



300 North Korean soldiers killed fighting in Ukraine
P7



Education deserves a reform commission
P8



No more concessions for India on border killings or fencing
P9



'Nahid Rana is pure gold'
P11

Reform panels aim to ensure power balance

Caretaker govt, bicameral parliament among key recommendations likely to be made tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four reform commissions are set to submit their reports to the government tomorrow and the Constitution Reform Commission and the Electoral Reform Commission are likely to propose a caretaker government system and a bicameral parliament.

The Police Reform Commission may recommend allowing the police to use only non-lethal weapons in crowd control to prevent loss of lives, adhering to the standards set by European countries.

The Anti-Corruption Commission Reform Commission is considering a recommendation to bar bureaucrats from holding secretary- to director-level positions at the ACC.

According to sources in the Constitution Reform Commission, its proposals may include a two-term limit for prime ministers to curb the head of government's absolute power. It may also recommend establishing a balance of



A large swathe of wetland in Khulna city's Khalishpur has been filled with sand to make way for a housing project. This has not only hampered the biodiversity but also increased the chances of flooding in the area. Such unplanned housing projects are largely behind the shrinking of agriculture lands and wetlands. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

BORDER FENCES 'India followed all protocols, agreements'

Delhi summons Bangladesh envoy to convey message

STAR REPORT

India said it has abided by all protocols and agreements between the governments and border security forces of the two countries with regard to security measures at the border, including barbed wire fencing.

The message was conveyed to Bangladesh's acting high commissioner to India Nural Islam, who was summoned by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to the South Block yesterday afternoon.

The summoning came a day after Bangladesh foreign ministry summoned Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma amid tensions touched off by the recent BSF activities along the shared border.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 7

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Two-term limit for PM
- Balance of power between PM, president
- A 21-year-old can run for parliament
- Election winner goes to lower house
- Proportional representation for upper house
- Direct vote for seats reserved for women
- Non-lethal weapons for police to control crowds
- Clipping ACC secretary's powers to transfer investigators

power between the prime minister and the president. The commission is also likely to recommend bringing the minimum age to 21 from 25 to run for parliament.

Meanwhile, the Electoral Reform Commission is expected to recommend the formation of a high-level parliamentary committee, under the Speaker, with representatives from political parties, that would hold election commissioners accountable for any irregularities during elections.

Additionally, the Electoral Reform Commission is considering a dual voting system. The first-past-the-post (FPTP) method, where the candidate with the most votes wins, is suggested for the lower house of parliament. For the proposed upper house, the commission is likely to recommend a proportional representation system, said a member of the reform commission without elaborating further.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BNP wants nat'l polls by mid-2025

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The BNP wants the national election by the middle of this year and local government polls afterwards.

The party believes that local government polls before parliamentary election would be a delaying tactic.

"The government should abandon plans for local government elections and instead focus on holding a national election by mid-year, in line with the public aspirations," said a standing committee member wishing anonymity.

The issue was discussed during a standing committee meeting, the highest policymaking body of the BNP, at the party chairperson's Gulshan office last night.

Party's acting chairman Tarique Rahman joined the meeting from London virtually.

Meeting sources said the party leaders were for putting pressure on the interim government through seminars and discussions to have the general election by the middle of this year.

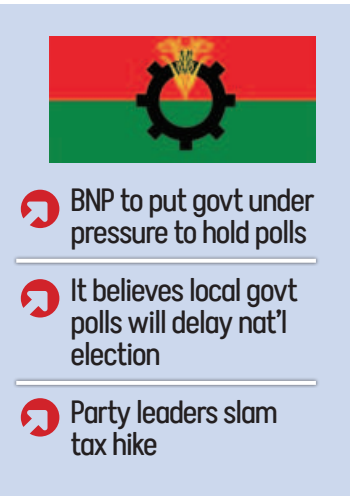
"We have supported the government, and we will continue it. But that does not mean that the government will remain in the office for an indefinite period," said another standing committee member.

The interim government has indicated that the national election is likely to be held either later this year or early next year, depending on reaching a consensus on reforms. The government has also stated that if there is no significant demand for widespread reforms from the political parties, the polls may be scheduled earlier.

The BNP, however, maintains that reforms are an ongoing process and should continue, but the election should only be conducted after implementing the necessary reforms.

The meeting also discussed in details the local government polls. All senior leaders said this attempt will delay the general election as local government polls will take place in different phases and it will take more than one and a half years to complete the process.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



- BNP to put govt under pressure to hold polls
- It believes local govt polls will delay nat'l election
- Party leaders slam tax hike

NOAKHALI-FENI Floodwaters gone months ago but sufferings linger

PINAKI ROY with ANWARUL HAIDER

Nineteen-year-old Sajjad Hossain had no alternative but to start building a new thatched home for his two sisters, mother and himself since their house was swept away by a flood four months ago in Pashchim Aloka village, situated on the banks of Muhuri river in Feni's Parshuram upazila.

Initially, they opted to live in his grandmother's house in Gutuma village, around 12km away from their own, after the devastating flood hit in August. "Within a few hours of rain, the embankment on the river broke down and the water entered our home. At first, we took shelter in a neighbour's under-construction house. After staying there for a few days, we moved to our grandmother's house."

At that time, some government officials visited the Pashchim Aloka village, while some non-government organisations listed the flood-hit victims, including Sajjad and his family.

"We initially received some food assistance and were given Tk 12,000 collected by eight separate sources... But nothing since then."

After a four-month wait for proper assistance and relief, Sajjad took it upon himself to build a house on the yard of their previously destroyed house. He took help from his neighbour Md Liton Mia - another victim.

Visiting the yard earlier last month, this correspondent saw Sajjad, a diploma student of electrical engineering, working on the thatched house with Liton.

"We couldn't recover anything from our old house except for some corrugated tin sheets from the rooftop. We've started afresh and bought everything for this new house," he told The Daily Star.

He added that his mother had to borrow money from relatives so that he

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

ILLEGAL PLOT ALLOCATION Hasina, Rehana, her children sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed three separate cases against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana, Rehana's son Radwan Mujib Siddiq Bobby, and her daughters Azmina Siddiq Ruponti, and Tulip Rizwana Siddiq, also a British lawmaker.

The accused have been charged with abuse of power to influence high-ranking officials at the Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) to secure plots in the diplomatic zone of Sector 27, Road 203, in the Purbachal New Town Project. The allocation includes three 10-katha plots.

The cases were filed at the ACC's Integrated District Office in Dhaka, ACC Director General Akhtar Hossain told journalists.

Rehana, Bobby, and Azmina have been named as the prime accused in the cases, while Hasina and Tulip are listed as co-accused. Each case names an additional 12 to 13 individuals, including officials from the Ministry of Housing and Public Works and Rajuk.

Speaking to reporters, ACC DG Akhtar said British lawmaker Tulip Siddiq influenced Sheikh Hasina to secure the Purbachal plots, adding that the ACC has gathered sufficient evidence to support the allegations.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Parents waiting with their sick children at the Dhaka Shishu Hospital yesterday. According to doctors, the hospital sees around 60-70 new patients every day, most of them suffering from pneumonia, diarrhoea, and other cold-related illnesses.

HASINA'S VOICE RECORDINGS ICT orders CID, BTRC to verify evidence

Abu Sayed's brother files complaint against her with tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday ordered the CID and BTRC to verify the authenticity of key voice recordings and other digital evidence related to Sheikh Hasina and her associates in connection with the 2024 uprising.

The tribunal gave the order after prosecutor Tanvir Hassan Zoha filed a petition requesting its intervention in authenticating the evidence by the Criminal Investigation Department and the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission.

During the hearing on the petition, Zoha informed the court that call records and digital evidence involving ousted prime minister Hasina and others had been collected from various sources. He emphasised that these materials are critical for the trial of crimes against humanity committed during the July-August uprising.

"Once authenticated, the call records and other evidence will be submitted to the court as documentary proof," Zoha told the tribunal. He claimed while technical assistance has been sought from the CID and other relevant authorities, the CID's lack of cooperation caused delays.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



MIGRANT WORKERS Yunus urges KL to issue multi- entry visas

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus urged Malaysia to issue multiple-entry visas for Bangladeshi workers employed there to facilitate their return home as and when required.



He raised the issue when Malaysian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Mohd Shuhada Othman called on him at the State Guest House Jamuna yesterday.

Yunus also urged that the entry of 18,000 Bangladeshi workers, who missed the deadline to join their work in Malaysia last year, be facilitated.

Mohd Shuhada Othman said a joint technical committee, comprising officials from both countries, held a meeting in this regard in Kuala Lumpur on December 31, and a similar meeting was planned to be held on Tuesday.

Recalling his meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim in Dhaka in October, the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



This picture, taken from the Israeli side of the border with the Gaza Strip, shows smoke plumes rising from explosions above destroyed buildings in northern Gaza yesterday amid the ongoing Israeli offensive in the Palestinian enclave.

PHOTO: AFP

63 lawyers, including Chinmoy's counsels, get bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday granted bail to 63 lawyers, including the counsels of former ISKCON leader Chinmoy Krishna Das, in a case filed over clashes and vandalism on the court premises on November 26.

The violence broke out following the rejection of bail of Chinmoy, who was arrested on charges of disrespecting the national flag.

Yesterday, Additional Metropolitan Magistrate Sarker Hasan Shahriar passed the bail order after the lawyers surrendered before the court seeking bail, said Public Prosecutor Mofizul Hoque Bhuiyan.

Senior Supreme Court lawyer Subrata Chowdhury, who represented the lawyers during the hearing, told The Daily Star, "The court heard all parties. We informed the court that the death of lawyer Saiful Islam Alif [amid clashes on November 26] was a tragic incident, and the perpetrators must be punished.

"However, the accused lawyers were not involved in the clashes or vandalism. Additionally, no lawyer's name was mentioned in the murder case filed by Alif's father. The court carefully reviewed the arguments and granted bail."

The case was lodged by Alif's brother following the clashes. The court granted bail to 63 out of the 66 accused on a bond of Tk 5,000 each.

The hearing was held under tight security, and some of Alif's associates reportedly objected to the court's decision to grant bail.

On November 25, Chinmoy, also the spokesperson for Sammilita Sanatani Jagaran Jote, was arrested at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka in the case filed with a Chattogram police station.

Reform panels aim to ensure power balance

FROM PAGE 1

Ali Riaz, chief of the Constitution Reform Commission, Badiul Alam Majumdar, chief of the Electoral Reform Commission, Itekhazuzzaman, chief of the ACC Reform Commission and Safar Raj Hossain, chief of the Police Reform Commission, confirmed this newspaper yesterday that they are set to submit their reports tomorrow.

"The balance of power will not be limited to the president and prime minister. A balance of power will be established by creating more institutions to place the government's executive branch under surveillance and prevent the prime minister's misuse of power," Ali Riaz told The Daily Star yesterday.

Badiul said their recommendations would be discussed internally within the government and also with political parties. He hopes these discussions will lead to a consensus.

After taking charge in August, the interim government formed at least 15 reform commissions to strengthen weakened democratic institutions, and establish a state system rooted in public ownership, accountability, and welfare.

The first six commissions for reforming the constitution, electoral system, police, judiciary, public administration, and the ACC were formed on October 3. They were given

90 days to submit their reports.

The deadline for the Judiciary Reform Commission was extended to January 31 and the remaining five to January 15.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Constitution Reform Commission is likely to recommend the inclusion of equality, human dignity, and social justice in the preamble to the constitution in line with the proclamation of the 1971 Liberation War.

The commission plans to propose enhancing parliamentary standing committees' ability to monitor the government's activities and hold the executive branch and prime minister accountable. It will also recommend repealing Article 70 of the constitution, which practically stops MPs from voting against party lines.

The Electoral Reform Commission is set to recommend the reintroduction of "No" vote option on ballot papers and direct election to seats reserved for women. The commission is also in favour of increasing the seats for women to 100 from 50, and the total number of lawmakers in the lower house to 400 from 350. It is likely to recommend 400 seats for the upper house.

Members of the commission said they were likely to recommend

a non-party caretaker government system ahead of polls, amending the law for the appointments of election commissioners and their chief, increasing the EC's authority under the Representation of the People Order (RPO), and making the EC more accountable.

They are also considering recommending provisions that will require candidates to disclose their foreign assets in their affidavits and the verification of the information provided in the affidavits.

Sources in the Police Reform Commission said that their recommendations might include freeing law enforcement agencies from political influence.

They will also stress the importance of reducing corruption and ensuring accountability through exemplary punishment of offenders in law enforcement agencies.

The commission is likely to propose guidelines following High Court Division and Appellate Division directives regarding arrests without warrants under Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the treatment of individuals on remand under Section 167 of the CrPC.

These directives include: police officers must disclose their identity and present ID cards after arresting

the suspects; reasons for arrests must be recorded in a register; relatives of the arrestee must be informed within an hour; detainees should have access to a lawyer or relatives; interrogations during remand must occur in a designated room with a transparent glass wall, where a lawyer or relative can observe the proceedings.

The ACC Reform Commission is likely to recommend ensuring the appointment of neutral persons as ACC commissioners and chairman. The reform commission is likely to propose repealing the controversial section 54 of the ACC Employees (Service) Rules. The section gives the ACC secretary absolute authority to transfer investigation officers. It also permits the dismissal of employees without prior notice.

Employees argue that this provision undermines their ability to conduct independent and impartial investigations.

According to sources, the commission may recommend expanding the current three-member ACC to a five-member body by amending the Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2004. Additionally, the commission is considering a proposal to establish integrated ACC offices in all 64 districts, up from 36.

Bangladeshi cattle trader shot by 'BSF' in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A Bangladeshi cattle trader was shot allegedly by the Indian Border Security Force along Patgram border in Lalmonirhat on Sunday night.

Shahidul Islam, 42, of Kashidanga village of the same upazila, was shot around 11:30pm, said Subedar Jahangir Alam, commander of Shamsnagar BGB company camp.

Other cattle traders rescued and admitted him to a clinic in Rangpur city, Jahangir said.

A group of five six cattle traders were smuggling in cattle from India's Maynati village in West Bengal's Cooch Behar district, he said.

A BSF patrolling team fired bullets, and one of them hit Shahidul in his leg, he added.

A family member of Shahidul said that he was now out of danger.

ICT orders CID

FROM PAGE 1

"The CID has informed the prosecution that court approval is necessary to proceed with verification. This has created challenges in certifying the evidence, which led us to seek the court's guidance," Zoha added.

Acknowledging the petition's significance, the three-member bench led by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Majumdar directed the CID and BTRC to verify the evidence. Justice Md Shofiqul Alam Mahmood and Justice M Mohitul Hoque Anam Chowdhury were also part of the bench.

Chief Prosecutor Muhammad Tajul Islam later told reporters that all digital evidence must be certified by the CID in line with the law before being presented in court.

"We have collected substantial digital evidence from multiple sources. To ensure its certification, we submitted a petition requesting the court to instruct the CID to expedite this process," he said.

Tajul, however, dismissed allegations of a lack of cooperation from government agencies. "This is an ongoing process. There's no need to blame any agency at this stage. If non-cooperation persists, legal measures can be taken under the law, but for now, we seek everyone's cooperation to prevent misunderstandings."

He also said the petition was not limited to obtaining call records for any specific individual but aimed at verifying the certification of all relevant digital evidence.

Hasina, Rehana

FROM PAGE 1

The complainant in Rehana's case is ACC Deputy Director Md Salahuddin. Assistant Director SM Rashedul Hasan is the complainant in Bobby's case, while Assistant Director Afnan Jannat Keya lodged the case against Azmina.

In Rehana's case, the accused include Hasina, Tulip, and 15 others, including officials from the housing ministry and Rajuk.

Similarly, in the case against Bobby, the accused include Hasina, Tulip, and 16 others. In the case against Azmina, the accused include Tulip, Hasina, and 16 others.

Earlier, on Sunday, the ACC filed another case against Hasina, her daughter Saima Wazed Putul, the secretary of the housing ministry, and 16 others for allegedly abusing power to secure six 10-katha plots in Purbachal.

This is the fourth probe initiated by the ACC against Hasina following her removal from office on August 5.

On December 22, 2024, the commission began investigating Hasina and her son Saieeb Wazed Joy over allegations of laundering \$300 million to the United States.

On December 17, 2024, the ACC launched a probe into two complaints of embezzlement amounting to Tk 80,000 crore involving Hasina and her family in nine major projects,

including the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant.

OPPOSITION WANT TULIP FIRED

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer faced fresh pressure yesterday to sack Tulip Siddiq, his anti-corruption minister, amid claims that she lived in properties linked to her aunt Hasina and the Awami League party she led, reports AFP.

Tulip has insisted that she has done nothing wrong.

Earlier this month, Tulip referred herself to Starmer's standards adviser. Asked yesterday whether Tulip's position in the UK government remained tenable, senior British minister Pat McFadden told Sky News she had "done the right thing" with the self-referral.

He insisted the standards adviser had the powers to "carry out investigations into allegations like this".

"That is what he is doing, and that is the right way to deal with this," McFadden said.

But UK opposition politicians want Siddiq fired.

"I think it's untenable for her to carry out her role," the Conservatives' finance spokesman Mel Stride told Times Radio on Sunday.

"It's inappropriate for Tulip to be in the position that she holds at the moment. She is the anti-corruption minister in government."

Floodwaters gone months ago but sufferings linger

FROM PAGE 1

could build the new house.

Md Liton, who has been helping Sajjad, had his own home swept away. Along with that, the paddy he cultivated on an acre of land was destroyed.

"I have been spending my nights sleeping under a makeshift shed.

"After some initial flood assistance, there has been no help. I'm now trying to survive as a day labourer and by helping people build new homes for themselves."

Liton further said 12 homes of the village were completely destroyed but only three families got financial assistance from different companies and organisations to rebuild their homes. He, however, was not lucky enough.

The situation is no different in the neighbouring district of Noakhali.

Tajul Islam, a timber trader of Babunagar village in Begumganj upazila, said his house had been waterlogged for over a month since the floods.

"My house was not washed away completely but it has been severely damaged. The corrugated tin sheets have to be changed, and the wood and bamboo were also destroyed.

"My business is also not going too well as people don't have money in their hands in the face of such a situation. And so, I don't have money to fix my own house either."

GOVT SUPPORT 'NOT ENOUGH'

The late August floods caused damage worth an estimated Tk 14,421.46 crore, and the government would need to increase its budget for relief distribution, according to a study of the Centre for Policy Dialogue released on October 6 last year.

Noakhali endured 29.07 percent of the damages, followed by Cumilla at 23.51 percent; Feni at 18.61 percent; and Chattogram at 11.63 percent.

According to data from the DC offices, over 90 percent of the populations in Feni and Noakhali – the hardest hit districts in the August floods – have been severely affected.

in Noakhali and 110 in Feni.

