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## CRAFTING THE PATH AHEAD

Reform has been a catch phrase since the interim government took over, following a mass uprising more than five months ago. Of the six focal reform commissions, those on constitution, electoral system, police and anti-corruption submitted their proposals to Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus yesterday, recommending measures to strengthen accountability and transparency in their spheres of governance.

### CONSTITUTION REFORM

- Equality, human dignity, social justice, pluralism, democracy in preamble
- Bicameral parliamentary systems with tenures of 4 years
- Introduction of National Constitution Council
- Reinstating caretaker govt system and referendum for amending constitution
- 2-term limit for presidents, prime ministers
- Minimum age 21 years for eligibility to run for parliament
- Repeal of article 70 allowing MPs to vote against party line



### Sweeping changes in constitution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expanding the fundamental rights to include food, clothing, shelter, education, internet, and vote, the Constitution Reform Commission proposes replacing nationalism, socialism, and secularism with equality, human dignity, social justice and pluralism as fundamental principles of state policy.

The only core principle retained from the 1972 constitution is democracy.

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### ELECTORAL REFORM

- EC can postpone polls to avoid questionable election
- Re-election if turnout under 40 percent
- Introduction of online voting, recall system
- Election commissioners can be probed for failure to perform duties
- Allowing expats to vote via app
- Disqualifying people accused of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings from running for office
- Changing definition of law enforcement agency to include armed forces division



### More powers, accountability

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Electoral Reform Commission has recommended increasing the Election Commission's power to postpone national polls and introducing methods to hold election commissioners accountable for failing to do their constitutional duties.

The reform commission submitted its report to the government yesterday and recommended an

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### ACC REFORM

- Recognise ACC as a constitutional institution
- Allow ACC to file cases against judges, civil servants without govt approval
- Appoint ombudsman as per constitution
- Stop legalising black money
- Increase ACC commissioners to 5 from 3
- Reduce commissioners' tenure to 4 years from 5 years
- ACC commissioner search body to have treasury, opposition representatives



### Structural, legal overhaul stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Reform Commission yesterday proposed significant changes to the ACC's structure and operations, while also recommending some constitutional amendments to stop power abuse by the government of the day.

The reform commission also wants elimination of provisions for whitening black money.

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### POLICE REFORM

- Reassess the need for Rapid Action Battalion
- Police's use of force has to be precise, appropriate and last resort
- Rules of engagement for UN peacekeepers be used for police's use of force
- Bodycams, GPS trackers for police during raids, arrests
- All-party body in each police station to monitor police activities
- Clear-walled rooms for interrogating suspects
- Court order required for arresting suspects not mentioned in FIR



### Tight rein pitched for police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Police Reform Commission has recommended extensive measures to rein in the police and considering the abolition of Rapid Action Battalion.

In its report submitted to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday, the commission stated that the police's use of force against civilians will have to be the last resort and will

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Chiefs of four reform commissions pose for a photograph with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at his Tejgaon office during the handing over of reports of the commissions yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

### So, what's a bicameral parliament?

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Simply put, a two-house parliament provides for better checks and balances, through more discussions and debates.

A bicameral parliament, one of the novel constitutional reform proposals, has two chambers -- an upper house and a lower house.

A bicameral system can ensure representation of diverse groups more effectively.

However, this system can slow down decision-making as a bill needs approval from both houses. Typically, it increases public expenditure also since two houses increase administrative and operational expenses. Also, an unelected or indirectly elected upper house member may not be as accountable as the lower house members.

Currently, Bangladesh has a unicameral parliament with 350 seats, including 50 reserved seats for women.

Ali Riaz, the constitution reform commission chair, told The Daily Star yesterday that they proposed

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## A new chapter for the nation begins

Says Yunus upon receiving reports from four reform commissions; talks with political parties mid-February

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said a new chapter has begun as the reform commissions have charted a course for a Bangladesh long aspired by its people.

He made the observation while receiving reports from the reform commissions on constitution, electoral, police, and anti-corruption commission at the Chief Adviser's Office in Tejgaon around 11:30am.

"Many reports are prepared, I receive them and do the formalities. Today's [Wednesday's]

event goes beyond such formalities. This is not just a formality; it is a historic moment," said Prof Yunus.

"The vision of a new Bangladesh that we aspire to build rested on your shoulders [members of the commissions]. You have drafted the framework for the dream, marking the beginning of a new chapter.

