last year witnessed an array of major judicial decisions shaping the jurisprudence and legal discourse in Bangladesh. Indeed, throughout the year, the High Court Division (HCD) and the Appellate Division (AD) of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh (SCB) handed down several significant judgments, of immense constitutional importance, among others.

**The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution has been partially invalidated.**

The HCD has delivered a landmark judgment invalidating the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution partially. A total of 54 changes were brought by the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 2011. The major changes include scrapping the provision for a non-partisan Caretaker Government (CTG) to hold elections, incorporating an inexhaustive list of basic structure to the Constitution (Article 7B), etc. The HCD bench comprising Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Debasish Roy Chowdhury gave the verdict, scrapping parts of the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment reinstalling the provision of CTG, omitting Articles 7A, 7B, etc. The final decision regarding the CTG will be taken by the Appellate Division as three review petitions are pending in it challenging a 2011 verdict that had scrapped the system.

**Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) has been reinstalled**

The AD of the SCB has recently scrapped the 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution. The SJC is a body composed of the Chief Justice and two other senior most judges of the AD to probe allegations on the grounds of incapacity or misconduct against any judge of the Apex court. The 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment scrapped the SJC and gave the power to the parliament in 2014. The 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment was invalidated by both

the HCD and the AD in 2016 and 2017, primarily focusing on the doctrine of ‘separation of power’ and concerns regarding judicial independence. However, when the government filed the review petition, the matter reached a legal stalemate and continued in that state until recently, when the AD again declared the 16<sup>th</sup> Amendment unconstitutional.

**Discouraging disclosure of the sex of unborn babies**

The HCD of the SCB has ruled that the guideline by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) discouraging revealing the sex of unborn babies be followed. Prenatal sex detection oftentimes has a direct connection with the ill-treatment of babies and pregnant mothers. That is why the DGHS, in their guideline, discouraged hospitals, clinics, and diagnostic centres from revealing the sex of unborn babies for non-medical reasons. The HCD disposed of the writ petition seeking a ban on such disclosure by directing that the guidelines of the DGHS be followed.

**Revising the quota scheme**

The AD of the Apex Court of the country has revised the existing quota scheme, which some have embraced positively, while others raised concern over the level of interference in policy decisions done in the case. Prior to the decision of the AD, the HCD had decided that the notification by the government in 2018 withdrawing the quota system in government jobs was illegal. However, the AD reversed the decision of the HCD. The new quota scheme is applicable for government jobs in all grades. As per the new scheme, a seven percent quota is reserved for all jobs: five percent for children of freedom fighters, martyred freedom fighters and Beerangonas, one percent for the indigenous community, and one percent for people with disabilities and ‘Tritiyo Lingo’.

**The imposition of conservancy fees under section 3 of Conservancy and Pilotage Service Fees Rules 1990 is legal**

The plaintiffs of the original case alleged, amongst others, that the imposition of conservancy fees under the 1990 Rules is illegal. The AD of the SCB found that, firstly, such imposition of fees under the 1990 Rules is justified and not at all a breach of the principle of double jeopardy. It moreover concluded that the imposition of conservancy fees is not a punitive measure but rather an investment in sustainable water management. Such measures are needed for both our economic interests as well as out of environmental concerns. In a country with concerning environmental conditions, such decisions by the Apex Court of the country are appreciable.

**The legitimacy of the interim government under the current Constitution**

The AD of the SCB on 8 August 2024 decided that the President of Bangladesh may, to fill in the constitutional vacancy, for urgent necessity, appoint chief advisor and other advisors to conduct executive functions on an interim basis. The AD exercised its power under Article 106 of the Constitution which allows it to give opinions to the President when the President seeks the same on a question of law of great public importance. The AD noted that as the previous Prime Minister resigned and the President dissolved the previous parliament, such an interim government could be established as of necessity. This decision by the AD was important to maintain the constitutional continuity of the country.