At least 8,453 houses – 50 concrete, 350 semi pucca and 8,053 thatched – have been completely damaged, while 1,46,439 were partially damaged.

Noakhali DC Estiaque said, "Though the government is initially providing 90 houses, the support is not enough for the victims," adding that the government is supposed to allocate more houses later.

The district administration has provided aid to nearly 21 lakh flood-affected people in 87 unions and eight municipalities across nine upazilas of the district. The relief measures include Tk 58.98 lakh in cash, 1,800 metric tonnes of rice, 1,000 packets of dry food, Tk 15 lakh for baby food, and Tk 15 lakh for animal feed.

Meanwhile for Feni, the government has prepared a list of 8,659 families who have lost their homes. According to the list, 1,798 houses have been completely damaged, while 6,941 were partially damaged.

Of the 110 houses to be built by the government for the victims, 35 will be in Feni Sadar upazila, 20 in Fulgazi, 20 in Chhagalnaiya, 20 in Parshuram, 10 in Daganbhuiyan.

The army was given the task to build these houses, Feni DC Saiful said.

Meanwhile, the government has also allocated 400 bundles of corrugated tin sheets and Tk 12 lakh in six upazilas.

In Fulgazi upazila, the Bangladesh Army has provided four bundles of corrugated tin sheets to 157 families and repaired 15 houses, while the Bangladesh Navy repaired 85 houses.

In both districts, different international development partners, including UNDP, WFP, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, BRAC, As-Sunnah Foundation, Mastul Foundation YPSA, RIC, Gulf Co-Operative Society have provided cash assistance to some selected flood victims to help them repair their damaged homes.

However, the number of recipients is far less than the number of victims.

DEPENDENT ON DEBT

In Noakhali's Subarnachar upazila, all the crops grown by Jamal Uddin in Char Amanullah village were damaged in the floods.

"I had to take a loan from an NGO to do so. Now, they come to my house every day for the repayment in instalments, but I am unable to pay it.

Md Mainuddin, of Char Darbeshpur village, never had to purchase rice as he would grow his own. "But the flood damaged all my crops, my fish farm and my house.

"I had to take a loan of Tk 10 lakh from the bank to start my business afresh. Now I have to pay Tk 48,000 per month for two years. But I don't have any income to be able to do so."

Speaking to The Daily Star, Noakhali's Fisheries Officer Md Iqbal Hossain said at least 85,000 fish farms were flushed out during the flood, resulting in a loss of Tk 600 crore.

"But none of the farmers received a single penny from government as support."

Md Saiful Islam, executive director of NGO Sagarika Samaj Unnayan Sangstha, said the number of people taking loans from them has shot up since the flood.

In June and July 2024, the NGO distributed Tk 111.53 crore among 11,538 borrowers before the flood.



However, during the flood in August and September, 7,725 people took loans worth Tk 62.79.

In October and November, after the flood, loan distribution rose sharply and 17,261 people took loans worth Tk 128.24 crore.

Saiful said a total of 30 NGOs have been working to assist in flood-affected areas. "I believe the amount of loans given has increased in all NGOs as the victims need them to start working again."

Mohammad Kamruzzaman, branch manager of TMSS (Tangail-based NGO Thengamara Mohila Sabuj Sangha) in Noakhali, told The Daily Star that the organisation has disbursed over Tk 100 crore in microloans. TMSS currently operates 17 branches in the district.

"Borrowers primarily take microloans to rebuild homes damaged by the floods or to invest in agricultural activities," he said, adding that the demand for loans has been overwhelming since the flood.

"We carefully evaluate each applicant to ensure they have the capacity to repay the instalments before approving the

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Fakhrul discusses bilateral issues with Chinese envoy

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday had a meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Dhaka Yao Wen and discussed various issues relating to the bilateral interests of the two nations.

The hour-long meeting, which began around 11:00am, took place at the Chinese ambassador's Baridhara residence, said a BNP leader close to Fakhrul.

The Chinese embassy, in a post on its verified Facebook page, said the ambassador met the BNP secretary general. It also said the two sides exchanged views on issues of mutual concern.

On August 21 last year, the Chinese envoy met a BNP delegation, led by Fakhrul, reaffirming China's commitment to supporting Bangladesh.



Speakers at a discussion titled "Pathways to a Just Energy Transition: Balancing Sustainability, Equity, and Industry Growth in the RMG Sector," at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

RMG sector must lead renewable energy push

Speakers tell discussion; call on govt to align policies, set timeline to achieve net zero emissions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although not a major carbon-emitting country, Bangladesh can emerge as a global pioneer in carbon reduction as a victim of climate change, experts said at an event yesterday.

They said the RMG sector should lead this effort, given its potential to increase the use of renewable energy in factories. Additionally, they called on the government to align policies and set a timeline to achieve net zero emissions.

The remarks were made during a discussion titled "Pathways to a Just Energy Transition: Balancing Sustainability, Equity, and Industry Growth in the RMG Sector," at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

The event was jointly organised by The Daily Star and Oxfam.

In his keynote presentation, Dr Mohammad Emran Hasan, head

of Climate Justice and Natural Resource Rights (CJNRR), said while Bangladesh contributes minimally to global carbon emissions, it is among the most impacted countries globally.

He said the RMG and textile industries could save approximately 1,159 kilotonnes of oil equivalent (KTOE) of energy annually by adopting energy-efficient machinery and conservation measures.

The overall industrial sector in Bangladesh consumes about 3,740 KTOE per year.

Hasan suggested measures such as introducing Solar PV Systems, Net Metering Policy, energy-efficient machinery and processes, automation and digitalisation, green financing initiatives, and access to green bonds to ensure a just energy transition.

Azad Abul Kalam, manager

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

A betrayal of July uprising's spirit

Speakers on removal of the word 'Adivasi' from textbook

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Removal of the word "Adivasi" from the back cover of NCTB textbooks is a betrayal of the July uprising's spirit, said speakers at an event yesterday.

"Those who participated in the July uprising were not in favour of removing the term 'Adivasi'. If they were, it wouldn't have appeared in graffiti on the streets," said Khushi Kabir, executive director of Nijera Kori.

She was speaking at a remembrance event marking the first death anniversary of indigenous leader Rabindranath Soren at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

She criticised the decision to remove the word, saying, "Why are we so quick to consider such changes just to appease a small group?"

She urged people to resist the discrimination that comes with minoritisation.

"Bangladesh has begun to dream of a new future through anti discrimination movements. To realise that, we must work to end long-standing inequalities and secure the rights of all, including indigenous peoples," Khushi Kabir said.

She also called for a separate land commission for indigenous peoples in the plains and demanded the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

The withdrawn cover symbolised Bangladesh's diversity, pluralism, and multi-ideological identity. We cannot let this achievement of the uprising be wasted.

Shamsul Huda
ALRD Executive Director

ROAD ACCIDENTS IN 2024

Fatalities rise as initiatives ineffective

5,480 lives lost on roads, says BRTA

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

At least 5,480 people died in 5,856 road crashes in 2024, according to the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority.

This marks a nine percent rise in fatalities and a 6.57 percent rise in crashes compared to 2023, as per the data released on its website yesterday.

BRTA collected the data through its field offices across the country.

The development comes at a time when most government initiatives to curb road crashes have remained ineffective.

On January 4, Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity presented its annual report, in which it reported 8,543 deaths in 6,359 road crashes in 2024, reflecting an 8.11 percent increase in fatalities and a 1.56 percent rise in crashes compared to the previous year.

On January 8, the Road Safety Foundation reported 7,294 fatalities last year, a 12 percent increase from 2023.

Referring to the Road Safety Foundation report, Fouzul Kabir Khan on Saturday said, "We, the interim government, take responsibility for it. We take responsibility that we could not reduce the number of road crashes and deaths."



Data from both government and NGOs indicates that small and unauthorised vehicles, including motorcycles, three-wheelers, and battery-run easy bikes, are major contributors to road crashes.

In 2015, the previous government banned three-wheelers on 22 major highways but failed to enforce the restriction. The situation remained unchanged after the change in

government in August 2024.

The previous government had taken two separate initiatives to prepare a regulation guideline for three-wheelers and motorcycles, but they were not finalised.

No progress is still visible in this regard. However, Senior Secretary Ehsanul Hoque recently said the Local Government Division is working on a guideline for battery-run easy bikes.

Old and outdated vehicles also contribute significantly to crashes.

In May 2023, the then government set 20 years for buses and 25 years for trucks as economic lifetime, but it backtracked from the decision in August, 2023.

In October last year, the interim government gave vehicle owners until May this year to remove outdated vehicles from the capital, but no visible action was taken for such vehicles in other parts of the country.

Admitting failures to curb road crashes, the road adviser said BRTA

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

1972 CONSTITUTION

'Repealing it is like denying Liberation War'

Say 36 freedom fighters in a statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-six decorated freedom fighters have condemned and protested the attempt to repeal the 1972 constitution, saying that the issues achieved and resolved through the Liberation War cannot be questioned or changed.

In a joint media statement issued yesterday, they also condemned and protested the incidents of assaulting and humiliating the freedom fighters, vandalising their homes and offices of the Muktiyoddha Sangsad across the country since August 5.

The gallantry award recipient freedom fighters said amending or updating the constitution to meet the aspirations of the people as per the need of the time is an ongoing process, but repealing the 1972 constitution achieved through the great Liberation War means denying the Liberation War and betraying the three million martyrs.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

The previous governments have repeatedly distorted the original constitution of 1972 in their own ways to achieve their interests.

Seize tax documents of Benazir, daughter

Court directs ACC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday directed the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to seize income tax documents of former Inspector General of Police Benazir Ahmed and his eldest daughter, Farheen Rishta Binte Benazir, over allegations of illegally amassing wealth.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of the Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court issued the order after ACC Deputy Director Md Hafizul Islam, who is leading the investigation, filed two applications.

ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir moved the petitions on behalf of the anti-graft body.

In the applications, the ACC official said Benazir

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Prioritise justice, stop crime

IGP instructs police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam yesterday said police must make every effort to stop crimes like extortion, mugging, and murder.

He said this while attending DMP's monthly crime review meeting for December at the Police Auditorium in Rajarbagh.

"Police must work with honesty and stay on the path of justice. They must make every effort to stop extortion, mugging, and murder. With the highest level of professionalism, police must eliminate all crimes, including extortion and drug-related offenses," he said. Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali said a zero-tolerance policy must be followed for snatchers and extortionists. Muggers and extortionists must be arrested.

He said the police stations of DMP must play a more active role. Progress in the investigation of cases must be further increased.

"A response must be provided within an hour of filing the GD at the police station, and necessary actions related to it should be initiated immediately," he said.

He also said the recovery of stolen mobile phones must be given the utmost importance. "If we all work together, the public will regain full trust in the police," he said.

Additional Commissioner (Crime and Operations) SN Nazrul Islam and Additional Police Commissioner (Admin) Faruk Ahmed also spoke.



NO GAS... An empty filling station in the Paribagh area of Dhaka yesterday. It had to shut down operations around 2:00pm due to a countrywide gas shortage.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

CHILMARI-ROUMARI ROUTE

Navigability crisis halts ferry services

S DILIP ROY

Ferry services on the Chilmari-Roumari route have been suspended since December 23 last year due to a navigability crisis on the Brahmaputra River.

Passengers now rely on boats, paying nearly three times the usual ferry fare.

Prafulla Chauhan, manager (commerce) of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC) at Chilmari River Port, said ferry services were halted due to dredging and navigability issues in the river.

The suspension has disrupted travel and commerce for locals.

Amzad Hossain, a businessman who frequently uses the route, said, "Crossing the river by boat is risky and costs three times more. The ferry service should be restored quickly."

Truck driver Delowar Hossain, who arrived at Chilmari port with a stone-laden truck, was unaware of the ferry service suspension. Now stuck, he said he was uncertain about when he can transport his cargo to Rajibpur.

This correspondent also noticed several boats near the port, used for transporting



passengers. Boatman Saiful Islam said due to the ferry service closure, many people are using boats to cross the river. He also said high diesel costs have forced them to charge higher fares.

BIWTC manager Prafulla said services will resume once the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) grants clearance, although no timeline has been confirmed.

Contacted, BIWTA deputy assistant engineer Md Kamruzzaman said a survey is underway to address the navigability crisis.

A six-kilometre stretch from Baldamara to Roumari Ghat is affected, with a char forming in the channel near Saheber Alga. The survey is expected to conclude soon, and dredging will begin to reactivate the channel and restore ferry services, he added.

RMG sector must

FROM PAGE 3

of Just Energy Transition at ActionAid, said policymakers should prioritise energy sovereignty over energy security.

"If they want energy security, they would plan more energy imports, but if they think about energy sovereignty, they would focus on relying on local resources like gas, solar, and wind," he said.

Azad said the ousted government had showcased the power sector as their greatest success, but the Ukraine war exposed its vulnerabilities.

"During that time, when fuel prices spiked globally, the industries faced the most trouble," he said.

Wasiur Rahman Tonmoy, senior coordinator of capacity development at Manusher Jonno Foundation, said, "We analysed 23 policy papers in Bangladesh's power and energy sector. None of the papers incorporated women's access to energy. Moreover, the rights of marginalised people to energy are also overlooked."

Shahriar Ahmed Chowdhury, head of the Centre for Energy Research at United International University, said there were misalignments in government plans for the power and energy sector.

"Local experts were not involved in the process; the planning was injected. Foreign experts introduced unproven technologies into those papers," he said. He said transmission and distribution systems are still not ready to handle solar energy.

Sohanur Rahman, executive coordinator at YouthNet Global, stressed the importance of capacity-building for a green transition.

"As zero carbonisation is one of the major goals of the chief adviser, it is time

for Bangladesh to take the lead. We need initiatives to develop green skills and jobs, especially for youths and women," he said.

He also called for mass public consultations and worker-level input in future plans.

Former BGMEA president Faruque Hassan said there are inefficiencies in industrial energy use. "Industries are wasting around 28 percent of their energy. SREDA has initiated energy audits, but these efforts need to expand. Energy-saving technologies can help industries save energy and reduce dependence on imported fuel," he said.

Oxfam Country Director Ashish Damle highlighted global shifts back to fossil fuels, which could impact Bangladesh.

"Bangladesh needs a strong policy commitment. This is the right time to collaborate with the most affected countries and demonstrate leadership," he said.

Dr Munjurul Hannan Khan, executive director of NACOM, pointed out the lack of inter-departmental collaboration.

"Policies from the environment ministry are ignored by the energy ministry and vice versa. We also lack a specific timeline for achieving net-zero targets," he said.

He urged the government to remove taxes on renewable energy.

Shariful Islam, Oxfam's head of Influencing, Communication, Advocacy and Media, conducted the discussion.

Among others, Helvetas Bangladesh's Mohammad Mahmudul Hasan, Laudes Bangladesh's programme manager Faiza Tuba, journalist Mahfuzur Rahman Mishu, and The Daily Star's in-charge of NGOs and Foreign Missions Tanjim Ferdous spoke.

It may have

FROM PAGE 5

with Sheikh Hasan Itekhhar alias Chalu, a former ward councillor of Khulna City Corporation, and the woman, who, according to some sources, is a student in Khulna.

Later, Chalu, alongside Mejbah Haque Bhutto, a resident of Cox's Bazar's Tekpara who is close to Tipu, was arrested by Rab and sent to jail. CCTV footage from the hotel shows Tipu leaving the hotel with the woman at 6:31pm on Thursday.

Rab is conducting a shadow investigation into the murder, said Lt Col HM Sajjad Hossain, commanding officer of Rab-15.

Recovered bullet shells confirm the murder weapon was a 9mm pistol, likely made in Myanmar, he added.

Both Rab and police officials believe Tipu was a victim of a targeted killing. Several police officers, seeking anonymity, said Tipu might have been killed due to past enmity in Khulna.

Meanwhile, police have sought a 10-day remand for Chalu and Mejbah, said Jasim Uddin, additional superintendent of Cox's Bazar District Police.

The date for the remand hearing has not been set yet, he added.

During initial questioning, Chalu claimed he was visiting Cox's Bazar with Tipu, said OC Ilyas Khan.

Equipment

FROM PAGE 5

However, no one involved in the theft could be arrested.

Abu Taleb, a sub-inspector of the police station and also investigation officer, said necessary legal action will be taken upon investigation.

Kalapara OC Mohammad Jewel Islam said efforts are on to identify and arrest those involved in the incident.

A betrayal of July uprising's spirit

FROM PAGE 3

activation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Land Commission.

Shamsul Huda, executive director of ALRD, said, "Graffiti is part of a people's uprising. Removing or altering it disrespects that history, and we will not tolerate such actions."

He added, "The withdrawn cover

symbolised Bangladesh's diversity, pluralism, and multi-ideological identity. We cannot let this achievement of the uprising be wasted."

Ruhin Hossain Prince, general secretary of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), paid tribute to Rabindranath Soren, saying, "Throughout his 67 years, Rabindranath

Soren worked tirelessly for the progress of society, the country, and civilisation."

He criticised the removal of "Adivasi" from textbooks, saying, "Someone makes a statement, and the cover is immediately changed. This has heightened fears among indigenous communities about preserving their identity during this interim government period."

Writer and researcher Pavel Partha presented a keynote paper at the event.

Other speakers included Rajekuzzaman Ratan, assistant general secretary of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal; Dipayan Khisha, PCJSS leader; Saiful Haque, general secretary of Biplobi Workers Party; Zakir Hossain, executive director of Nagorik Uddyog; and

Bichitra Tirki, president of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad.

The speakers unanimously called for preserving the legacy of the July uprising and ensuring that the term "Adivasi" remains an integral part of the nation's narrative.

Fatalities rise

FROM PAGE 3

officials will be held accountable for crashes caused by unfit vehicles or unlicensed drivers.

Other agencies, including the Roads and Highways Department, will also be responsible for crashes resulting from their negligence, he said.

The head of one of the agencies under the ministry said the ministry issued similar warnings earlier, but they had little effect, as issues like extortion by transport associations contribute to disorder in the sector, which in turn causes road crashes. Speeding vehicles are another major cause of crashes.

In May 2024, the previous government introduced speed limits for vehicles, but the guidelines remain unimplemented under both the previous and interim governments.

Seize tax

FROM PAGE 3

allegedly acquired assets worth Tk 9.44 crore illegally and concealed information on assets worth Tk 2.62 crore.

However, ACC found information of Tk 14,05,16,391, which is inconsistent with his income. To ensure a fair investigation, the commission requested access to all income tax returns and related records.

Farheen allegedly acquired illegal assets worth Tk 8,75,03,374, which are also outside known sources of income.

So, it is necessary to seize the income tax returns to investigate the matter in a proper way, ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud said.

Repealing it is like denying

FROM PAGE 3

In the more than half a century since Bangladesh's independence, the previous governments have repeatedly distorted the original constitution of 1972 in their own ways to achieve their interests, thus going against the original spirit of the Liberation War, they said.

In the statement, the freedom fighters said, "The constitution of 1972 cannot be repealed under any circumstances, but rather we strongly demand from the current interim government that the original constitution of 1972 be reinstated in its entirety."

The statement was signed by the Titled Freedom Fighters Association Secretary General Md Shahjahan Kabir (Bir Pratik).

Other signatories include AW Chowdhury Bir Uttam and Bir Pratik, Captain (retd) Shahab Uddin (Bir Uttam), Major (retd) ATM Hamidul Hossain (Bir Bikram), Lt Col (retd) Abdur Rouf (Bir Bikram), Honorary Captain (retd) Abdul Haque Bir Bikram, Abul Kalam Azad (Bir Bikram), Maj Gen (retd) Md. Masudur Rahman Bir Pratik, Captain Kazi A Sattar Bir Pratik, DIG (retd) Kazi Joyal Abedin Bir Pratik, Md Momin

Ullah Patwari Bir Pratik and Anwar Hossain Pahari Bir Pratik.

The other freedom fighters who signed the letter are Mizanur Rahman Khan Bir Pratik, Mozammel Haque Mahbub Elahi Ranju, Nur Uddin, Mohiuddin Manik, Bahar Uddin Reza, Professor Abdullah Al Mamun, Delwar Hossain, Ratan Ali Sharif, Syed Rezwan Ali, Rafiqul Islam, Golam Azad, Md Idris Ali, Anwar Hossain, Anisur Rahman, Maj (retd) Waqar Hasan, Sardar Mohsin Ali, A Hakim, Bazlur Mahmud, Nurul Haque, Nurul Islam, Habibur Rahman, Fazlul Haque, Abdullah and Abdul Gafur.

Former NCC

FROM PAGE 5

His wife, Rokeya Rahman, was also accused in another ACC case.

Meanwhile, Rokeya claimed that while her husband is a political leader, their son has no involvement in politics.



PRAYER TIMING		JANUARY 14	
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib
5:30	12:45	4:00	5:36
6:05	1:15	4:15	5:40
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION			

IN MEMORIAM

34th Death Anniversary of
Late Abul Qasem FCA (1919-1991)
Founder President (ICAB),
Former President (DCCC),
Founder, A. Qasem & Co., Chartered Accountants
In Fond Remembrance
Shakil, Farzana, Sohel, Jabeen, Sanjida, Mostaq, Sadaat,
Sajid, Navid, Sanjida Khan, Sadaaf, Omair, Ahnaf, Afraz
&
All Partners, Directors, Staff and Students of A. Qasem & Co.

বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক পিএলসি.
BANGLADESH DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC.
(A State Owned Commercial Bank)

Reference: 11.2/17/ Dated: 14/01/2025

Tender Notice No: BDBPLC./ITSU/OTM/EGP/2025/01

e-Tenders have been invited in the national e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of the following Goods.

LOT NO.	e-Tender ID	Description	Last Date & Time for Submission Through Web	Date & Time for Tender Opening
Single Lot	1060569	Renewal of License/Subscription/Support (including Spare Parts Replacement) and AMC (Annual Maintenance Contract) for Cyber Security Devices/Solutions at Bangladesh Development Bank PLC's Data Center (DC) & Disaster Recovery Site (DRS) for a contract duration of three (3) years.	05/02/2025 3:30 P.M.	05/02/2025 3:30 P.M.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System portal must be deposited online through any registered bank branch by 3:00 PM on 05/02/2025.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) (0176262528-31). (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

N.B. This is the amended notice. Please disregard the previous one.

sd/
(Sabrina Chowdhury Dooty)
Assistant General Manager
Head, IT Security Unit

NOTICE OF CLOSURE

KOMAIHALTEC Inc. Bangladesh Branch Office announces to be closed permanently in Bangladesh, effective March 31, 2025. We sincerely thank our valued clients, partners, and stakeholders for their support and cooperation throughout our journey. It has been an honor to serve you. For any pending matters, inquiries, or assistance, please contact us. We are committed to addressing all concerns during this transition period.

KOMAIHALTEC Inc.
Skylark MAK84, House # 84, Road # 11, Block-D, Banani, Dhaka-1213, Tel: +818067559182

Office of the Chief Engineer
University of Dhaka
Re-Invitation for Enlistment

1	Ministry	Ministry of Education
2	Agency	University of Dhaka
3	Procuring entity	Superintending Engineer, Office of the Chief Engineer, University of Dhaka
4	Procuring entity district	Dhaka
5	Invitation for	Enlistment/Renewal of Enlistment
6	Invitation Ref No.	
7	Date	01/2025
KEY INFORMATION		
8	Procurement method	Limited Tendering Method (LTM)
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
9	Application closing date and time	Date: 21.01.2025 Time: 12.30pm
10	Name & address of the officer(s)	Address
	Application form availability	Pritom Dutta, Executive Engineer, University of Dhaka
	Receiving application form	Superintending Engineer, Estimate Division, University of Dhaka
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
11	Eligibility of applicant	a. Must have valid trade license (2023-2024) b. Must have TIN certificate c. VAT registration certificate d. Must have up-to-date bank solvency certificate e. ABC License and Electrical Supervisor License (2023-2024)
12	Price of application form (Tk)	500.00 (non-refundable) (Should deposit on A/C No. 2624/3300098 at Janata Bank PLC., TSC Branch, University of Dhaka).
13	Enlistment/renewal fee (Tk)	5000.00/2000.00 (Should deposit on A/C No. 2624/3300098, at Janata Bank PLC., TSC Branch, University of Dhaka).
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
14	Name of official inviting application	Engr. A. K. M. Mahbub Mustafa, PEng
15	Designation of official inviting application	Superintending Engineer
16	Address of official inviting application	Estimate Division, Office of the Chief Engineer, University of Dhaka
17	Contact details of official inviting application	Tel. No. 9661900, Ext. 4130
18	Clause 5.1, 5.4, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10 & 5.11 of Application Form	no need to attach in the case of Renewal of Enlistment and those who have already applied for Renewal and New Enlistment need not apply again. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all Applications.

Superintending Engineer
Estimate Division
Office of the Chief Engineer
University of Dhaka

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

Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212 www.powergrid.gov.bd
Ref No.: 27.21.0000.101.07.425.25.186 Date: January 13, 2025

Notice of 1st Time Extension

Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 400/230/132 kV AIS Substation at Pekua and associated single /double circuit 400kV/230kV/132kV LILO Lines on turnkey basis (Package-1)
(CONTRACT NO. POWERGRID/ADB/400KVIPEKUA/PTSIREP/PACKAGE-1/Re-Tender)
Ref.: Power Grid's IFB No.: 27.21.0000.101.07.425.24.6193, December 03, 2024

The deadline for submission of bids for the above Works has been extended from January 20, 2025, 11:00 AM Bangladesh Standard Time (BST) to **February 03, 2025, 11:00 AM BST.**

All other terms and conditions of the above Bidding Document shall remain unaltered.
Md. Jahangir Azad
Company Secretary

বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Bangladesh Power Development Board
www.bpdb.gov.bd

Directorate of Purchase
WAPDA Building (10th Floor)
Motijheel, Dhaka-1000
Tel: 01819223401, 9836626
e-mail: dir.purchase@bpdb.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice

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

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Package	Reference No.	Description of goods/works	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time	Opening date and time
1	ID-1062626	GD-16a (Lot-1) (FY-24-25)	27.11.0000.304.25.210.25 Date: 13/01/2025	Supply of AAC WASP (Insulated) Conductor (CSD, Fouzdarhat and different places at Project Sites)	12-Feb-2025, 17:00	13-Feb-2025, 14:00	13-Feb-2025, 14:00
2	ID-1062890	GD-16a (Lot-2) (FY-24-25)	27.11.0000.304.25.211.25 Date: 13/01/2025	Supply of AAC WASP (Insulated) Conductor (CSD, Fouzdarhat and different places at Project Sites)	12-Feb-2025, 17:00	13-Feb-2025, 14:15	13-Feb-2025, 14:15
3	ID-1062977	GD-16a (Lot-3) (FY-24-25)	27.11.0000.304.25.212.25 Date: 13/01/2025	Supply of AAC WASP (Insulated) Conductor (CSD, Tongi and different places at Project Sites)	12-Feb-2025, 17:00	13-Feb-2025, 14:20	13-Feb-2025, 14:20

These are online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
For more details please contact to the PE's Support Desk (01768015538).

সিদ্ধান্ত/জন্-৬৭৮(২)/১৩/০১/২৫
Md. Nannu Miah
ID No. 1-01304
Director
Directorate of Purchase
BPDB, Dhaka

Former NCC councillor, his son arrested in Dhaka

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Narayanganj

Former Narayanganj City Corporation Councillor Motiur Rahman, 55, and his son Moshir Rahman, 29, were detained in Dhaka early yesterday.

They are accused in several cases in Narayanganj over attacks on protesters and killings during the anti-discrimination student movement.

Sujon Hoque, inspector of Bhatara Police Station, said they were detained from a flat in Bashundhara Residential Area around 2:00am.

"As there are multiple cases against them in Narayanganj, they will be brought here after being shown arrested in those cases," said Abdullah Al Masud, additional superintendent of Narayanganj district police.

Motiur Rahman is also the president of Jubo League's Siddhirganj unit in Narayanganj and was a close associate of former lawmaker Shamim Osman.

Earlier, he was imprisoned in a case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) over the acquisition of illegal wealth and money laundering in 2023.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Cold, fog harming boro seedlings

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Boro seedlings in seedbeds across many areas of the Rangpur region are suffering due to a persistent cold wave and dense fog. Farmers are struggling to save their seedbeds by covering them with polythene and spraying medicines, and they are now worried about recovering their production costs.

During visits to various locations in Lalmonirhat Sadar, Kurigram Sadar, and Rangpur's Gangachara upazila on Friday and Saturday, this correspondent observed many farmers re-sowing boro seeds in their fields as their seedbeds had been damaged by the cold weather and dense fog.

Farmers in five districts — Lalmonirhat, Kurigram,

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ Water seedbeds at night
- ▶ Cover them with polythene
- ▶ Use proper fertiliser

Gaibandha, Rangpur, and Nilphamari — have prepared seedbeds on 26,000 hectares of land. The target is to cultivate boro paddy on 508,978 hectares, with a production goal of 1,781,423 tonnes of rice this season, said the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in Rangpur.

Mansur Ali, 55, a farmer from Sakoya village in Lalmonirhat's



Aditmari upazila, said he prepared a boro seedbed on 15 decimals of land, but a portion of it was damaged due to the cold weather.

"I sprayed pesticides and fungicides several times over the last 12 days to save my seedbed from the cold, but the seedlings are still dying," he said.

Suresh Chandra Sen, 65, a farmer from Nabdiganj village in Rangpur Sadar, said he had prepared a seedbed for seedlings on 12 decimals of land to cultivate boro paddy on six bighas. He said about fifty percent of the seedlings have turned yellowish and been damaged.

"I sowed 30kg of boro seeds on 15 decimals of land, but 20

percent of the seedlings have been damaged due to the cold and fog," said Saher Ali, 50, from Durgapur village in Kurigram's ulipur upazila. Obaidur Rahman Mandal, additional director of DAE in the Rangpur region, said boro seedlings in some villages are affected by the severe cold weather.

"We believe they will recover as the weather improves," he said. "Farmers are advised to water seedbeds at night, cover them with polythene, and use proper fertiliser," he said, claiming that the production target will not be hindered as such situations arise in the northern districts every

winter.

Equipment stolen from power plant

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

Equipment worth at least Tk 5 lakh has been stolen from the 1,320MW coal-based RNPL thermal power plant in Dhankhali village under Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila.

The plant is ready for power generation.

Aminul Islam, deputy manager (admin) of the power plant, said a case has been filed accusing 34 named and 16 unnamed persons with Kalapara Police Station on January 12 in this connection.

Most of the accused are reportedly local activists of BNP and its affiliate bodies, and residents of Gilatola and Londa villages under the upazila, he said.

According to the case statement, on the night of January 9, the accused entered the power plant premises and stole copper wires, iron and steel goods, and different construction materials worth at least Tk 5 lakh.

They later stored the stolen items near Gilatola Bazar. The next morning, (January 10), while the goods were being smuggled in a truck, the power plant's security personnel, with help of police, recovered five tonnes of goods worth around Tk 2.50 lakh.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

TIPU MURDER

It may have been a targeted killing: police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Golam Rabbani Tipu, a Swetchhasebak League leader and former councillor from Khulna, was gunned down near Hotel Seagull in Cox's Bazar — one of the most dangerous areas along Cox's Bazar beach. This has raised questions about why he went to that spot.

Even the street lights and CCTV cameras in the area are currently out of order.

Tipu was shot on the footpath near the pine tree garden opposite the hotel, close to Sughandha Point on January 9. The spot is usually quiet,

Tipu's two phones were recovered from the crime scene, but they remain locked, and the last calls made are yet to be identified. We will send the phones to an expert to access the call logs as part of the investigation

Ilyas Khan, OC, Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station

especially at night. It is suspected that someone Tipu knew might have called him to the location with the woman who shared the same hotel room with him. The woman is still missing.

Police recovered Tipu's two phones from the crime scene, but they remain locked, and the last calls made are yet to be identified.

"We will send the phones to an expert to access the call logs as part of the investigation," said Ilyas Khan, officer-in-charge of Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station.

The motive behind Tipu's murder is still under investigation, the OC added.

The hotel guestbook shows Tipu checked in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

SAGAR-RUNI MURDER

PBI to quiz sacked Maj Gen Ziaul, ex-DC Moshir

BSS, Dhaka

The Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) has been granted permission to interrogate Maj Gen (sacked) Ziaul Ahsan and former deputy commissioner of the Detective Branch Moshir Rahman in connection with the case lodged over the murders of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Nahar Runi.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Imran Hossain approved the PBI's request on January 8, court sources confirmed to BSS.

The investigation officer, PBI Additional Superintendent of Police Azizul Haque, filed the plea, saying key information could be uncovered by

questioning the two former security forces officials.

"PBI has information that Ziaul and Moshir were involved in the initial stage of the investigation into the case. Ziaul Ahsan was the additional director general (operation) of Rab and Moshir was the DC of DB at the time," said court sources, quoting the IO's plea.

ASP Azizul Haque, however, refused to comment on the latest development in the case, saying PBI is continuing its probe with much importance.

The journalist couple was murdered at their rented flat in the city's West Rajabazar on February 11, 2012. Runi's brother Nawser Alam filed a murder case with the Sher-e-Banglanagar Police Station.



PILKHANA MASSACRE

Commission seeks army support for reinvestigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The independent inquiry commission that has been formed to reinvestigate the 2009 Pilkhana massacre sought cooperation from the Bangladesh Army for conducting the probe.

The commission members led by its chairman major general (ret'd) ALM Fazlur Rahman made a courtesy call on Chief of Army Staff Waker-Uz-Zaman at the Army Headquarters yesterday.

The army chief assured the commission of full support from the army for the smooth progress of the investigation.

The commission members present at the meeting included major general (ret'd) Md Jahangir Kabir Talukder, brigadier general (ret'd) Md Saidur Rahman, Bir Pratik; former joint secretary Munshi Alauddin Al Azad; former DIG M Akbar Ali; associate professor Md Shariful Islam from Dhaka University's Political Science Department; and assistant professor Md Shahnewaz Khan Chandon from Jagannath University.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and
Afforestation in Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar
Forest Department
Planning Wing
Ban Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.

Memo No.: 22.01.2680.014.002.057.007.25.

Date: 14/01/2025

Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI)

The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a credit from the World Bank toward the cost of the 'Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and Afforestation in Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar' under Host and Rohingya Enhancement of Lives Project (HELP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments for this consulting service to be procured under the project. The following consultants (national) will be recruited on the basis of individual capacity:

Title	Qualification	Experience	Duration
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST - 1 position Package No. S-01	(i) At least master's degree in accountancy, finance or management from any reputed university (ii) The Applicant having professional qualification such as Chartered Accountant/Cost and Management Accountant/Chartered Certified Accountant will get additional benefits in the selection process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Applicant should have at least 10 years of general experience in financial management, accountancy, management of which at least 3 years in multilateral development bank/development partner financed projects in Bangladesh. The Applicant should have experience in software based accounting management system to generate various financial analysis reports and have ability to train up other people working in the financial management/accountancy area. S/he should have strong interpersonal communicative skill, experience in team leadership and participatory management. The Applicant should have proficiency in English (both writing and speaking) and computer operation in MS office (i.e. MS Word, MS Excel and MS Power Point, Database). 	12 months
ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE - 1 position Package No. S-02	Master of Commerce in Accounting/Finance or MBA with major in Accounting/Finance. Candidate having fully or partly professional accountancy degree (CA/ACCA/CMA/ equivalent) will get preference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Applicant should have at least 6 years of overall professional experience with 4-5 years of relevant experience in financial analysis, auditing, taxation, or managerial accounting. Experience in World Bank's disbursing & reporting requirements and Experience in working with World Bank or similar development partners-funded projects will be added advantage. Fully conversant with and have had hands on experience in Microsoft or similar computerized Accounting System practice in the World Bank supported project. 	12 months
MONITORING SPECIALIST - 1 position Package No. S-04	At least Bachelor degree in environmental science, forestry, ecology, biology, environmental economics, BBA or a related field. Candidate having an advanced degrees (Master's or Ph.D) in a relevant discipline or a professional degree in project management will get preference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 years of overall professional experience with 4-5 years of relevant experience. Experience in working with World Bank or similar development partners-funded projects, particularly in afforestation, environmental conservation and biodiversity protection initiatives will be added advantage. Hands on experience in developing M&E frameworks for development projects. Sound knowledge of environmental and social safeguards requirements, rules and policies of the World Bank and GoB. Strong quantitative and qualitative data analysis skills. Ability to conduct fieldwork in diverse environmental conditions, including remote or challenging terrain, and to oversee field teams engaged in data collection activities. Fully conversant with Microsoft Office tools (Word, Excel, PowerPoint); expertise in GIS software will be an added advantage. 	09 months


Conditions for application:
During the term of the contract the consultant shall not be associated with any other Government agency, consulting firm or private business entities.

The Bangladesh Forest Department (BFD) now invites eligible applicants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Applicants are invited to provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (complete CV with other details and expected remuneration). The consultant will be selected following the Selection of Individual Consultant method as set forth in the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Fifth Edition, September 2023.

Interested applicants may obtain the Terms of Reference (TOR) and the prescribed format for Application Submission, Curriculum Vitae (CV) and Indicative Remuneration & Expenses from the office of Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and Afforestation in Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar Project during office hours or download from the website www.bforest.gov.bd.

Expressions of Interest (EOI) shall be submitted by January 29 2025 up to 11.45 am to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail).

The authority reserves the right to accept any or reject any or all the applications.