*The writers are Law Desk Assistant and Law Desk Intern of the Law & Our Rights, The Daily Star, respectively.*

LAW LETTER

## Ensuring fair trials in Bangladesh

Any justice system must have fair trials as a cornerstone, ensuring that each individual receives the same impartial treatment while in conflict with the law. Articles 27 and 31 of the Constitution of Bangladesh upholds the concept of fair trial. Nevertheless, there are several obstacles that hamper the execution of justice when these concepts are put into practice.

A major concern is the overburdened judiciary. By 2023, there will be over 3.7 million cases still waiting, making it very difficult for the justice system to provide timely justice. Prolonged pre-trial detentions, as well as greater financial and emotional strains on litigants, may result from procedural delays. Due largely to this backlog, people’s right to a fair trial gets routinely violated.

Moreover, securing competent legal representation continues to be a serious struggle, especially for the socioeconomically disadvantaged citizens. While the Legal Aid Services Act, 2000 provides for

free legal aid, the system remains underfunded and hence inaccessible to a vast swathe of people.

Consequently, the marginalised groups are often without access to adequate representation fuelling miscarriages of justice. The legal system suffers from corruption as well, further undermining the fairness of trials. Corrupt practices undermine public confidence in the judiciary and

often distort the outcome of trials in favor of the wealthy, powerful and/or political elites.

Another obstacle to fair trial is the manner in which investigations are carried out. In Bangladesh, law enforcement agencies are often accused of fabricating evidence, obtaining forced confessions through torture, and conducting investigations that are neither thorough nor neutral. Along with that, there are insufficient forensic facilities and trained personnel, which makes it more difficult to deliver justice based on reliable evidence.

These challenges can be solved in different ways. To begin with, managing the backlog could be achieved by increasing the number of judges, improving case management systems and establishing specialised courts for specific types of cases. In addition, enhancing outreach of its free legal aid mechanisms and augmenting the resources for the Legal Aid Services Act may help under-privileged citizens access justice better. Furthermore, investing in advanced forensic facilities and enabling police to properly gather evidence and conduct fair investigations can lead to trials of a better standard. Finally, independent oversight authorities must be put in place to investigate corruption allegations within the judiciary and by the law enforcement agencies.

Upholding the rule of law and maintaining public trust in Bangladesh’s justice system depend mostly on ensuring fair trials. Even though the obstacles are substantial, they are not insurmountable. By working together, the government, judiciary, and civil society can establish a more efficient and equitable judicial system, which will bring the nation closer to the principles enshrined in its Constitution.

Alph Imran Chowdhury

*Law student at London College of Legal Studies (South)*



YEAR-END LAW REVIEW

# Reviewing the laws enacted in 2024

Parban Chakma and Sadika Nousheen

The year 2024 presented new hopes for Bangladesh. New laws and ordinances were enacted, some old laws were revised as the spirit of reforming the state touched the legal landscape. Ten Acts were enacted by the previous regime while 17 new Ordinances were passed after the parliament was dissolved. From *finance to international crimes*, this piece discusses some notable laws and ordinances from this year.

**The Local Government (Union Parishad) (Amendment) Act 2024**

The Act, originally enacted in 2009, was amended in 2024 to incorporate a provision for appointing an administrator on the expiry of the five-year tenure of the union-level local government body. Hence, the Union Parishad chairman and members shall not remain in their respective positions once the specified duration is over and will be replaced by an administrator appointed by the government to carry on the local activities until the next Parishad is formed. The administrator will be allocated a 120-day tenure for the task and cannot be appointed as the same more than once.