(Dr. Md. Zaglul Hossain)
Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests
Planning Wing
and
Project Director
Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and
Afforestation in Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar
Forest Department
Ban Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka

GD-134

বাংলাদেশ স্থলবন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষ
বেনাপোল স্থলবন্দর
বেনাপোল, যশোর
www.blpa.gov.bd

স্মারক নং- ১৮.১৫.৪১৯০.০২৫.০০.০৯৯.২৩.১২ তারিখঃ ২৮ শেখ ১৪৩১
১২ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫

মাইক্রোবাস ভাড়ার দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (OTM)

বাংলাদেশ স্থলবন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষের আওতাধীন বেনাপোল স্থলবন্দর, বেনাপোল, যশোর এর প্রশাসনিক ও অপারেশনাল কাজে ব্যবহারের জন্য একটি মাইক্রোবাস মাসিক ভিত্তিতে ভাড়াবন্দীর জন্য আর্থীক দরদাতা প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতায় নিকট হতে উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র (Open Tendering Method) পদ্ধতিতে সীলমোহরকৃত নামে নিম্নোক্ত শর্তে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে:

১. মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	বাংলাদেশ স্থলবন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষ।		
২. সস্তাহক সত্তা	বেনাপোল স্থলবন্দর, বেনাপোল, যশোর।		
৩. বাজেট ও অর্ধের উৎস	বাংলাদেশ স্থলবন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষের রাজস্ব বাজেট।		
৪. দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৫-০২-২০২৫ খ্রিঃ পর্যন্ত (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়)		
৫. দরপত্র দাখিলের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৬-০২-২০২৫ খ্রিঃ তারিখ দুপুর ১২.৩০টা		
৬. দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২৬-০২-২০২৫ খ্রিঃ তারিখ দুপুর ২.৩০টা		
৭. দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান ও ঠিকানা	পরিচালক (ট্রাফিক) এর দপ্তর, বেনাপোল স্থলবন্দর, আন্তর্জাতিক প্যাসেঞ্জার টার্মিনাল ভবন (৩য় তলা), বেনাপোল স্থলবন্দর, যশোর।		
৮. দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান ও ঠিকানা	(ক) আন্তর্জাতিক প্যাসেঞ্জার টার্মিনাল ভবন (৩য় তলা), বেনাপোল স্থলবন্দর, প্রশাসন শাখা, বেনাপোল, যশোর। (খ) জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, যশোর।		
৯. দরপত্র জামানত	তফসিলসূত্রে যে কোন ব্যাংক থেকে ইস্যুকৃত পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট চেয়ারম্যান, বাংলাদেশ স্থলবন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষ এর অনুকূলে জমা দিতে হবে।		
১০. দরদাতার যোগাযোগ	ক) গাড়ির যাবতীয় কাগজপত্র হালনাগাদ থাকতে হবে। (খ) গাড়িচালকের অনূন ০৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ বৈধ ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র এবং শিক্ষাপত্র যোগ্যতা হিসেবে কমপক্ষে এসএসসি পাসের সনদ দাখিল করতে হবে। (গ) প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতায় হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ট্যাক্স সনদ, ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রি, সনদ এবং সফটওয়্যার অভিজ্ঞতার প্রমাণক দাখিল করতে হবে। (ঘ) গাড়িতে কোন ক্রটি দেখা দিলে তার পরিবর্তে একই মানের বিকল্প একটি গাড়ি যথাসময়ে সরবরাহ নিশ্চিত করতে হবে। (ঙ) গাড়িচালক অসুস্থ হলে/ছুটি নিলে/চাকরি ছেড়ে দিলে তার বিকল্প গাড়িচালক তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে নিশ্চিত করতে হবে। (চ) অন্য কোন ব্যক্তি/প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতায় মালিকানাধীন মাইক্রোবাস দিয়ে মাইক্রোবাস সেবা সরবরাহ করা যাবে না।		
১১. গাড়ির বিবরণ	(ক) ০৭ (সাত) আসন বিশিষ্ট (খ) ইঞ্জিন কমপক্ষে ১৮০০-২০০০ সিসি (গ) ২০১৭ বা তদুর্ধ্ব সালের উৎপাদিত মাইক্রোবাস হতে হবে (ঘ) বিআরটিএ রেজিস্ট্রেশন ২০২২ এর পূর্বে নয় (৫) মাইক্রোবাসের জ্বালানি, ভ্যাট, ট্যাক্স ও গাড়িচালকের বেতনসহ যাবতীয় খরচ সরবরাহকারী প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতায় বহন করতে হবে।		
১২. কাজের বিবরণ	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য) দরপত্র (নিরাপত্তা) জামানত (ফেরতযোগ্য) কাজ সমাপ্তির সময়সীমা		
বেনাপোল স্থলবন্দর, বেনাপোল, যশোর এর জন্য মাসিক ভাড়া ভিত্তিতে একটি মাইক্রোবাস (ড্রাইভারসহ) সরবরাহ কাজ	২৫০০/- (দুই হাজার পাঁচশত) টাকা মাত্র	৯৫,০০০.০০ (পঁচানব্বই হাজার) টাকা	২৪ (চব্বিশ) মাস
১৩. শর্তাবলী/বিশেষ নির্দেশনাঃ	(ক) দরদাতা বা তার ক্ষমতাপ্রাপ্ত/মনোনীত প্রতিনিধি দরপত্র খোলার সময় উপস্থিত থাকতে পারবেন; (খ) নির্ধারিত সময়ের পরে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না; (গ) অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী ও তথ্যাদি দরপত্র সিডিউলে উল্লেখ আছে; (ঘ) বর্ধিত দরপত্রের ক্ষেত্রে পিপিআর ২০০৮ ও পিপিএ ২০০৬ এর বিধি বিধান প্রযোজ্য হবে। (ঙ) কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যেকোন দরপত্র বা সকল দরপত্র গ্রহণ কিংবা বাতিলের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।		

২৩/০১/২০২৫
মোঃ মামুন কবীর তরফদার
পরিচালক (ট্রাফিক) অঃ দঃ
বেনাপোল স্থলবন্দর, যশোর
ফোনঃ ০২৪৭৭-৭৯৫৬০১
ই-মেইলঃ benapolelandport@gmail.com

GD-130



What's the Haps?

'Oboyaber Protidhwani' Renowned sculptor Shaymol Chowdhury, celebrated for his *Shontrash Birodhi Raju Sharokh Bhashkorjo*, presents a curated showcase of 45 artworks from his private collection. Handpicked by his daughter, Rupakalpa Chowdhury, the exhibition *Oboyaber Protidhwani* features fiberglass sculptures, Shaymol's student-era sketches, photographs of his sculpting process, and a video presentation, offering an intimate insight into the artist's creative evolution.

DATE:
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

TIME:
2PM-7PM

VENUE:
AMBROSIA, ROAD NO-4,
SHAYMOLI



Sometimes SHAPLA, sometimes SUMI

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Shahnaz Sumi earned acclaim for her portrayal of Suraiya in the web-series *Mobaroknama*. The actress, who began her journey as a dancer, recently worked in Vicky Zahed's directorial web-film *Ondhokarer Gaan*, on Binge.

Your first web film, 'Ondhokarer Gaan', has been released. How has the response been?

The response has exceeded my expectations. For *Mobaroknama*, I received so much love that I wondered whether people would remember me for this new project in the same way. But now *Ondhokarer Gaan* seems to be leaving behind a lasting impression as well.

You played the character of Shapla. Introduce her to us.

Shapla is an RMG worker. Belonging to a lower-middle-

class family who tries to find happiness in her circumstances, she is a person that I am proud to have portrayed. Honestly, after the release, many people started calling me Shapla. As an actor, this is a big achievement.

How was your experience of working with Vicky Zahed?

The story itself is so beautiful—truly well-written.

This was my first time working with him—he has a very structured approach. His work has a unique quality, and audiences enjoy it very much.

This time, my dialogues were limited due to the needs of the story. I was present throughout, but with fewer lines to deliver. The story itself is so beautiful—truly well-written.

This is the second time you've acted opposite Mosharraf Karim. Was it any different?

It didn't feel like it had been a year since *Mobaroknama*. It felt like we had just worked together the other day. He is a great actor, but more importantly, he is an extraordinary human being. Despite being such a big star, he remains grounded as a person. As a co-actor, Mosharraf Karim makes work so much easier.

What are your upcoming projects?

I'm currently in talks for a web-series and a film. Once everything is finalised, I'll be able to share more.

What are your plans regarding dance?

Right now, I am hopeful that I'll be able to perform in some government-organised dance programmes under the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

BTS member J-Hope announces first solo tour

BTS member J-Hope is set to embark on his debut solo tour next month. His *Hope on the Stage* tour is set to begin on February 28 with a three-night run at the KSPO Dome in Seoul.

He will then visit a series of cities, including Brooklyn, New York; Chicago; Mexico City; San Antonio; Oakland, California; Los Angeles; Manila, Philippines; Saitama, Japan;



Singapore; Jakarta, Indonesia; Bangkok; Macau; Taipei, Taiwan; and Osaka, Japan.

The announcement was posted on J-Hope's social media channels and Weverse, the online fan platform operated by BTS' management company, Hybe.

Weverse shared that details about the North American tour would be released later, citing the "Wildfires in California and their resulting impact on the region."

Dorod to premiere on OTT ahead of Indian release

Despite initial promises of a simultaneous release in India, Anonno Mamun's *Dorod* remains absent from Indian theatres, months after its Bangladesh premiere on November 15.

Although the film has debuted in over 20 countries, including the USA, Thailand, and Canada, its much-anticipated Indian release continues to face delays.

As per the latest update, Indian audiences will get to watch *Dorod* on OTT before it hits cinemas. The OTT platform iScreen confirmed the film's release by sharing the movie poster on its official Facebook page.

Dorod is a Bangladesh-India co-production starring superstar Shakib Khan and Sonal Chauhan, with Payal Sarkar, Rahul Dev, Rajesh Sharma, Safa Marwa, and Imtu Ratish in key roles.



'RICKSHAW GIRL' to hit theatres this month

Amitabh Reza Chowdhury's film *Rickshaw Girl* is set for release in theatres on January 24. Based on the novel by Mitali Perkins, the film tells the story of Naima, a young woman who, after her father falls ill, becomes a rickshaw driver to support her family. Novera Rahman stars as Naima, with Momena Chowdhury and



Naresh Bhuiyan portraying her parents. The film, initially slated for release in 2020, was delayed due to the pandemic. Following the release of its trailer, anticipation has been building, with the film generating significant buzz. *Rickshaw Girl* marks the first joint production between the United States and Bangladesh.

COUNTRYWIDE

PHULBARI GOVT COLLEGE

A tale of negligence

KONGKON KARMAKER

Phulbari Government College remains neglected for over 32 years since its nationalization in 1992.

Despite the introduction of honours courses in six disciplines, the college continues to struggle due to absence of master's programmes, insufficient classrooms and lack of residential facilities for students.

The college has been struggling significantly since its establishment in 1963, with 26 out of the 52 teaching positions still remain vacant, which includes vital posts like associate professors, assistant professors and librarians.

Female students, in particular, suffer most due to lack of dormitory support and most of them are compelled to reside in rented accommodations far from the institution.

Currently, 1,901 students are enrolled in honours programmes across six departments, while 960 are pursuing degree programmes.

However, lack of master's courses forces many graduates to seek higher education elsewhere.

"Every year, hundreds of honours graduates are left with no option but to move to other institutions to pursue their postgraduate degrees," said Mohammad Ali, a former student of the college.

"If master's courses were available

here, I could stay at home and continue my education," said Sumi Akhter, an honours student.

Like her several other students of the institution said lack of higher education facilities locally disrupts academic progress of many meritorious students.

Moreover, as the lone dormitory for male students can only accommodate 80 to 85 students, many of them are forced to commute long distances to go to and from the institution.

While talking, Professor Altaf Hossain, principal of the college, said introducing master's programmes and building residential facilities for students and teachers will make higher education accessible to the local community.

Established nearly 62 years ago, the college was once a hub of education for students from adjacent upazilas like Nawabganj and Parbatipur.

However, the institution has witnessed a decline in both academic and extracurricular activities since its nationalisation over three decades ago.

Local residents as well as current and former students urge the government to take immediate measures to restore the college's potential.

Contacted, Saiful Islam Jewel, a social worker in Phulbari upazila, said he hope that the government will respond promptly to the plight of the students and the institution, paving the way for a brighter academic future.

Court freezes his cement company's bank account

FROM PAGE 12

elections, he was accused of amassing huge wealth abroad. After that, he was not seen in the cabinet formed after the elections. Media reported that Javed moved to London with his wife and family members just before the fall of the Awami League government in the student public movement on August 5 last year.

A review of the case documents revealed that when Javed was a minister, his family company Aramit Cement Ltd took a loan from Bank Asia.

After the company defaulted on the loan, seven people including Rukmila and Mohammad Masudul Islam, the first assistant vice president of Bank Asia, filed a case against Aramit Cement on November 11,

2023. However, Javed was not accused in the case.

On November 26 last year, Bank Asia informed the court that their total debt against the loan given to Aramit Cement stood at almost Tk 14.64 crore. The defendants do not have any property mortgage to the bank against this loan. Besides, the defendants left the country after the political changeover on

August 5. They are accused of smuggling a huge amount of money abroad.

Bank Asia also asked the court to attach a bank account of Aramit Cement with the United Commercial Bank Ltd (UCBL), Bahaddarhat branch, for collecting the dues.

The court's bench assistant Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star, "After

a hearing, the court ordered the suspension of all transactions of the company's UCBL bank account. At the same time, it issued the defendants a show-cause notice asking them to explain why all the accounts should not be attached."

"They will have to respond to the show-cause notice by January 20," he added.

Normalcy to return once elected govt is in place

FROM PAGE 12

important to us. We are neighbours. We have to live together, understand each other, and no kind of animosity is not in each other's interest."

The Indian army chief said he has been in regular contact with his Bangladeshi counterpart, Waker-Uz-Zaman, including during the regime change.

He mentioned a video conference with Waker on November 24 last year and has stayed in touch with him since.

Bangladesh shares a significant border with India, except for a small portion in the southeastern region, and no other country shares such an extensive border with India, he said.

The comments come at a time when relations between the two countries remain strained in the aftermath of the ouster of Sheikh Hasina and her fleeing to India.

The two countries have summoned their envoys in Dhaka and New Delhi amid tensions over border fencing by the Indian Border Security Force.

Although the relationship between the militaries of the two countries remains "perfect", the joint military exercises have been temporarily put on hold due to the current situation in Bangladesh.

The joint military exercises would resume once the situation stabilises.

On military cooperation, he said it is "on the rise again."

Responding to a question about the vulnerability of India's northeastern states following allegations that "anti-India" elements were being allowed free movement near the border, Dwivedi said: "There is no vulnerability from either side."

JnU students lay siege

FROM PAGE 12

previous notice.

Speaking to The Daily Star, AKM Rakib, a protesting student from the botany department, said, "We received assurances that the project work would be handed over to the army. In addition, the matter of temporary accommodation for students will also be discussed at Wednesday's meeting. Two of our three demands are being accepted. So we are withdrawing from the hunger strike."

"Although we have called off the hunger strike, the campus shutdown will remain in place. The next course of action will be determined based on the decisions at Wednesday's meeting."

Around 3:00pm yesterday, a notice was issued by the ministry that the steering committee for the second JnU campus project would meet on Wednesday to discuss the transfer of the project to the army, and examine the project's progress.

At a press briefing on the campus in the morning, students had threatened to besiege the Secretariat if their demands were not met by the afternoon.

Students were seen locking the main gate of the university around 9:00am. JnU Vice-Chancellor Professor Rezaul Karim said, "The student protest has made our job easier and accelerated its pace. At the meeting [on Wednesday], the project's

current state will be analysed, and a final decision will be made. The other demands will also be discussed at the meeting."

On Sunday at 8:30am, another section of students went on a hunger strike and 12 of them were hospitalised after falling sick. Yesterday, four more protesters fell sick during a hunger strike at the campus.

Despite assurances from the VC, the students earlier refused to end their protest.

Students from various departments joined the shutdown and locked the main gate in solidarity. The closure of the main gate has restricted vehicle access to the campus, although a smaller pocket gate remains open for pedestrian movement.

Journo, father beaten up

FROM PAGE 12

indiscriminately, they said.

At one stage, he lost consciousness. The locals then took Bachchu and his father to the local upazila health complex.

Bachchu said the attack was led by Jasim and Ali.

The Daily Star failed to contact Ali for comments as his phone was found switched off.

However, Jasim said he went there and saw that Bachchu was being beaten up. When he went to stop the beating, Bachchu attacked him, he claimed.

Contacted, Tariqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Mahipur Police Station, said legal action would be taken if a written complaint is filed in this connection.

Yunus urges KL

FROM PAGE 2

chief adviser hoped that Malaysia would expedite the process so that the next batch of Bangladeshi workers can plan their migration to Malaysia for work.

Yunus congratulated Malaysia for taking over as the chair of ASEAN from January 1, and also sought the country's support for Bangladesh's bid to become

a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of the ASEAN and, in turn, become a full member.

He also told the High Commissioner that Bangladesh seeks support from the ASEAN in the upcoming International Conference on the Rohingya Crisis, which will be convened by the UN this year in line with the UNGA Resolution 79/182.



The old academic building of Phulbari Government College in Dinajpur's Phulbari upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

WAR IN UKRAINE Around 300 North Korean soldiers killed Says Seoul; Kremlin declines to comment on N Korean POWs

AFP, Seoul

Around 300 North Korean soldiers have been killed and 2,700 wounded while fighting in Russia's war against Ukraine, a South Korean lawmaker said yesterday, citing information from Seoul's spy agency.

Seoul has previously claimed North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has sent more than 10,000 soldiers as "cannon fodder" to help Moscow fight Kyiv, in return for Russian technical assistance for Pyongyang's heavily sanctioned weapons.

Over the weekend, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Kyiv had captured two North Korean soldiers, releasing video of the injured combatants being interrogated and raising the possibility of a prisoner swap for captured Ukrainian troops.

"The deployment of North Korean troops to Russia has reportedly expanded to include the Kursk region, with estimates suggesting that casualties among North Korean forces have surpassed 3,000," lawmaker Lee Seong-kweon told reporters after a briefing from spy agency. This includes "approximately 300 deaths and 2,700 injuries," Lee said.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin declined to comment on Kyiv saying it had captured North Korean soldiers after Zelensky suggested he was ready to exchange them for Ukrainian POWs.



People displaced by conflict, sheltering at a school, queue to fill up their water containers from a cistern in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday, amid the ongoing Israeli offensive in the Palestinian territory.

PHOTO: AFP

CHINA BORDER

India won't trim troops in winter

Says army chief; Modi opens strategic tunnel to China border zones

AGENCIES

India is not looking to reduce the number of troops along the northern frontier in winter, the country's army chief said yesterday adding that it will review summer deployment based on outcome of negotiations with China.

Four years ago, 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers were killed during border clashes following which both sides stopped patrolling several points on the border in Ladakh to avoid new confrontations, while moving tens of thousands of new troops and military equipment closer to the freezing mountainous region.

New Delhi and Beijing reached a deal in October last year to resolve the four-year military stand-off and few days later they

pulled back troops from the disputed border.

"During winter deployment, the number of troops come down. So therefore, at least in the winter strategy, we are not looking forward to any reduction of troops," army chief Upendra Dwivedi told reporters in New Delhi.

Dwivedi said a decision on summer deployment would depend on how negotiations and talks with China progress, reports Reuters.

"When it comes to the summer strategy, we'll take a review based on that time, how many negotiations and meetings have taken place," he said.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a strategic Himalayan road tunnel yesterday, pushing all-weather access northwards towards contested

high-altitude border zones with rivals China and Pakistan.

The Z. Morh or Sonmarg tunnel, stretching 6.4 kilometres (four miles) beneath a treacherous mountain pass cut off by snow for between four to six months a year, is part of a wider infrastructure drive in border zones, reports AFP.

It helps connect Indian-administered Kashmir with Ladakh, acting as a stepping stone in opening the Srinagar-Leh Highway all year round to allow rapid deployment of military supplies.

India and China share a poorly demarcated border which runs along the Himalayas and has been a source of tension between the neighbours for decades, including a brief but bloody war in 1962.

'India followed all protocols, agreements'

FROM PAGE 1

Nural was accompanied by First Secretary (Political) Alamgir Hossain of the Bangladesh High Commission.

India told Bangladesh that barbed wire fencing, border lighting, installation of technical devices and cattle fences were measures for securing the border, the MEA said in a statement.

"India reiterated its commitment to ensuring a crime-free border by effectively addressing the challenges of cross-border criminal activities, smuggling, movement of criminals and trafficking."

"India conveyed its expectation that all earlier understandings will be implemented by Bangladesh and that there will be a cooperative approach to combating cross-border crimes," the statement said.

Indian envoy Pranay Verma made similar remarks after his meeting with Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Md Jashim Uddin on Sunday.

After the meeting, Bangladesh foreign ministry in a statement said the construction of barbed wire fences by the Indian BSF along the Bangladesh-India border "without proper authorisation" undermines the spirit of cooperation and friendly relations between the two nations.

In a separate event at the Secretariat on Sunday, Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retired) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said that tensions arose in five border areas, including Chhapinawabganj, Naogaon, Lalmonirhat, and the Tin Bigha Corridor due to the BSF's recent fencing activities.

However, India has been forced to halt its activities thanks to the strong position of the BGB and locals.

Dhaka will push for the cancellation of any "unequal

agreements" related to Bangladesh-India borders at a director general level meeting of the border forces of the two countries scheduled for February, Jahangir Alam said.

He said four border-related Memorandums of Understanding have been signed between the two countries since Bangladesh's independence, and various issues have risen along the border due to some "unequal agreements" signed during the previous government's tenure.

The four MoUs are the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement for the disposal of enclaves and disputed lands; the Joint Indo-Bangladesh Guidelines for Border Authorities 1975; the Land Boundary Agreement Protocol 2011; and the Coordinated Border Management Plan 2011.

The home adviser said that, of those agreements, the 1975 MoU specifies that no defence development activities can take place within 150 yards of the zero line.

Another MoU states that any development activities cannot occur within the 150 yards of the zero line without mutual consent. Any such work will require prior agreement between the two nations, he said.

He said India has already fenced 3,271km of the 4,156km-long border with Bangladesh, leaving approximately 885km unfenced.

Speaking to The Daily Star, international relations analyst Dr Imtiaz Ahmed said as per international law, no structures can be built within the 150 yards of the border. However, it can be done only if there is consent from both countries sharing the border.

"If Bangladesh now feels it will withdraw the consent, it can. This is a political decision."

Case disposals nearly halved in July-Sept

FROM PAGE 12

according to him.

He suggested reforming the entire judiciary, appointing adequate judges in proportion to the number of cases, and reducing the workload of the judges, who have to take charge of multiple courts and tribunals simultaneously.

The chief justice called for speedy recruitment of skilled manpower to the post of stenographers for assistant and senior assistant judges, and recruitment of staff in all courts of joint district and sessions judges.

Supreme Court lawyer Shishir Manir told The Daily Star in October last year that litigants were losing their trust and confidence in the judiciary because of the backlog of cases.

"We should take measures to immediately increase the number of efficient judges both in the Supreme Court and the lower courts, and appoint adequate supporting staff, such as research officers, stenographers," he said.

"The Supreme Court may rethink the length of vacation days. Miscellaneous cases should be disposed of by constituting special benches. E-judiciary project should be accelerated

and the police should complete investigation at the earliest opportunities," Shishir Manir added.

SC Registrar General Aziz Ahmed Bhuiyan declined to comment on the backlog of cases.

RESOLUTION OF MAJOR CASES

On October 20 last year, the Appellate Division disposed of the long pending review petition involving the 16th amendment to the constitution, saying that the Supreme Judicial Council, not parliament, will deal with the allegations against SC judges over incapacity or misconduct.

The Appellate Division on December 10 last year stayed a High Court verdict that declared "Joy Bangla" as the country's national slogan.

The apex court on December 1 stayed a High Court verdict that justified August 15 as National Mourning Day and public holiday.

On December 8, the Appellate Division upheld the High Court verdicts that scrapped all the proceedings of five cases filed against Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus. The cases were filed under the Labour Act in 2019 on charges of illegally terminating some workers of Grameen

Telecommunications. Yunus was the chairman of the organisation that time.

On November 11, the apex court stayed the HC verdict that doubled BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's jail term to 10 years in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case.

The court on December 10 stayed a HC verdict that sentenced BNP's acting chairman Tarique Rahman to seven years' imprisonment in a money laundering case and also stayed a lower court judgement that sentenced Tarique's close aide Gias Uddin Al Mamun to seven years in jail.

The Appellate Division on December 2 started hearing the Jamaat-Islami's appeal challenging a HC verdict that scrapped its registration with the Election Commission as a political party.

The top court is expected to conclude the hearing and deliver a verdict soon.

The High Court on December 1 disposed of the two cases filed over the August 21, 2004 grenade attack on an Awami League rally. It acquitted Tarique, former state minister Lutfozzaman Babar and all the other convicts in the cases.

On October 30, the HC scrapped the trial proceedings of 11 cases filed

against Khaleda over arson, violence, and sedition in 2015.

Earlier on October 23, the HC scrapped four extortion cases filed against Tarique during the regime of the military-backed caretaker government in 2007.

Besides, the High Court on December 17 scrapped a part of the 15th amendment to the constitution that abolished the non-partisan caretaker government system and also restored the provision for holding referendums for amending the constitution.

Meanwhile, the SC has sent its proposals to the law ministry for establishing a separate secretariat for the judiciary and formulating a law for the recruitment of SC judges.

On December 19, the HC in a verdict acquitted Babar and five others, who were sentenced to death by the trial court, in a case filed over the sensational 10-truck arms haul in Chattogram in 2004.

Meanwhile, the government has constituted a commission headed by Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman, a former Appellate Division judge, to make necessary recommendations in order to bring reforms to the judiciary.

BNP wants nat'l polls by mid-2025

FROM PAGE 1

"The interim government is supposed to hold the national election, not the local government polls," said a standing committee member.

The party also discussed the government's decision to raise VAT and supplementary duties on over 100 goods and services midway through the fiscal year.

During the meeting, BNP leaders expressed frustration over the tax increase, arguing that no elected government would implement measures

that exacerbate public sufferings.

They criticised the hikes in VAT and other taxes, particularly on goods and services integral to daily life and public welfare.

Contacted, Abdul Moyeen Khan, standing committee member of the party, said, "Shall I be wrong if I say that the IMF became a collaborator of the fascist Awami League regime and shored up their collapsing economy by providing a \$4.7 billion loan to sustain an illegitimate government?"

"Moreover, will it be an

overstatement if I ask that are they not planning now to destroy this interim government by forcing them to take an anti-people as well as an illegal economic measure to make them unpopular and lead the country to another mess by misleading the government on the pretext of stabilising the country's financial platform?"

Meanwhile, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir called a press conference at the BNP chief's political office in Gulshan today to discuss the outcomes of

the meeting.

The meeting also reviewed the treatment and health condition of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, who is undergoing treatment in the UK.

Party leaders expressed gratitude for her gradual recovery. Some leaders noted that her improving health is positive news for the party, adding that she is in good spirits and spending quality time with her family at the hospital.

Khaleda was admitted to the London Clinic on January 8.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Chief Adviser's Office
Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority
Uttara Export Processing Zone
Shangalshi, Nilphamari
(www.bepza.gov.bd)

Ref. No. 03.06.7364.333.33.112.2022-229

Date: 08 January, 2025

Auction Notice

Sealed auctions are hereby invited from the interested National/Foreign Buyers/Companies in order to sell inventoried Machinery Equipment, Finished Goods & other Assets by auction "as and where basis" of terminated Garments manufacturing industry named M/s. Texas Clothing Ltd., SFB-3 (3rd Floor), Uttara EPZ or to operate the enterprise. To participate in the auction the terms & conditions are stated below:

Terms & Conditions:

- Interested Persons/Organizations/ Existing enterprises of EPZ(s) (Local/Joint Venture/Foreign) or any other interested persons/organizations from outside EPZ can take part in this auction who are interested to purchase the Machinery Equipment, Finished Goods & other Assets "as and where basis" of the company by observing the existing rules and regulations in this regard.
- Successful bidder will have to pay VAT, TAX and other payable fees as per custom rules for the duty free imported Assets of existing Assets of industry to be taken out to the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA).
- Auction documents attached with a single pay order/bank draft/FDD from any schedule bank of an amount of 15% as earnest money (non-refundable for successful bidder & refundable for unsuccessful bidder) must be submitted in favour of BEPZA. Auction documents without earnest money will be treated as rejected.
- Inventoried Machineries Equipment, Finished Goods & other Assets under the inventory list may be seen on 16/02/2025 to 18/02/2025 from 10.00 AM to 3.00 PM. Information regarding the visit and the list of Assets may be collected by contacting with the Executive Director, Uttara EPZ directly.
- If the auction is accepted by the Authority, the successful bidder will have to pay the remaining 85% amount of the quoted price along with applicable TAX & VAT within 15 days to BEPZA through Pay Order/Bank Draft/FDD. Accordingly, the delivery of Machineries Equipment, Finished Goods & other Assets will have to be taken as per Customs & BEPZA rules.
- Auction Schedule may be bought by paying Tk. 5,000.00 (non-refundable) within 18/02/2025 during office hours from the Accounts Department of Uttara EPZ, Dhaka EPZ, Chattogram EPZ, Adamjee EPZ, Mongla EPZ, Cumilla EPZ, Karnaphuli EPZ, Ishwardi EPZ & Accounts Department of BEPZA Executive Office, Dhaka.
- Auction schedule may be dropped into the auction box kept at the office of Executive Director, Uttara EPZ on 26/02/2025 from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm and Submitted Auction documents will be opened in the same date at 12:30 pm at the office of Executive Director, Uttara EPZ in presence of the bidders (If any). Updated copy of VAT, TIN and Trade License shall have to be attached with the Auction schedule; but this condition may be relaxed by the Authority in case of fully new 100% foreign owned company interested to invest in the EPZ.
- Persons/Organizations/Investors who are interested to operate the closed industry will get priority in auction.
- Successful bidder will have to take permission to operate the industrial unit in the EPZ by following the project sanctioning procedure of BEPZA as per rules.
- The Authority reserves the right to accept any auction or reject any or all of the submitted auctions without showing any reason. The Authority also reserves the right to cancel the Auction and accordingly take next action if the desired rates are not obtained.

(Mohammad Abdul Jabbar)
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The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Bring top criminals under police radar

Proper law enforcement vital for businesses, public safety

We are worried about the continued law-and-order fallout due to the re-emergence of criminal gangs under kingpins who were, until recently, behind bars. Their involvement is partly responsible for the surge in criminal activities such as theft, mugging, robbery, extortion, and abduction. Equally alarmingly, these gangs are also engaging in public clashes to assert dominance, sometimes even in the presence of law enforcers, creating panic among citizens.

On Friday night, for instance, two computer traders were hacked with machetes by a gang of 20 in front of the Multiplan Centre in Elephant Road, Dhaka. Despite the presence of a police outpost and a traffic police box nearby, no intervention was made to rescue the victims. According to a report by this daily, the attack is supposedly linked to a power struggle between two top criminals—Sanjiddul Islam alias Emon of Hazaribagh and Imamul Hasan Helal alias Picchi Helal of Mohammadpur. Both were listed as top criminals in 2001 and are among the 43 high-profile criminals who secured bail in various cases after the political changeover on August 5.

As we know, following the uprising, the law enforcement situation in the country became fluid in large part due to the absence of a fully functional police force. However, although over five months have passed since then, police still seem to be struggling to regain their footing, leaving room for criminal activities to thrive. It goes without saying that the resurgence of such crimes not only endangers public safety but also poses a threat to businesses and the economy. A report by this daily has quoted several businesspeople in the capital who allegedly received extortion demands and violent threats from the gangs of top criminals. Some have had to pay extortion fees to multiple groups. Many are not even reporting these threats out of a fear of retaliation.

The country's businesses are already grappling with the fallout of the previous regime's corruption and financial irregularities, which left behind a huge debt for us along with a fragile banking system. The additional menace of criminal gangs is only making things worse, undermining business confidence and creating an untenable environment for economic recovery amidst high inflation and unemployment.

While it may be too late now to question the decisions that granted bail to so many criminals and militants after August 5, it is not too late for the police to act decisively. They must proactively monitor these individuals, keep criminal gangs under strict surveillance, and respond swiftly to any complaints about their activities. Rebuilding confidence in law enforcement is essential for fostering a stable environment where businesses can flourish, economic challenges can be tackled and, overall, citizens can feel safe across the country.

Another case of identity fraud

Investigate Bagmara maternity allowance scam, punish perpetrators

It's alarming to learn that a fraud ring has siphoned off the maternity allowances of nearly 2,500 mothers in Bagmara, Rajshahi. According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, the government, under its Mother and Child Support Programme, provides Tk 800 monthly to impoverished pregnant women and mothers of infants. However, in Bagmara, these allowances—disbursed through mobile financial services such as Nagad, Rocket, and bKash—were diverted to unauthorised accounts after the registered mobile numbers of beneficiaries were fraudulently replaced with other numbers. Some of the beneficiaries reported not receiving their allowances for months, only to discover later that their funds had been stolen.

This has naturally caused hardship for the affected mothers who depend on the allowance for essential needs such as nutritious food and infant care. We have earlier heard about beneficiary inclusion problems in this programme as well as instances of new enrolments being stalled or payments being suspended. The new development, however, points to a far serious problem, as it shows how vulnerable such support programmes for underprivileged communities can be to the increasingly ingenious identity fraud using digital platforms. In recent years, we have often come across similar reports on various government allowances being stolen, including by stealing the NID information of victims.

It is reasonable to think that such schemes cannot be pulled off without the involvement of insiders—those directly engaged in the allowance initiatives. In the Bagmara case, the victims have also blamed insider involvement, claiming that only the relevant department has the authority to modify their account information. Moreover, they said the fraud involved temporarily altering their mobile numbers before fund disbursement and reverting them afterward to avoid detection, indicating a coordinated action.

However this fraud has been committed, it is vital that the authorities get to the bottom of it and take necessary actions against those responsible. It is also imperative that they arrange for the return of stolen funds to victims, and critically review the safety protocols of all government support programmes. The goal of such programmes is to uplift the most vulnerable members of our society. Therefore, we must ensure that these are not only well-designed but also resilient against scams and irregularities.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Jasmine Revolution



On this day in 2011, Tunisian President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali stepped down following mass protests against poverty, unemployment, and political repression; the uprising was known as the Jasmine Revolution.

Education deserves a reform commission



Dr Manzoor Ahmed is professor emeritus at BRAC University, chair of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN) and adviser to Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE). Views expressed in this article are the writer's own.

MANZOOR AHMED

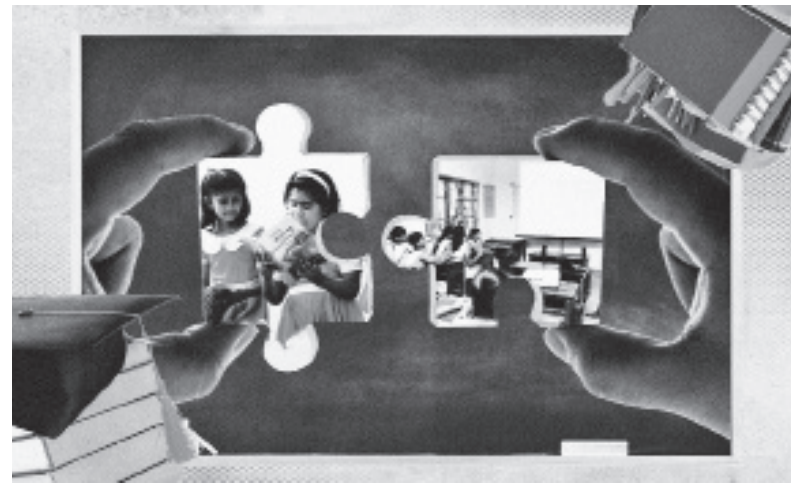
In his first address to the nation on August 25, 2024, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus stated that the misuse of the previous government had crippled the education system and had created anarchy at all levels of education. He declared that comprehensive education reform was a promise of the interim government, that the work on developing a curriculum suited to changing times would commence, and that an urgent task was to restart educational institutions in a creative, safe, and learner friendly environment.

On September 11, Prof Yunus announced the formation of six independent commissions to work on reforms of the constitution, the electoral system, the judiciary, the police, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), and public administration. Another set of five commissions was established on October 31 for reforms in health, mass media, workers' rights, local government, and women's rights. It is ironic that the student-led anti-discrimination uprising that precipitated the "state-repair" agenda did not lead to the appointment of an education reform commission.

The students' protest against discriminatory quotas in public service jobs was the spark that ignited a mass uprising against the entrenched and authoritarian oligarchy. It also drew attention to the poor quality of the education system, the lack of nurtured skills and competencies within educational institutions, and the opportunities denied to the majority of young people in a highly unequal system. Prof Yunus's motto of zero poverty, zero unemployment, and zero carbon emissions also implied a major rethink of education goals and methods.