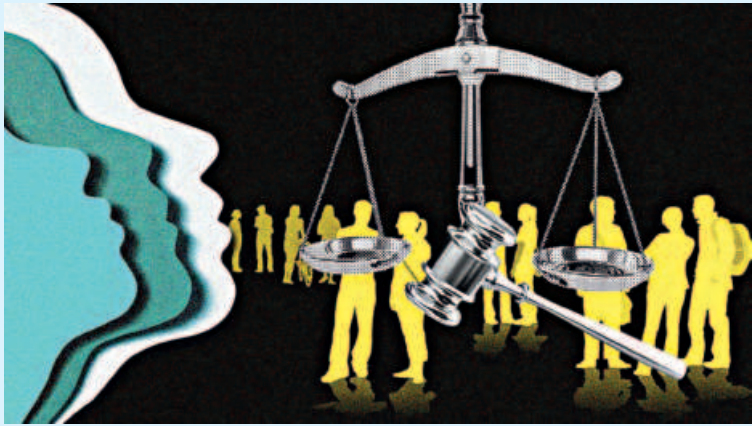
**Payment and Settlement System Act 2024**

The Payment and Settlement

System Act was passed to make provisions related to reducing the risk of financial transactions and protecting the interests of customers through integration, supervision and control of the payment, drainage and settlement system. No banking company can participate in any payment system, operate payment system or provide electronic currency payment services without the approval of Bangladesh Bank. Similarly, no individual, organisation, or company can run a payment system or perform payment services

**As Bangladesh stands at a crossroads and awaits meaningful reforms within its policy-legal framework, 2025 looks both full of hopes and anticipations.**

without first getting a license from Bangladesh Bank. Violation of this clause will result in a possible 5-year prison sentence, a fine of up to 50 lakhs, or both. Offenses committed under this Act shall be cognizable



and non-bailable.

**National Primary Education Academy Act 2024**

In order to execute the National Curriculum and improve the professional abilities of primary school teachers and primary education officials, the Act has been passed to create a National Primary Education Academy that would undertake research and offer cutting edge training. The Act aims to strengthen the primary education structure.

**Offshore Banking Act 2024**

The Offshore Banking Act 2024 was enacted to govern and regulate offshore banking activities in conformity with the dynamics of

the contemporary international financial system. It outlines the regulatory framework for establishing and operating offshore banking units by Scheduled Banks in Bangladesh. This law prohibits engagement with any offshore banking business except a scheduled bank operating in Bangladesh.

Offshore banking units in Bangladesh can accept deposits from foreign-owned enterprises in specific zones and provide financial services like loans, letters of credit, and bill discounting. They also handle deposits and loans from non-resident Bangladeshis, foreign individuals, and institutions, and operate foreign currency accounts for residents to facilitate remittances

and transfers. Certain restricted activities include unauthorized transactions and demand deposits, and credit facilities must follow prescribed procedures. Offshore banking units are required to keep records for easy auditing, with scheduled bank auditors conducting audits. Bangladesh Bank has the authority to inspect records and assets, impose fines for non-compliance, and issue directives and policies. Penalties for non-compliance include fines for failure to submit financial statements, providing false information, and other violations of the Act.

**International Crimes (Tribunals) (Amendment) Ordinance 2024**

Originally enacted in 1973, this Act was revised this year followed by the fall of Sheikh Hasina Regime. This was done to bring the Act more in line with the international instruments and address the loopholes of the previous version. The law now has the jurisdiction to international crimes committed extraterritorially. There have been some fundamental changes in the definitions of the crimes. Definition of Crime against Humanity is expanded to include explicitly forcible transfer of population, sexual exploitation, enforced disappearance, human trafficking, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy,

enforced sterilization among other acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack, or persecutions based on political, racial, ethnic, or religious grounds. Incitement to commit any international crimes has been incorporated within the Jurisdiction of the Tribunal. Apart from this the new changes include provisions for recording and broadcasting tribunal hearings, allowing representatives from UN bodies and human rights organizations to observe public hearings. Accused persons are granted rights which the earlier version of the Act lacked. There are also new measures for submitting digital evidence, providing compensation to crime victims, and ensuring witness protection. These updates aim to enhance transparency, fairness, and protection within the judicial process in line with the international standards.

As Bangladesh stands at a crossroads and awaits meaningful reforms within its policy-legal framework, 2025 looks both full of hopes and anticipations.