So far, during the months of the interim government's tenure, we have seen ad hoc actions and decisions in education, mainly in the nature of firefighting to contain the chaos inherited from the past regime and arising from the turmoil of the protest

movement. An initiative has been undertaken only for primary and non-formal education by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), which appointed a nine-member "consultative committee" to recommend short, medium- and long-term measures for improvement and reform in this sub-sector. The committee's work, headed by this writer, is underway, and its report is due by the end of January. While this is a positive step, it is a partial move that leaves major concerns in the education



FILE VISUAL: SHAIKH SULTANA JAHAN BADHON

sector unaddressed. The work on primary education highlights the need for a comprehensive approach and holistic thinking about the education system, calling for political choices at the state level on education reform beyond the remit of MoPME alone.

Public and media discourse overwhelmingly favours the idea of a reform commission for education. However, the interim government has not expressed a definitive position on the matter. Why is there reluctance to set up a commission on education reform? Is it because such a commission may open Pandora's box, unleashing demands, protests, and counter-protests from an array of stakeholders—more than what is

already being encountered? This is a legitimate concern. But will inaction or ad hoc measures stem the discontent and frustrations of students who have long been subjected to misguided policies and decisions that jeopardise their futures? What about the expectations of the nation that this opportunity for change and reform in education should not be lost? The interim government has waded into reform efforts in many difficult, complex, and sensitive spheres; why should education be left out?

Forming a commission, defining its tasks, and deciding its working mechanism in a field as complex and multifaceted as education demands careful consideration. The education sector encompasses major sub-sectors with distinct objectives, pedagogic approaches, beneficiaries, organisational arrangements, and state obligations. For instance, the challenges vary across sub-sectors

individuals knowledgeable about the sub-sectors and those with insight into the holistic nature of education and its transformation are represented in the commission. Its working methods should ensure that each sub-sector receives due consideration.

Discussions and debates within the education community suggest that the following areas deserve special attention as part of the reform agenda:

i) Guiding efforts toward an education sector plan with a medium-term timeframe and a longer-term perspective. Some work was done in this respect with the participation of both education ministries and with support from UNESCO and the Global Partnership for Education in 2020. However, the government failed to follow it up, reflecting a lack of seriousness.

ii) The sector plan would prioritise a time-bound programme and strategy for universal primary and secondary education; market-linked vocational education and training; employment-responsive four-year colleges under the National University; and university expansion rigidly applying quality criteria.

iii) Rethinking teacher and education worker recruitment to attract and retain top talent in teaching.

iv) Creating a responsive, accountable, and decentralised education governance and management system, effectively utilising education resources, and substantially increasing public investment.

v) Helping to articulate the government's position on external assistance areas and priorities aligned with the proposed sector plan and strategies for various subsectors.

The education commission may operate somewhat differently from other reform commissions in two ways. First, since decisions may need to be made regarding ongoing educational activities and institutions that could affect anticipated future reforms, the government could seek the commission's advice on sensitive issues and long-standing grievances. Second, in anticipation of a permanent education commission—a demand of the education community and an unimplemented recommendation of the Education Policy 2010—the reform commission appointed now could engage in public dialogue on the nature, role, and composition of the proposed permanent body and continue to serve until a future political government formally establishes it.

Prioritise TIN returns, not VAT hikes

Molla Mehedi Hasan is former research assistant at Islamic Relief Bangladesh and postgraduate student of sociology at Khulna University. He can be reached at mehedikusoc19@gmail.com.

MOLLA MEHEDI HASAN

In its bid to mobilise revenue, the government has decided to increase value-added tax (VAT) and supplementary duties on over 100 products and services, including essentials such as liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), soap, detergent, and biscuits. While this measure aims to bridge the widening budget deficit, it disproportionately burdens the middle class and low-income groups already grappling with high inflation and constrained purchasing power. A more equitable and sustainable approach would focus on improving compliance with income tax return submissions rather than relying on regressive tax hikes.

According to the National Board of Revenue (NBR), there were more than 1.02 crore Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) holders as of April 25, 2024. While this reflects an encouraging expansion in the tax base, the reality is disheartening: 59 percent of these TIN holders did not file tax returns in the financial year 2023-24. Among registered companies, the compliance rate is even worse. Of the 2.88 lakh registered companies, only 8.45 percent filed returns in the same fiscal year. These figures reveal a significant disconnect between the generation of TINs and the actual filing of returns.

This gap stems partly from the ease of obtaining an e-TIN, introduced in 2013 to make tax compliance more accessible. With minimal requirements—such as a national ID for individuals or an incorporation certificate for companies—many

people have acquired TINs out of curiosity or for specific transactions, such as land transfers or trade licenses, without any intention of submitting returns. Additionally, a portion of TIN holders has become inactive or deceased, further skewing the statistics.

Efforts to encourage return submissions, such as mandating proof of submission for availing over 43 services, have yielded limited success. Without stricter enforcement or incentives, the lack of compulsion continues to deter taxpayers from fulfilling their obligations. The NBR's own reports show that nearly 5.28 lakh people who obtained TINs for land transfers and another 3.75 lakh for various one-time purposes do not regularly file returns. Meanwhile, dormant companies and individuals with minimal taxable income remain outside the compliance net.

The historical context sheds light on this issue. Before 1995, taxpayers were identified by General Index Register (GIR) numbers, maintained manually by tax circles. The introduction of TINs marked a shift towards digitisation, but the ease of obtaining an e-TIN since 2013 has inadvertently inflated the number of TINs without corresponding growth in tax compliance.

The recent VAT increases are regressive in nature, disproportionately impacting low- and middle-income families. With inflation at 10.89 percent in December 2024—and food inflation even higher at 12.92 percent—raising

VAT on everyday items like LPG, soap, and biscuits exacerbates the cost-of-living crisis. Economists have voiced concerns that such measures hurt those with fixed incomes far more than the affluent, who can absorb these costs with minimal lifestyle adjustments.

While the government argues that VAT hikes are necessary to meet revenue shortfalls—especially under pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—this approach

The government's focus on VAT and supplementary duty hikes is a short-term fix that risks alienating the very population it seeks to serve. Instead, a long-term strategy centred on improving tax compliance and broadening the income tax net would foster economic resilience and social equity.

undermines social equity. Revenue collection efforts should instead target those who can contribute more, such as high-income individuals and large corporations that evade taxes through loopholes or non-compliance.

Rather than resorting to VAT hikes, the government should focus on increasing tax compliance among TIN holders. Several measures could be adopted to bridge the gap between TIN generation and return submissions:

i) Implementing stricter regulations to compel all TIN holders to file returns, regardless of income level, could significantly improve compliance. Simplified filing processes and better

public awareness campaigns would support this transition.

ii) Conducting regular audits to identify and deactivate dormant or irrelevant TINs would provide a clearer picture of active taxpayers and reduce administrative inefficiencies.

iii) Offering tax credits, rebates, or other benefits for timely return submissions could encourage more people and entities to comply.

iv) Strengthening enforcement mechanisms for registered companies, which currently exhibit dismal compliance rates, should be a priority. Penalties for non-compliance, coupled with support for small businesses to navigate the tax system, could address this issue.

v) Expanding digital infrastructure to make filing returns seamless and error-free would reduce barriers to compliance. Transparency in how tax revenues are utilised could also build trust and encourage voluntary compliance.

Revenue mobilisation is essential for addressing the budget deficit and funding public services, but it must be pursued in a way that upholds fairness and minimises economic hardship. Prioritising the enforcement of tax return submissions over VAT hikes aligns with the principles of progressive taxation, ensuring that those with higher incomes contribute their fair share.

The government's focus on VAT and supplementary duty hikes is a short-term fix that risks alienating the very population it seeks to serve. Instead, a long-term strategy centred on improving tax compliance and broadening the income tax net would foster economic resilience and social equity. By addressing the root causes of non-compliance among TIN holders and companies, the government can achieve sustainable revenue growth without overburdening vulnerable groups.

No more concessions for India on border killing or fencing



OF MAGIC AND MADNESS
Badiuzzaman Bay
is assistant editor at The Daily Star.

BADIUZZAMAN BAY

There couldn't be a more harrowing indictment of India's ruthless border policy than the recent killings of two Bangladeshis around the 14th anniversary of the gruesome murder of Felani Khatun. The first of these killings involved Zahur Ali, 55, who was allegedly beaten to death by members of the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and local Indian citizens at the Boro Keora border area of Chunarughat, Habiganj. According to a report by *Prothom Alo*, Zahur, a security guard from Dhaka with a history of mental instability, had recently returned home on a five-day leave. On January 6, he went out apparently to sell some merchandise at the village market and was not heard from again. The next day, his body was discovered inside Indian territory.

The second incident involved Saidul Islam, 23, who was allegedly killed by BSF on January 8 near the Mashimpur border in Bishwambharpur, Sunamganj. According to a report by *Dhaka Tribune*, Saidul was apparently smuggling betel nuts into India when he was shot, sustaining wounds to his chest and abdomen. He later died at the Sunamganj Sadar Hospital. And just three days after that, another victim, Md Shahidul Islam, 22, was critically injured near the border in Shibganj, Chapainawabganj. *Prothom Alo* reports that Shahidul was apparently returning from India with smuggled Phensedyl when BSF shot him. He is now under treatment at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

If this was India's way of commemorating the incident from 14 years ago that gave rise to that iconic image of the upside-down body of a 14-year-old girl hanging from a barbed-wire fence for hours—before she was shot and left to die a slow, painful death—it indeed made its point. However, the recent string of tragic shootings has nothing to do with Felani, who was just another entrant in the absurdly long list of BSF victims. But that haunting image today stands as a symbol of BSF's trigger-happy

exploits that continue unchecked. The ordeal that Felani's family had to go through, both before and after the January 7, 2011, shooting, represents everything wrong with India's border policy. It starts with allowing lethal force to prevent unlawful movements regardless of their causes or its own "zero-death" pledge—with 25 shot dead in 2024, according to Ain o

of his reckless actions. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court of India, which was supposed to hear final arguments in this case on January 8, reportedly postponed the hearing without explanation. Furthermore, despite India's National Human Rights Commission directing the Indian home ministry in 2013 to provide Rs 5 lakh as compensation to Felani's

Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma stuck to the same guns. The BSF also routinely uses the excuse of firing in "self-defence" under "compulsion." In July 2022, its then director-general even went as far as to call Bangladeshi nationals killed at the border "criminals." Rights activists have consistently laid bare the hollowness of such arguments about the means or excuses used to stop so-called border crimes, yet Indian authorities refuse to mend their ways or ensure accountability for what is clearly a violation of both internationally accepted border control protocols and bilateral instruments.

This authoritarian tendency was further evident in BSF's recent attempts to construct barbed-wire fences along five border areas, including Chapainawabganj, Naogaon, Lalmonirhat, and the Tin Bigha Corridor. India has already fenced 3,271 km of its 4,156-km border with Bangladesh, leaving approximately 885 km unfenced. While it has temporarily halted its border incursions thanks to strong resistance from Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel and local villagers, its increasingly adversarial approach since the ouster of New Delhi's once-favoured leader Sheikh Hasina stands in stark contrast to its rhetoric of friendly relations. The question is, who surrounds their neighbours with barbed wire, frequently violates bilateral agreements on border management, resorts to excessive force at the slightest hint of unauthorised presence or activity, and continuously refuses to engage in accountability measures?

Interestingly, Pranay Verma, while talking to journalists after the Sunday meeting, said: "We have an understanding with regard to fencing the border for security... We expect that the understanding will be implemented." He was likely referring

to what Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retired) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury termed as "unequal agreements" or MoUs on barbed-wire fencing signed during Awami League's tenure, leading to the present disputes. Revisiting all such controversial MoUs has become essential in post-uprising Bangladesh, even though India still seems to be tethered to a time when it could get Bangladesh to concede to any unfair demand using its political leverage. But that belongs to the past now. India can no longer expect undue concessions or unequal opportunities when it comes to border management. It must acknowledge that true friendship between two neighbours demands respect, accountability, and adherence to established protocols and agreements, not coercion or exploitation.

There have been four border-related treaties signed since Bangladesh's independence, as the home adviser has said. Of them, the 1975 one specifies that no defence development activities can take place within 150 yards of the zero line, with another MoU adding that any such work will "require prior agreement between the two nations." There have also been repeated commitments from the Indian authorities to pursue a non-lethal strategy in combating border crimes. India must honour these agreements and commitments. Also, the extrajudicial killings of so many Bangladeshis by BSF cannot go unanswered. India faces too many unresolved issues with Bangladesh—including Sheikh Hasina's extradition—to allow these manageable crises to fester unnecessarily. But if it continues its uncooperative stance, the government should consider taking the issue to the international court and actively raising it on global platforms. Protecting the lives of our citizens and our border integrity is non-negotiable.

The power of silence in a bitter political rivalry



THE STREET VIEW

Mohammad Al-Masum Molla
is a journalist of The Daily Star.

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia boarded a flight to the UK for medical treatment a few hours after her scheduled departure. The delay was caused by the thousands who thronged the highway to bid her farewell. The ensuing traffic jam inconvenienced commuters, no doubt, but it was an outpouring of love and support from her admirers and followers. On the same day, the Bangladesh government revoked 97 passports, including that of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who is now exiled in India, having fled after a massive political upsurge.

Just six months ago, the tables were completely turned. Khaleda was under house arrest, while her party was desperately appealing for her to be allowed to travel for medical care. The request was denied many times. Meanwhile, Sheikh Hasina held an iron grip on power, with no one daring to challenge her.

Since Hasina's government came to power, Khaleda had endured relentless verbal attacks but remained largely silent, maintaining a quiet dignity even as Hasina's words often struck with sharp venom. The two women, both giants of Bangladesh's political landscape, share a bitter rivalry, yet their communication styles couldn't be more different—Hasina is known for her fiery, often harsh tone, while Khaleda is known for remaining calm and calculated, rarely engaging in public verbal sparring.

Khaleda Zia's troubles began in 2009 when her archrival Hasina assumed office. The first blow came when Khaleda was forcibly evicted from her Dhaka cantonment house, which she had called home for decades. In a tearful press conference at her Gulshan office, Khaleda accused the government of dragging her out of her bedroom, breaking down her door, and leaving her with nothing but the clothes she was wearing. Awami League leaders, including Hasina herself, dismissed her emotional plea as nothing more than "crocodile tears."

The political climate grew more hostile. On December 29, 2013, as the BNP declared its "March for Democracy" ahead of the controversial January 5, 2014, elections, Khaleda's path was blocked by five sand-laden trucks ordered by the government to prevent her from attending the rally. The sight of the trucks—now infamous in Bangladesh's political history as "sand-truck democracy"—left Khaleda frustrated and powerless. It was the first time she was out of parliament since she began parliamentary politics in 1990. While she was visibly upset, her fury was directed not at Hasina but at the female police officers who had managed to irritate her. In a brief moment of exasperation, Khaleda lashed out in a rare outburst. The only other time Khaleda appeared ungracious was when Hasina wanted to offer condolences for the death of Arafat, Khaleda's younger son. The

sitting prime minister was turned back from the locked gates of Khaleda's Gulshan house.

Khaleda's journey took an even darker turn when she was imprisoned on corruption charges filed during the army-backed caretaker government. Meanwhile, Hasina, when she came to power, had all charges against her cleared, even as Khaleda languished in Dhaka Central Jail. Hasina, ever vocal, repeatedly mocked Khaleda, calling her a "thief" and

prison, deepening the political animosity between the two women and fuelling a bitter feud that shaped Bangladesh's political landscape. Even after sending her to jail, Hasina did not refrain from making harsh comments. Earlier in 2022, she even remarked that Khaleda Zia should be "thrown" off the Padma Bridge. At a programme in London in October 2023, Hasina further said, "Khaleda Zia is over 80 years old, and there is news every

she blamed the students and ordered the police to crack down hard on the protesters.

Ultimately, Hasina was forced to flee the country. Despite her repeated declarations that she would never leave, she fled Bangladesh in the face of mass public anger, abandoning millions of her party loyalists who were left in disarray.

On the other hand, Khaleda Zia departed the country amid a spontaneous farewell fit for a respected leader after years of hardship. Despite that, Khaleda chose not to lash out against Hasina. Instead, she called for "no destruction, no anger, and no revenge," urging the need for love and peace to rebuild the nation.

In a world where silence hardly prevails, Khaleda Zia's restraint became her strength. When the autocratic regime sought to break her, it was the people who showered her with love. This quiet yet powerful defiance set her apart from others.

Where others saw defeat, Khaleda saw an opportunity. As Hasina fled in the face of overwhelming public dissent, Khaleda was met with the kind of love and support that transcended years of political conflict. In choosing peace over revenge and dialogue over destruction, she set an example that speaks louder than words.

Of all the five major political figures in Bangladesh's history—Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Ziaur Rahman, HM Ershad, Khaleda Zia, and Sheikh Hasina—it is only Khaleda Zia who has managed to avoid the label of an autocrat. This distinction is a significant defining aspect of her political legacy.

At a time when politics often rewards the loudest voice, Khaleda Zia's legacy serves as a reminder that silence, too, can be golden. It is this quiet strength that will echo through Bangladesh's history, ensuring that she is not just remembered but also revered.



VISUAL: MONOROM POLOK

claiming she deserved the punishment she received. Hasina would often declare, while mocking the BNP's political efforts: "Now they're marching for a thief."

Ironically, however, the international media has reported massive corruption allegations against Hasina's cabinet and even her niece, who is a British MP.

Hasina even issued threats that any attempt by the BNP to step up its movement would result in Khaleda being thrown back into

day that she is on the verge of dying." She then questioned the point of crying over her health.

Hasina's ungracious comments weren't limited to Khaleda. She also targeted other prominent figures, including Muhammad Yunus, who is currently the chief adviser to the interim government. She infamously labelled Yunus a "bloodsucker of the poor." Moreover, during the student protests in late July, Hasina's reaction was far from empathetic. Instead of listening to the youth's grievances,

CROSSWORD
BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

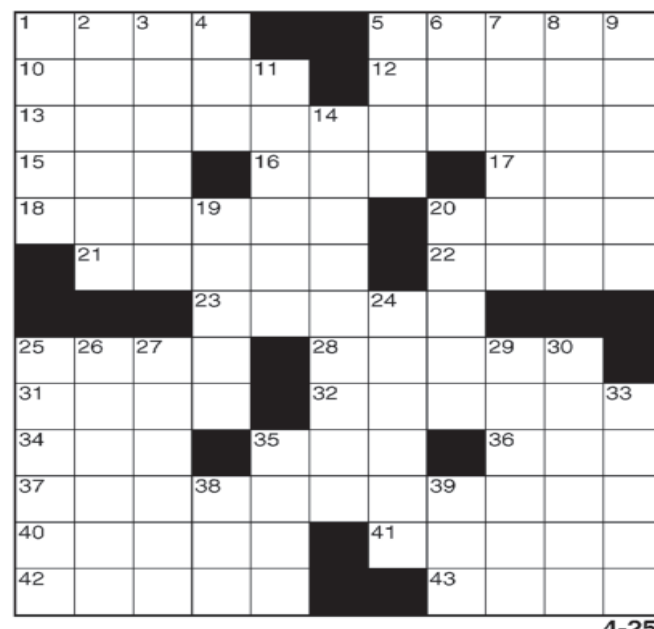
- 1 One of the Deadly Sins
- 5 Church fixture
- 10 Pays to play
- 12 "Cheers" barmaid
- 13 South America's north coast
- 15 Bar bill
- 16 Quaker's pronoun
- 17 Not pos.
- 18 Sand substance
- 20 Skin woe
- 21 Home design
- 22 Reduced amount
- 23 More than sufficient

DOWN

- 1 Survives
- 2 Like some debts
- 3 Horse house
- 4 Wallet bill
- 5 Needing aspirin
- 6 Hurried flight
- 7 Somnolent state

8 Sci-fi threat

- 9 Mountain chains
- 11 Half-hour show, often
- 14 Twinge
- 19 Start of a Caesar quote
- 20 Watchful
- 24 "Get a move on!"
- 25 Contribute
- 26 Made over
- 27 Incite
- 29 La Scala city
- 30 Water channel
- 33 Dance's de Mille
- 35 Top Ten songs
- 38 Cardinal color
- 39 Tire track



SATURDAY'S ANSWERS



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dsopinion@gmail.com.

Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB)
TCB Bhaban, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215
www.tcb.gov.bd
Commercial Section

Invitation For Tender (National) for Purchase of
(a) 2,20,00,000 Litre Refined Soyabean Oil, (b) 1,10,00,000 Litre Refined Rice Bran Oil (c) 2,20,00,000 Litre Refined Palm Olein, (d) 10,000 M. Ton Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil.

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Commerce.
2	Agency	Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB)
3	Procuring Entity Name	Additional Director (Commercial), TCB, Dhaka.
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not applicable.
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka.
6	Invitation for	a) Refined Soyabean Oil b) Refined Rice Bran Oil c) Refined Palm Olein d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil.
7	Invitation Ref. No.	a) 26.05.0000.016.08.502.25.4175, b) 26.05.0000.016.08.502.25.4176, c) 26.05.0000.016.08.502.25.4177, d) 26.05.0000.016.08.502.25.4178
8	Date	13-01-2025

KEY INFORMATION
9 Procurement Method: Open Tendering Method (OTM) (National)

FUNDING INFORMATION
10 Budget and Source of Funds: TCB's Own Fund.

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

11	Tender Package No.	a) TCB/Imp-116/ Soyabean Oil/ 2024-25, b) TCB/Imp-116/ Rice bran oil/ 2024-25, c) TCB/Imp-116/ Palm Olein/ 2024-25 d) TCB/Imp-116/ Red Lentil/ 2024-25
12	Tender Package Name	a) Refined Soyabean Oil, b) Refined Rice Bran Oil, c) Refined Palm Olein, d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil.
13	Tender Invitation/ Publication Date	14-01-2025
14	Tender Documents Last Selling Date and Time	26-01-2025 17:00 P.M
15	Tender Closing Date and Time	27-01-2025 12:00 P.M
16	Tender Opening Date and Time	27-01-2025 12:15 P.M
17	Name & Address of the office(s)	Address: (1) Sonali Bank Ltd. Kawran Bazar Branch, TCB Bhaban, Dhaka. (2) Trust Bank Ltd. Kawran Bazar Branch, and (3) Accounts & Finance Division, TCB's Principal Office at Dhaka. Receiving Tender Document: In front of TCB's reception (2 nd floor), TCB Bhaban, 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. Opening Tender Document: Board Room, TCB.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER
18 Brief Eligibility of Tenderer: Bonafide Suppliers. Details conditions have been mentioned in the Tender documents.

19 Brief Description of goods: a) 2,20,00,000 (Two Crore Twenty Lac) Litre Refined Soyabean Oil Packed in 02 (Two) Litre Food Grade PET Bottle. b) 1,10,00,000 (One Crore Ten Lac) Litre Refined Rice Bran Oil Packed in 02 (Two) Litre Food Grade PET Bottle. c) 2,20,00,000 (Two Crore Twenty Lac) Litre Refined Palm Olein Packed in 02 (Two) Litre Food Grade PET Bottle. d) 10,000 (Ten Thousand) M.Tons Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil packed in 50 kg bag.

20 Price of Tender Document: Price of (a) Refined Soyabean Oil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand), (b) Refined Rice Bran Oil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand), (c) Refined Palm Olein tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand) & (d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil tender document is Taka 5,000 (Five Thousand).

Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount (BDT)	Supply Schedule
21	a) Refined Soyabean Oil b) Refined Rice Bran Oil c) Refined Palm Olein d) Whole Husked (Without Husk) Red Lentil.	Offers are to be made on TCB's Godowns of Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Barisal, Moulvibazar, Mymensingh, Cumilla, Madaripur, Jhenaidah, Bogura, Dinajpur, Gazipur/District's godown/Upazila's godown.	Tender is to be submitted along with Tender Security amounting to: a) BDT 7,82,00,000 (BDT Seven Crore Eighty Two Lac) Only. (In case of partial quantity tender security will be proportionate). b) BDT 4,20,00,000 (BDT Four Crore Twenty Lac) Only. (In case of partial quantity tender security will be proportionate). c) BDT 7,68,00,000 (BDT Seven Crore Sixty Eight Lac) Only. (In case of partial quantity tender security will be proportionate). d) BDT 2,13,00,000 (BDT Two Crore Thirteen Lac) Only. (In case of partial quantity tender security will be proportionate).	Entire quantity of Goods is to be supplied within: (a) 12-05-2025 (b) 12-05-2025 (c) 12-05-2025 (d) 12-05-2025

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS
22 Name of Official Inviting Tender: Md. Golam Khorshed
23 Designation of Official Inviting Tender: Additional Director, Commercial (Substitute), TCB Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.
24 Address of Official Inviting Tender: Principal Office, Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.
25 Contact details of Official Inviting Tender: Telephone No. 55014273 Telephone No. 55014273 E-mail: tcb@tcb.gov.bd, tcbimp@tcb.gov.bd

26 Special Instruction: a) All terms and conditions related to the tender and product details are mentioned in the tender document. b) The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender in whole/in part without assigning any reason.

(Md. Golam Khorshed)
Deputy Secretary
Additional Director, Commercial (Substitute)
Trading Corporation of Bangladesh

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
BANGLADESH TELEVISION
HEADQUARTERS BUILDING
RAMPURA, DHAKA-1219.
www.btv.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice

This is an International 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, registration in the e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. For more details, please contact e-GP support desk contact numbers.

e-Tender is invited in e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Office of the Senior Engineer (O&M), BTV as below:

Tender ID No. / Reference No. / Procurement Type	Name of Goods	Tender Publication Date and Time	Last date & Time for Tender Security Submission	Tender Closing & Opening date & Time
1	2	3	4	5
Tender ID: 1048840 Invitation Reference No.: 15.54.0000.023.07.197.24 Procurement Type: ICT	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Production Control Room (PCR) Equipment for Auditorium of BTV Dhaka Station on Turnkey Basis.	13-Jan-2025 15:30 BST	27-Feb-2025 11:00 BST	27-Feb-2025 15:30 BST

Procurement Method: Open Tendering Method (OTM)

e-Tender details can be downloaded from e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for pursue. e-Tender will be accepted only as stated in e-GP System Portal, accepted Tenders will be opened online immediately as stated in above table.

(Signature)
13.01.2025
Muhammad Anisur Rahman
Senior Engineer (O&M)

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and Afforestation in Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar under HELP Project
Forest Department
Planning Wing
Ban Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.
www.bforest.gov.bd

Memo No.: 22.01.2680.002.014.057.007.25. Date: 14/01/2025

Country : Bangladesh
Name of the Project: 'Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and Afforestation in Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar' under Host and Rohingya Enhancement of Lives Project (HELP).
Grant No : IDA - E3250
Project ID No : P501274

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (REOI)
For Selection of Procurement Specialist (Individual, National)
PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST
(Package Number: S-03)

- The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a credit from the World Bank toward the cost of the 'Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and Afforestation in Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar' under Host and Rohingya Enhancement of Lives Project (HELP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments for this consulting service to be procured under the project.
- Scope of Services:** The Scope of Services of the Consultant includes, but not limited to the following:
 - Work under the guidance of the PD, 'Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and Reforestation of Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar' Project under HELP in implementing all aspects of procurement under the project.
 - Preparation of procurement plan through Systematic Tracking of Exchanges in Procurement (STEP) portal and updating time to time;
 - Preparation of procurement documents such as tender documents for goods and works, procurement notices, Request for Proposal, shortlist report, tender/ proposal evaluation reports, minutes of pre-bid/proposal meeting/ negotiation, draft contract documents;
 - Assist the Project Director in pre-proposal meeting if any;
 - Evaluate Tenders and Proposals;
 - Assist the Project Director in procurement proceedings of tenders and proposals;
 - Assist the Project Director in contractual matters during implementation of project;
 - Ensure that all procurement activities are carried out following World Bank Procurement Regulations and PPR 2008, as applicable;
 - Uploading all procurement related documents in STEP;
 - Prepare all documents required for approval of the PD HELP, Chief Conservator of Forests, BFD and MoEFCC;
 - Prepare complaint handling mechanism and address complaint as per the PPR-2008 and WB Procurement Regulations;
 - Take necessary measures for Concurrence of concerned documents from World Bank;
 - Assist PD in contractual conflicts/disputes and contractor's claim;
 - Providing guidance to PD to develop better procurement management;
 - Provide operational advice on concepts, policies and procedures for international and local procurement matters;
 - Provide assistance on procurement matters of the projects to ensure consistent application of the Procurement Regulations of the World Bank and /or Public Procurement Act 2006 (PPA), Public Procurement Rules, 2008 as laid out in the legal documents between IDA and GOB;
 - Closely monitor procurement activities in reference to the Procurement Plan timeline and the procurement approval process of the Government and bring any slippage of activities immediately to the attention of the PD;
 - Conduct procurement activities under the project using BPPA's e-GP portal;
 - Conduct training as required and requested by the PD; and
 - Guiding the Supervision Consultant for better contract management;
 - Prepare and update Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD);
 - Any other relevant tasks assigned by PD.
- Duration:** The duration of the consultancy services is tentatively 09 Month; Full-time engagement.
- Selection Procedures:** The Project Director invites the eligible Applicants to submit the Expressions of Interests (EOI) for providing the services. The Interested Applicants need to provide information demonstrating that s/he has the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the services. The selection criteria are:
 - Educational Qualification:** Bachelor's degree in Engineering or Master's in Procurement/ Economics/ Statistics/Finance/ Business Administration/ Management/Law or other relevant subjects. Professional certifications/degree in procurement and contract management from any recognized institution will be given preference.
 - Experiences:**
 - About 10 (Ten) years of general experience out of which 8 (Eight) years of experience in a position having responsibilities and substantial content of his/her position involving practical application of public procurement;
 - Proven working experience on procurement following the World Bank or other Development Partners' Procurement Guidelines;
 - Strong Knowledge and working experience in e-Government Procurement (e-GP);
 - The consultant must have demonstrated sound technical expertise in procurement practices and have proven track record of providing technical fiduciary advice on procurement activities.
 - Hands-on experience in managing all steps in the procurement process, including procurement planning, preparation of bidding/contract documents, bid/proposal evaluation, contract award and implementation monitoring of internationally competitive procurement of goods, works and services.
 - Should have profound knowledge and competency in public procurement including up-to-date knowledge on Public Procurement Acts (PPA 2006), Public Procurement Rules (PPR 2008) and Standard Tender Documents (STDs), e-GP system as well as in procurement regulations of World Bank or similar Development Partners.
 - Knowledge and experience in technical, commercial and legal aspects of procurement of the World Bank financed project will be an added advantage.
 - Knowledge and understanding of World Bank's STEP system is an added advantage;

Applicants are required to submit their Expressions of Interest (EOI), comprising of a CV (including employment history with duties and responsibilities) and a forwarding letter describing briefly the reasons that the applicant considers him/her-self best suited to perform the assignment.

- The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraphs 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, Fifth Edition, September 2023 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.
- Detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) and other information will be available upon request from the address provided below either through email (dccl.plw@gmail.com) or in person. ToR is also available in BFD website. (www.bforest.gov.bd)
- The consultant will be selected following the Selection of Individual Consultant method of the World Bank Procurement Regulations.
- Expression of Interest needs to be submitted (either through e-mail or in person or by mail) to the undersigned office by **11:45 hours BST on 29 January 2025**. Please clearly mention "Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of Procurement Specialist (Package Number: S-03)" in the e-mail's subject line or on the top of the envelope.
- The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without assigning any reason, whatsoever.

(Signature)
Dr. Md. Zaglul Hossain
Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests
Planning Wing
and
Project Director
Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and Afforestation in Rohingya Affected Area in Cox's Bazar under HELP Project
Forest Department
Ban Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka
Telephone: 8802-55007105
E-mail: dccl.plw@gmail.com

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Police Telecommunication Organization
Police Telecom Bhabon, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
web: telecom.police.gov.bd

Invitation for International Tender

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the Manufacturers/Suppliers in their official pad for Supply of HF Fixed set with necessary accessories for FPU in FY 2024-2025.

1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs
2. Agency	Bangladesh Police
3. Procuring Entity Name	SP (Logistics), Police Telecom Organization
4. Invitation for	Supply of HF Fixed set with necessary accessories for FPU in FY 2024-2025
5. Invitation Ref. No.	44.01.0000.057.11.032.24/511/Betar
6. Date	13/01/2025

Key Information
7. Procurement Method: One Stage Two Envelope Tendering Method (OSTETM) - (International)

Funding Information
8. Budget and source of funds: Revenue Budget (GOB)

Particular Information

9. Tender Publication date	14 January 2025.
10. Tender last selling date	26 February 2025.
11. Tender closing date and time	27 February 2025 at 12:00 hrs.
12. Tender opening date and time (Technical offer only)	27 February 2025 at 12:30 hrs.

Name & address of the office

13. Name & address of the office	Bangladesh Police, Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
Selling tender document	ASP (Procurement), Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
Receiving tender document	Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
Opening tender document	Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.
14. Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)	27 January 2025 at 12:00 hrs. at Police Telecom Conference Room (1 st Floor), Police Telecommunication Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

15. Eligibility of Tenderer: 1) Up to date Export license 2) Written confirmation authorizing the signatory of the tender in accordance with the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association of the Principal 3) Affidavit confirming the legal capacity and financial capability 4) Original full Brochure of products of the Principal 5) Other requirements described in the standard tender document (PG 4A).

16. Brief description of goods: Supply of HF Fixed set with necessary accessories for FPU in FY 2024-2025

Sl. No.	Description of Good	Price of tender document (Non-refundable)	Tender security	Completion time
1.	HF Fixed set with necessary accessories	5,000/-	TK-4,00,000/- or US\$-3,280.00	150 days from the Date of Opening L/C.

Procuring Entity Details

17. Name of official inviting tender	Shahriar Bin Saleh
18. Designation of the official inviting tender	SP (Logistics), Bangladesh Police, Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217.
19. Address of official inviting tender	Police Telecom Organization, Rajarbag, Dhaka-1217.
20. Contact details of official inviting tender	Phone: +880 2-8301253 FAX: +880 2-8301404, Mobile: + 88 01320-020041 e-mail: splog.telecom@police.gov.bd

21. The tenderers shall submit their Technical and Financial offer in separate sealed envelope. Furthermore both envelopes shall be covered by an outer envelope which is sealed.

Special instructions

22. a) No tender will be received after the deadline of submission time & date.
b) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender process without assigning any reason.
c) The Procuring entity also reserves the right to omit, increase and/or decrease the quantity of any item(s) of the tender.
d) If not possible to receive/open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstance, the same will be received/opened on the next working date at the same time & same venue.
e) Evaluation will be done by Lot basis.
f) Date of financial offer opening will be duly informed to the Technically Responsive Tenderers and their local agents.
g) The Tenderer must comply with all requirements as per the tender data sheet provided with the tender schedule.
h) The Tender Security shall be in the form of an irrevocable bank guarantee issued by an internationally reputable bank and shall require to be endorsed by its any correspondent bank located in Bangladesh.
i) The Procurement will be performed according to the Public Procurement Act-2006 and Public Procurement Regulation 2008.

(Signature)
13/01/2025
(Shahriar Bin Saleh)
BP 7810126915
SP (Logistics)
Police Telecommunication Organization
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GD-133

High time Mustafizur proved his worth again

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's obvious fears going into global events were well outlined in chairman of selection panel Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu's press conference during the announcement of the Champions Trophy squad on Sunday. Flat wickets or even sporting tracks, as are observed in global ICC events, have more often than not found Bangladesh wanting.

More crucially, wickets of that nature strike at the heart of Bangladesh's position of strength which is their pace-bowling prowess. Case in point is the 2023 ODI World Cup in India.

Taskin Ahmed may have been carrying the burden of injury but in Mustafizur Rahman, the Tigers wanted their 'X-factor' to really come alive. The wickets did not allow Mustafizur to settle. Ahead of the Champions Trophy, selection panel prioritised exuberance of youth, but it appears that it was mostly in batting terms, for Mustafizur had been picked on the back of experience factor — a traditional reliance on said factor thus being witnessed again.

When asked about the experience factor in the Champions Trophy squad, Lipu relayed obvious fears.

"We always look for the best available combination but we could have a new

experience [in this regard]. What I am concerned about is that with bowling being our position of strength, we couldn't defend in West Indies series. It could be a blessing in disguise that we will not be overconfident. Where we made mistakes bowling in flat wickets in terms of line and length and judgement of individual batters, we will get somewhat of an opportunity to work on rectifying those mistakes during Bangladesh's

music.

Hasan went on to show his death-bowling prowess, despite largely been out of white-ball scheme since the 2023 World Cup. The right-arm pacer turned up in the Windies T20Is having gone at 6.5 per over economy rate in the ODIs. The right arm pacer bagged four wickets at an economy of 5.08 in the T20Is and more crucially, put an exhibition of death-bowling in the T20Is. He was one of the key difference

His cutters are usually more effective on such surfaces as Sharjah's but if he is to justify his selection for Champions Trophy, the left-arm pacer needs to really produce something special.

practice sessions," the selection head said.

But if bowling on such flat wickets need to be improved upon, Mustafizur's experience appear to count more since pacers such as Hasan Mahmud and Tanzim Sakib, too, suffered in the West Indies series. Mustafizur missed out on the tour and his last series was against Afghanistan in the UAE, not the kind of batting paradise as was in West Indies where Hasan or Sakib had to face the

makers in the T20I series sweep.