*The writers are Law Desk Intern, The Daily Star & LLM candidate at the University of Dhaka respectively.*



## SPORTS REPORTER

With three days left till the deadline for Champions Trophy squad submission on January 12, Shakib's selection for the tournament, which was already uncertain before tests for suspect action, looks even more difficult.



PHOTO: STAR

**SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN** *from Sylhet*

On Thursday, Sohan was faced with an even tougher challenge in the last over against Kyle Mayers but this time the wicketkeeper-batter won the game for his side by smashing three fours and as many sixes to take 30 off the over – most ever in the 20th over in BPL history.

After the match, there was a heated exchange between Barishal captain Tamim Iqbal and Rangpur's Alex Hales. Sohan, who was seen trying to calm Tamim down, claimed he did not know what caused this altercation.

**SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN** *from Sylhet*

Young starlets Gavi and Lamine Yamal, returning after an ankle problem, fired Barcelona into the Spanish Super Cup final with a 2-0 win against Athletic Bilbao on Wednesday. Gavi put Barcelona ahead from close range after 17 minutes and teenage winger Yamal netted the second early after the break. Spanish playmaker Olmo was cleared to play again on a temporary basis before the game and will be allowed to feature for Barcelona in the Sunday's final.

PHOTO: AFP

## SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan have been on the top of the BPL table with 18 points, three more than second-placed Rahmatganj.

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
JASHORE WATER DEVELOPMENT DIVISION  
BWDB, JASHORE**

**Corrigendum-1 of Tender 'Id No-1050706 & 1050451**

Due to Unavoidable circumstances some changes have been made in BoQ for the following tender. All others terms & condition remain same.

Invitation n Referen ce No	Tender ID	Package No & Description	Previous Tender/Pro posal Document Last Selling Date & Time	New Tender/Pro posal Document Last Selling Date & Time	Previous Tender/Pro posal Closing & Opening Date & Time	New Tender/Pro posal Closing & Opening Date & Time
T 30- A/1009; Dated: 12.12. 2024	1050706	Package No- CSAWM-WDB-SWZ-WD-14/04 The River bank protective work at (A) Afra Ghat from km 0.000 to km 0.300 = 300.00 m. (B) Gobindo Mondir from km 0.077 to km 0.200 = 123.00 m. (C) Kali Mondir from km 0.00 to km 0.077 = 77.00m. (D) kalibari from km 0.00 to km 0.630 = 630.00m. (E) Sarderghat from km 0.00 to km 0.500 = 500.00m. Total 1630.00 m. in Chitra-Bhairab-Afra Sub- Project (Jashore Part) in C/W Climate Smart Agricultural & Water Management Project in district Jashore under Jashore WD Division, BWDB, Jashore during the FY'of 2024-2025 & 2025-2026.	13-Jan- 2025 17:00 hrs	19-Jan- 2025 17:00 hrs	14-Jan- 2025 12:50 hrs	20-Jan- 2025 12:50 hrs
T30- A/1001 Dated: 12.12. 2024	1050451	Package No- CSAWM-WDB-SWZ-WD-14/05 Re-excavation of Amdanga Khal from 0.500 Km to 2.700 Km=2.200 Km and strengthening of Amdanga khal by protection works from km.0.000 to km 0.450 = 0.450 Km and Rehabilitation of 2Nos. Outlet at Km. 1.170 & Km. 1.330 of Amdanga khal in Chitra-Bhairab-Afra Sub- Project (Jashore Part) i/c with CSAWM Project (BWDB Part) under Jashore WD Division, BWDB, Jashore During the Year 2024-25 & 2025-26.	13-Jan- 2025 17:00 hrs	19-Jan- 2025 17:00 hrs	14-Jan- 2025 12:20 hrs	20-Jan- 2025 12:20 hrs

This is online tender, where only e-tenders will be accepted in National e-GP portal and no offline and hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branched up to Banking hours as stated in IFT.

Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help Pdesk ([helpdesk@procure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@procure.gov.bd)) (01762625528-31). (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)

(Polash Kumar Banerjee)  
Executive Engineer,

Jashore Water Development Division,  
BWDB, Jashore.

GD-104



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## Four killed as ambulance, 2 buses catch fire after collision

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Four people were burnt to death, and seven others injured when an ambulance and two buses caught fire following a collision on the Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar yesterday.

The deceased were the passengers of the ambulance while the injured were the passengers of one of the buses, said Md Rakibul Islam, duty officer at the Fire Service Control Room.

The official said the ambulance first collided with a road median in the Fulbaria Police Town area around 2:00am.

A bus then crashed into the ambulance from behind, causing the vehicle's gas cylinder to explode, which triggered the fire.

A second bus, which collided with the burning vehicle, also caught fire, he said.

Five firefighting units brought the fire under control in an hour, the official said.

The ambulance and the two buses, however, were completely destroyed.

The injured have been sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for treatment.

The identities of the deceased could not be confirmed.

A firefighting helicopter is seen on the backdrop of plumes of smoke as a wildfire burns in Pacific Palisades, California. A fast-moving wildfire in a Los Angeles suburb burned buildings and sparked panicked evacuations as "life-threatening" winds whipped the region. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: AFP

## No room for favouritism in next polls: CEC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday said they were working wholeheartedly to hold free and fair polls.

"We are committed to holding fair, transparent, and acceptable elections," he said.

The CEC made the comments while speaking at the inaugural session of a workshop titled "Challenges in the Voter Registration Process and Ways to Overcome It" held at the Moulvibazar Bengal Convention Hall. The Election Commission Secretariat's Capacity Building Project and Moulvibazar District Election Office jointly organised the programme.

"We have assumed the posts not to favour any particular party, organisation or individual to win elections. We are here to hold fair elections," the CEC said.

"Our aim is to hold an election where people's votes will be the only deciding factor in winning an election."

The CEC also asked the field-level officers to work fearlessly, saying, "There

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

### BCS EXCLUSION

## Intel reports on 227 to be reviewed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A decision has been made to review the intelligence reports on 227 candidates who were excluded from the final gazette of the 43rd BCS.

This was decided at a meeting between Public Administration Senior Secretary Mokhles Ur Rahman and representatives from two intelligence agencies at the Secretariat yesterday.

However, individuals facing legal cases are unlikely to achieve favourable outcomes.

Talking to journalists, the senior secretary said, "Those who have no record of criminal offences can hope to join their positions."

Altogether, 267 candidates were excluded from the 43rd BCS in two gazette notifications on October 15 and December 30 last year.

Among them, 40 candidates did not attend their medical check-ups and will not be considered for the review. As a result, the review will focus on the remaining 227 candidates.

Sources indicate that the senior secretary has directed officials to approach the review process positively.

No specific reasons were disclosed for disqualification of 227 candidates,

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## Govt expands OMS programme across country

Sale of rice to begin Jan 12 in 422 upazilas amid rising prices of the staple

BAHARAM KHAN and SUKANTA HALDER

The interim government has expanded the Open Market Sales (OMS) programme across the country to help families cope with inflation, as retail prices of kitchen essentials continue to soar in the local market.

Sales will continue till February after the first phase of the programme begins on January 12, a food ministry official said.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Food Adviser Ali Imam Majumder said the price of rice has increased exponentially in the local market, which is why the government has taken the initiative to provide relief to the common people.

A ministry official told this newspaper that under the OMS initiative, around 1,752 centres across 422 upazilas in the country will sell rice. "Two tonnes of rice will be sold every day in each upazila."

Each person can purchase five kilograms of rice at Tk 30 per kg, the official said.

Over the past two years, real income reductions due to ongoing inflationary pressure have pushed at least 78 lakh people into poverty, shows the study by the Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID).

This includes 38 lakh people who have become extremely poor.

Besides, around 1 crore more are at risk of slipping below the poverty line due to continued inflationary pressures, said Md Deen Islam, research director of the RAPID.

In the past week, the price of coarse rice has increased by 6.67 percent and medium-grain rice by 1.63 percent, according to the state-run Trading Corporation of Bangladesh.