Mustafizur, who had opted out of the Windies series, was Bangladesh's most successful bowler in the prior ODI series, bagging eight wickets at average of 18.12 and an economy of 5.37 in three games. But he was not tested on those batting paradises in St Kitts. He shone through his work with the new ball, bagging his first four-for in over a year in the UAE during Afghanistan ODIs.

His cutters are usually more effective

on such surfaces as Sharjah's but if he is to justify his selection for Champions Trophy, the left-arm pacer needs to really produce something special.

In 2018 Asia Cup, Mustafizur put in a masterclass with the old ball to take the Tigers to the final. His yorkers are getting more effective and his incoming deliveries now make him more of an effective bowler. In the meantime, between Jan 2023 to Jan 2025, his economy, strike-rate and average have all soared compared to his overall career. It seems Mustafizur is not at all a selection based on recent history, but one from faith and expectation.



Chittagong's foreign recruits making a difference

SPORTS REPORTER FROM SYLHET

Chittagong Kings' in-form foreign recruits Graham Clark, Usman Khan and Haider Ali once again made the difference in their side's 30-run win over Sylhet Strikers in their fourth Bangladesh Premier League T20 match in Sylhet on Monday.

England's Graham smashed 60 off 33 balls, while Pakistan's Usman and Haider contributed 53 and 42 not out, respectively, helping Chittagong post 203-6 after being asked to bat.

Consistent performances from their overseas players have been key to Chittagong's strong campaign, with three wins from four games ahead of their home phase. In contrast, Sylhet's foreign recruits struggled, as Ireland's Paul Stirling fell for a duck, USA's Aaron Jones managed just 15, and Scotland's George Munsey's 52 off 37 balls lacked impact in their chase.

Local star Jaker Ali Anik, who came in with Sylhet needing 140 from 53 balls, scored an unbeaten 47 off 23, but the target was out of reach by the time he arrived at the crease in the 11th over.

Named in Bangladesh's Champions Trophy squad, Jaker said he is currently focusing on the BPL and hopes to deliver his "best performance as per role" in the global tournament.

Nahid Rana is 'pure gold'

Former New Zealand pacer Danny Morrison, mostly known for his over-the-top commentary, is back in Bangladesh after six years for the ongoing edition of the Bangladesh Premier League T20. The 58-year-old, on Monday, spoke to The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan regarding his views on the omission of Liton Das and Shakib Al Hasan from the Champions Trophy squad, Bangladesh's pace unit revolution and much more. Following are the excerpts from the interview:

DS: The day you arrived in Bangladesh, Liton Das played a gem of an innings and records tumbled in that match between Dhaka Capitals and Durbar Rajshahi. Must have enjoyed the game a lot.

DM: I think it's always like this under the lights once dew factor comes in. So at night the ball slides on which is great for the batters. And obviously the crowd loves it to be honest. The fours and sixes, entertainment, tough for the bowlers. Liton was left out of the Champions Trophy side, so probably mentally it was good for him. It's like, 'come on man and I'll show you that I'm still worth something and got the ability'.

DS: When someone gets dropped, how challenging is it for them to overcome the situation?

DM: That's the pinnacle. You want to play for your country. Even though now it's a bit different because of franchise cricket all around, but for someone like Liton, wanting to play for Bangladesh is important. So he should have his own pride of his performance and understand what you try to achieve from the game because you can't play forever. So you have a small window and I think that probably motivated Liton last night [Sunday] just to show them. And he got the conditions too

that suited him.

DS: How much will Bangladesh miss Shakib Al Hasan in the Champions Trophy?

DM: What I will say is that it's very unique here. I have seen all around the sub-continent, in terms of being in the politics, it's very challenging if you are involved in politics and you are still playing cricket. It's better to retire and then go into politics. There is also his bowling action. That's just the thing you can tidy up. So I expect Shakib to be back. He is a very competitive player.... he is a good enough player to come back and still play.

DS: Bangladesh is producing many fast bowlers in recent times. How do you evaluate the pace revolution in Bangladesh?

DM: Taskin [Ahmed] is very useful with all his experiences coming into the fold. The fizz [Mustafizur Rahman] is still around and doing his thing. Everyone loves a left-armer, right? I think because of the people you used, you got Courtney Walsh

and Allan Donald as coaches. So you find pedigree in terms of overseas coaches to develop your quick bowlers. I think that looking for outside help and resources can create and develop guys and it's exciting.

DS: What about Nahid Rana?

DM: You got to hold onto it. That's gold, pure gold. It's quite freakish. Pakistanis got few over time. And do you think it's about DNA? Not really. There is an argument whether a sprinter is made or a sprinter is born. Some guys will have a timing or action and have the athleticism to do that. I think he is just one of those.

DS: Four franchise tournaments are running concurrently across the world. Why did you choose BPL?

DM: My work area is subcontinent, UAE and the West Indies. I do these tournaments. I'm a little bit of a showman and have fun with the crowds and being interviewed or doing these. I have been coming here since 1987. I think it helps if you embrace the culture. I love the food, the people and the noise and the passion.



AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Djokovic dodges early departure

AFP, MELBOURNE

Novak Djokovic survived a scare in his quest for tennis history before joining Carlos Alcaraz and defending champion Jannik Sinner in the second round of the Australian Open yesterday.

In the women's draw, Iga Swiatek and Coco Gauff powered through with minimum fuss as they seek to dethrone two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka. On a blockbuster second day in Melbourne, Djokovic lost the first set to 107th-ranked American Nishesh Basavareddy in the prime-time evening match on Rod Laver Arena.

But the Serbian great, hoping to roll back the years and win an 11th Australian Open and record 25th Grand Slam singles title, recovered to pull through 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

Djokovic was animated at the end and struggled to raise a smile. Italian world number one Sinner was playing under a cloud after twice testing positive for traces of a steroid in March. Sinner was warmly welcomed on Rod Laver Arena before defeating Chile's Nicolas Jarry 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/5), 6-1.

"I was happy about the crowd," said Sinner, who has not tasted defeat since losing to Alcaraz in the Beijing final in October. Alcaraz, a four-time Grand Slam champion but never a winner in Melbourne, had a couple of hairy moments before seeing off the challenge of Kazakhstan's Alexander Shevchenko, 6-1, 7-5, 6-1.

Earlier, the 11th-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas became the first major casualty when Alex Michelsen blasted past him 7-5, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4. The 26-year-old Greek, who played Djokovic in the 2023 final at Melbourne Park, never looked comfortable against the 42nd-ranked American.



Flick's 'incredible' Barca win Spanish Super Cup

AGENCIES

Head coach Hansi Flick praised his "incredible" Barcelona team after 5-2 win against Real Madrid in the Spanish Super Cup final in Saudi Arabia on Sunday.

Barca came from an early goal down, scoring four goals in a dominant first half and surviving having their goalkeeper sent off to clinch a record-extending 15th trophy.

Lamine Yamal, Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha and Alejandro Balde were all on target before halftime, after French forward Kylian Mbappe put Real in front in the fifth minute. Raphinha grabbed another in the second half while Rodrygo scored for Real.

At the King Abdullah Sports City stadium, Barcelona put in a clinical display to lift their first trophy in more than a year, having no silverware to show for last season.

Barcelona and Real met in the competition's final for third consecutive time, with Ancelotti's side prevailing last year while Barca lifted the trophy in 2023.

"I'm very proud of the team, the



staff, the club, the fans... everyone who supports Barca. I am proud to manage such an incredible team," said Flick.

The Catalan side were left with 10 men when goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny was sent off for fouling Mbappe in the 56th minute and Rodrygo beat substitute keeper Inaki Pena from the resulting free kick.

But Real, who hold a five-point advantage over Barca in LaLiga after 19 games, had no shots on goal after the penalty until Mbappe's effort was denied by Pena in stoppage time.

"After Szczesny was sent off,

it wasn't easy for anyone. We, the coaches, had a little discussion, and I thank them all because, in the end, we made the right decision. And Inaki did a great job, and we defended as a team. I loved it," said Flick.

"We are a team. You could see that after the win, but it always shows. We stick together, and our aim is to learn from every game."

"At big clubs, the goal is to win titles. And that's what we're working towards. We are very happy and proud but need to keep showing that we are the best in every game," added Flick.

SHORT CORNER

Zalmi pick Rana, no takers for Shakib and Mustafizur

Bangladesh's speedster Nahid Rana has been picked by Peshwar Zalmi in the ongoing players draft for the upcoming edition of the Pakistan Super League, set to begin in April. He troubled the Pakistani batters with his pace in Bangladesh's two-Test series in Rawalpindi last year, and clearly made a lasting impression as the Zalmi franchise raised their paddle to secure the services of the right-arm fast bowler from the Gold category.

Jessy to officiate in ICC U-19 Women's T20 WC

Bangladeshi umpire Shathira Jakir Jessy is set to become the first women umpire from the country to officiate in a Cricket World Cup at any level as the ICC has named her as one of the 20 match officials who will stand in the forthcoming ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup in Malaysia, beginning this Saturday.

Cummins to lead Australia's big guns at Champions Trophy

Pat Cummins will captain Australia at the Champions Trophy after being named in a preliminary 15-man squad also featuring fellow quick Josh Hazlewood on Tuesday. Squad: Pat Cummins (captain), Alex Carey, Nathan Ellis, Aaron Hardie, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Marnus Labuschagne, Mitch Marsh, Glenn Maxwell, Matt Short, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Adam Zampa.

*Read full stories on The Daily Star website

Clubs to discuss BCB's constitution reforms

SPORTS REPORTER

The proposed changes to the constitution of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), especially the dissolution of the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) and the reduction of councillors from Category 2 in the BCB general council, are causing quite a furore amongst Dhaka club cricket officials.

In a scheduled meeting today, 76 clubs under the CCDM will gather to discuss their concerns over the proposed reforms. The meeting is set to take place at 3 pm at a city hotel.

It was learned that the changes would reduce the number of councillors from clubs from 12 to just four, while the number of BCB directors would drop from 25 to 21.

Club officials have vehemently criticised the new changes in TV and print media reports over the past few days. There has been criticism that reducing the number of Dhaka-based clubs undermines their significance and contribution to Bangladesh cricket.

A five-member committee led by BCB director Najmul Abedeen Fahim is handling the proposals.

"We are fine-tuning the proposal and will possibly hand it over very soon. Before that, we will have a discussion with a group of people who can see it from a neutral point of view," Fahim told The Daily Star yesterday.

The proposal will then be forwarded to the general council and, ultimately, to the National Sports Council (NSC) for approval.

Regarding the criticism and media storm surrounding the proposed changes, Fahim felt that "many of the things being said aren't right."

EX-MINISTER JAVED Court freezes his cement company's bank account

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A court in Chattogram has ordered to suspend the bank account of Aramit Cement Ltd, owned by former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed, in a case of defaulted loan of Tk 15 crore.

J u d g e M u j a h i d u r R a h m a n of the C h i t t a g o n g Financial Debt Court issued the order yesterday afternoon, said the court's bench assistant Rezaul Karim.



Javed's wife Rukmila Zaman is the managing director of Aramit Cement, the company accused of defaulting on the loan.

Javed served as the state minister for land from 2014 to 2018 and as its minister from 2019 to 2023.

Before the 2024 parliamentary

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



Students of Jagannath University on a hunger strike in front of the Secretariat yesterday to press home their three-point demand. They called off their strike 35 hours after authorities assured them of accepting two of their demands. The photo was taken around 7:00pm just before they withdrew their strike.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

3-POINT DEMAND JnU students lay siege to Secretariat

Call off hunger strike at night; campus shutdown, class boycott to continue

OUR CORRESPONDENT, JnU

Students of Jagannath University (JnU), who went on a hunger strike to press home their three-point demand, called off their protest yesterday evening, 35 hours after authorities assured them of meeting two of their demands.

Their demands include the transfer of the second campus project to the army for timely completion, the provision of temporary accommodation for students, and the arrangement of a housing allowance for at least 70 percent of students until temporary accommodation is available.

The education ministry issued a new notice around 7:00pm yesterday.

This notice provided assurances of accepting the first two demands at the meeting of the steering committee for the second JnU campus project to be held at the Secretariat on Wednesday.

Earlier in the day, protesters gathered in front of the Secretariat since 4:45pm citing the "lack of clarity" in the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Fossil of world's smallest cat found in China

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have uncovered the fossil remains of a tiny feline species smaller than a house cat from an ancient cave in eastern China.

Researchers from the Chinese Academy of Sciences say the feline called *Prionailurus kurteni* was an extinct species of leopard cat. It was small enough to fit in the palm of one's hand.



The species was identified from a lower jaw fragment discovered at the Hualongdong cave in eastern China's Anhui province.

Its size is comparable to those of the smallest modern cats like the rusty-spotted *P. rubiginosus* of South Asia and the black-footed *Felis nigripes* of Africa, according to a study published in the journal *Annales Zoologici Fennici*.

P. rubiginosus and *Felis nigripes* are estimated to have a maximum head-and-body length of 48cm and 52cm, respectively.

"This species represents the smallest known fossil member of the family Felidae to date," the study says of the newly discovered cat.

The discovery points to a wide diversity of felines during the late Middle Pleistocene, beginning 300,000 years ago.

Fossils of *P. kurteni* have been rarely found because their small bodies decayed quickly in the forested habitat they preferred. The latest fossil, though, was better preserved in the cave environment, scientists say.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Journo, father beaten up by pro-BNP men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A local journalist and his father were beaten up allegedly by pro-BNP men over a trifling issue in Patuakhali's Kuakata upazila on Sunday night.

The victims, KM Bachchu, 30, Kuakata correspondent for the *Dainik Desh Rupantor*, and his father Yunus Khalifa, 60, were undergoing treatment at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital, Barishal.

Locals said Bachchu's father Yunus was talking to a person in the intersection area in Kuakata town around 9:00pm. Ali Khandaker, president of the municipal unit Krishak Dal, got into an argument with a peanut vendor over not paying the price of peanuts. Ali rather hurled abuse at the vendor for asking money.

As Yunus protested, Ali attacked him. When Bachchu reached the spot after hearing that his father was being assaulted, 10-12 people led by Jasim Mridha, vice-president of the municipal unit Sramik Dal, and Ali beat him up with sticks

SUPREME COURT

Case disposals nearly halved in July-Sept

Many political, constitutional cases saw resolution after Aug 5

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The rate of case disposals at the Supreme Court in the July-September period last year fell by around 47.4 percent to 7,916 from 15,045 in the previous quarter.

The number of cases pending with the courts across the country stood at over 44.43 lakh as of September 30, up from 43.80 lakh at the end of June and 37.3 lakh on December 31, 2023, latest SC data shows.

Despite the resolution of many significant political and constitutional cases after the uprising, the backlog continues to erode public trust in the judiciary, legal experts say.

The Appellate Division witnessed a sharp decline in disposals, down from 2,004 cases in the April-June quarter to a mere 685 in the subsequent period. Similarly, the High Court's disposal rate dipped from 13,041 to 7,231.

This trend translated into a significant increase in pending cases. The Appellate Division saw its backlog rise from 27,477 to 28,901 in this period, while the High Court's backlog surged from 5,65,619 to 5,77,280.

Lower courts also experienced an increase in pending cases, rising from 37,87,866 to 38,37,329. The SC did not provide data on lower court disposals.

Amid judicial reform efforts and steps like the appointment of new judges to clear the backlog, the growing number of pending cases is adding to the suffering of those seeking justice.

Contacted, Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) President AM Mahub Uddin Khokon said recently that judiciary's administrative and judicial have been progressing very slowly in the last few months.

He said the expectations of the people have not been fulfilled with a separate secretariat for the judiciary and a law or rules for recruitment of SC judges are not in place yet.

Khokon, also a BNP joint secretary general, alleged nepotism in the lower courts continued while judges who used to send the people to remand on false charges are still in service.

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed had earlier said the backlog of cases is a major problem in the judiciary and the delay in resolution is causing suffering to litigants.

In an address to the judges from across the country on September 21 last year, he mentioned multiple issues, including a shortage of judges, manpower, and courtrooms as the causes behind the backlog.

Despite the difficulties, only 2,000 judges are settling more than 10 lakh cases in a year,

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

The backlog of cases continues to erode public trust in the judiciary, legal experts say.

DHAKA-DELHI TIES Normalcy to return once elected govt is in place

Says Indian army chief

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The India-Bangladesh relations will normalise once an elected government is in place, said Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi yesterday.

"The military relations between the two countries remain perfect. But if you talk about the overall relations between the two countries, I would say that it will be normal once an elected government comes to power," he said in his annual press conference ahead of the Army Day celebrations in New Delhi.

Dwivedi described Bangladesh as a "strategic neighbour" and said any kind of animosity between the two countries is not in the best interest of either nation.

"I take your mind back to when the Bangladesh army chief recently said that India was a strategic neighbour of his country. It is the same vice versa -- Bangladesh is strategically

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



Upendra Dwivedi

GAZA CEASEFIRE DEAL Qatar hands Israel, Hamas final draft

Says official briefed on negotiations; 19 more Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes

REUTERS, Doha

Mediators yesterday gave Israel and Hamas a final draft of a deal to end the Israeli offensive in Gaza, an official briefed on the negotiations said, after a midnight "breakthrough" in talks attended by envoys of both Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

The official said the text for a ceasefire and release of hostages was presented by Qatar to both sides at talks in Doha, which included the chiefs of Israel's Mossad and Shin Bet spy agencies and Qatar's prime minister.

The official said Steve Witkoff, who will become US envoy when Trump returns to the US presidency next week, attended the talks. A US source said the outgoing Biden administration's envoy Brett McGurk was also there.

"The next 24 hours will be pivotal to reaching the deal," the official said, characterising the draft as the outcome of a breakthrough reached in the early hours of yesterday.

Israeli far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich warned that he would not support a deal in Gaza that halts the offensive, insisting that Israel should "open all the gates of hell" on the Palestinian territory.

Hamas said that talks over some core issues for a ceasefire deal have made progress, an official in the Palestinian group told Reuters.



A firefighter extinguishes the flames as the Palisades Fire, one of several simultaneous blazes that have ravaged Los Angeles County, burns in Mandeville Canyon, a neighbourhood in Los Angeles, California, USA, on Sunday night.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Los Angeles races to contain fires

Death toll rises to 24

AFP, Los Angeles

Firefighters were battling massive wildfires yesterday that have ravaged Los Angeles and killed at least 24 people, with officials warning of incoming dangerous winds that could whip up the blazes further.

The fires ripped through the United States' second-largest city for the seventh day, reducing whole communities to scorched rubble and leaving thousands without homes.

Massive firefighting efforts have stanchoned the spread of the Palisades Fire, which was looming toward upscale Brentwood and the densely populated San Fernando Valley.

But conditions are set to dramatically worsen, with "extreme fire behavior and life threatening conditions" over the coming days.

Winds up to 70 miles per hour mean a "particularly dangerous situation" will be declared from early today, said National Weather Service meteorologist Rose Schoenfeld.