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## 'Unhealthy competition' on to cling to power

Says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said an "unhealthy competition" is going on to cling to power, and urged all political parties to prioritise unity and stability in these critical times.

"Since Sheikh Hasina fled on August 5 last year, we haven't been able to regain the trust among ourselves. We are failing to stay united .... what has started is unfortunate; I think it's not a healthy development. An unhealthy competition has begun to remain in power.

"You can only stay in power when you can ensure stability," he said at an event at the party chairperson's Gulshan office.

He, however, did not specifically name who his remarks were directed at.

A book, titled "Rajbandir Jabanbandi", which chronicles the court depositions given by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia

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## Mediators make some progress in Gaza truce talks

Say sources; 3 children among 17 killed in Israeli strikes

AGENCIES

US and Arab mediators have made some progress in their efforts to reach a ceasefire accord between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, but not enough to seal a deal, Palestinian sources close to the talks said yesterday.

As talks continued in Qatar, the Israeli military carried out strikes across the enclave, killing at least 17 people, Palestinian medics said.

The death toll included eight Palestinians killed in a house in Jabalia, the largest of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps, where Israeli forces have operated for more than three months. Nine others, including a father and his three children, died in two separate airstrikes on two houses in central Gaza Strip.

Israel's military offensive in the Gaza Strip has killed at least 46,006 Palestinians and wounded 109,378 since October 7, 2023, the Gaza health officials said yesterday.

Palestinian authorities, meanwhile, warned that the al-Aqsa, Nasser, and European hospitals face imminent closure over dire fuel shortages, reports Al Jazeera online.

Pope Francis yesterday stepped up his recent criticisms of Israel's military campaign in Gaza, calling the humanitarian situation in the Palestinian enclave "very serious and shameful".

- » Three Gaza hospitals face imminent closure over fuel shortages
- » Death toll in enclave rises to 46,006

## ACC sues Nixon, wife over Tk 3,162cr shady transactions

Nixon Chowdhury

Tarin Hossain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti Corruption Commission has filed two cases against Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, alias Nixon Chowdhury, a former Awami League lawmaker from Faridpur, and his wife Tarin Hossain for their alleged involvement in shady bank transactions of more than Tk 3,162 crore.

The two also face charges of amassing illegal wealth of about Tk 19.5 crore.

During his tenure as a lawmaker, Nixon, also nephew of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, abused his power and accumulated unexplained wealth of Tk 11.23 crore, according to the case statement filed with the ACC's Integrated District Office in Dhaka by its Assistant Director Ferdous Rahman yesterday.

Besides, Nixon, the younger brother of former chief whip Noor-E-Alam Chowdhury, also conducted unusual

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### PRETTY LI'L PECKERS

A male scarlet-backed flowerpecker gently perched on a twig in the Hazarikhil Sanctuary in Fatikchhari. This passerine bird is found in subtropical or tropical moist lowland forests, and occasionally gardens, in a number of countries throughout South and East Asia, including Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand and more. However, it is known to be rare in Nepal and Bhutan. It feeds primarily on seeds, fruits and flower nectar, hence the name "flowerpecker". The bird is sexually dimorphic, meaning the males and females are easily distinguishable – the male has navy blue upperparts with a bright red streak down its back from its crown to its tail coverts, while the female and juvenile are predominantly olive green.

PHOTO: MD SUMON

## FA'S CHINA VISIT Rohingya crisis, trade gap to top agenda

BSS, Dhaka

Addressing trade imbalances, attracting Chinese investments in Bangladesh and Rohingya issue will be on the agenda during Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain's upcoming bilateral visit to China from January 20 to 24, according to a foreign ministry's spokesperson.

"This year marks the golden jubilee of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and China.

The adviser's visit to China is therefore of significant importance," said spokesperson Mohammad Rafiqul Alam during a weekly media briefing at the foreign ministry yesterday.

The foreign adviser is expected to hold a bilateral meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi

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