"We will discuss this with everyone, assess whether it resonates with everyone and evaluate if we are on track to make good on the commitments we have made. Simultaneously, you have provided us with the foundation for our discussions, and you will lead the talks," he added.

Prof Yunus

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**"Today's event goes beyond formalities. It is a historic moment."**

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UK PM grilled in House over Tulip issue

AGENCIES

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer yesterday faced a Keir Starmer grilling from Conservative Party chief and Leader of the Opposition Kemi Badenoch over former UK treasury minister Tulip Siddiq's resignation and the economy as the two leaders clashed at Prime Minister's Questions.

Tulip, whose ministerial role included tackling corruption in UK financial markets, quit as a Treasury minister on Tuesday after repeated questions about her financial links to the ousted Bangladeshi government run by her aunt Sheikh Hasina.

Tulip has come under intense scrutiny over her use of properties in London linked to her aunt's allies.

Starmer said he accepted the Hampstead and Highgate MP's resignation "with sadness" and that he wanted "to be clear that the



2 die from 'wrong treatment'

Probe body formed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Two patients have died due to wrong treatment at Shaheed Syed Nazrul Islam Medical College Hospital in Kishoreganj, their families alleged yesterday.

Admitting the incident, the hospital's Director (acting) Helish Ranjan Sarkar said the nurse responsible for the incident was removed from duty.

"A committee was formed to investigate the incident. After the investigation, I will recommend maximum punishment for the nurse to higher authorities," he added.

According to the victims' families and hospital sources, Moniruzzaman Mallik, 32, a teacher at a kindergarten school at Katiadi upazila, was admitted to the hospital on January 7 for hernia treatment.

Another patient Zahirul Islam, 22, of Nikli upazila, was admitted on January 12 due to abdominal pain.

Both patients were scheduled to undergo surgery yesterday morning.

Before their operation, Nadira Begum, a senior staff nurse, injected the two patients with anaesthesia while they were still in the ward around 7:30am, they said.

A relative named Mozafer said the anaesthesia injection "Nor Q" was supposed to be pushed in the operation theatre, but the nurse pushed it on the ward seat mistakenly.

The two men died soon after they were injected, he added.

Relatives of the deceased protested the deaths and demanded exemplary punishment for the person responsible for the incident. When the situation deteriorated, army and police personnel rushed and brought the situation under control.

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Cars of 31 ousted MPs set to be auctioned

UNB, Ctg

Chattogram Customs House has set January 21 to auction more than 100 vehicles, including 31 high-end cars imported by former members of parliament (MPs) from the ousted Awami League government.

The cars were brought with duty-free privileges that the MPs enjoy.

"These vehicles will be put up for auction on January 21 due to delays in having them released from the port," Md Sakib Hossain, assistant commissioner at Chattogram Customs House, said yesterday.

He said over 900 imported cars are currently being held at various locations, including the Chattogram Port car shed, and will be auctioned because of delays in clearance.

"Legal complications had prevented earlier auctions, resulting in congestion at port facilities," he added.



Locals catching fish in Gowahari Beel, a water body, in Sylhet's Bishwanath upazila on the occasion of Polo Bawa Utshab, a traditional fishing festival held on the first day of the Bangla month of Magh. They started gathering there from morning and then went into the knee-deep water with polos (bamboo-made fish traps).

PHOTO: STAR

Sweeping changes in constitution

FROM PAGE 1  
The commission also recommends an interim government to conduct elections, a bicameral parliament, two-term limits for the president and prime minister, lowering age limit of MPs to 21 from 25 and a national constitutional council to oversee appointments of constitutional bodies like the Election Commission as well as the chief adviser of the interim government.

The commission said in its recommendations that the five core principles reflect the ideals of the Liberation War of 1971 as well as the aspirations that emerged from the mass uprising of 2024. The commission recommended deletion of articles 8, 9, 10, and 12, which expanded on the key principles.

Led by Prof Ali Riaz, the commission also proposed to strike out articles 7A and 7B that barred constitutional amendments, which now have to be carried with two thirds majority in both houses followed by a referendum.

The commission recommends calling the nation "Bangladeshis" instead of the previous "Bengalees" and further proposes recognition of mother tongues of all Bangladeshis as common or traditional languages. Bangla will remain the state language as before.

The commission advocates expanding the scope of fundamental rights and ensuring their constitutional protection through a comprehensive charter merging the second and third sections of the constitution to form a new charter on "fundamental rights and liberty". Thus, the right to food, education, healthcare or the right to vote will become enforceable in a court of law.

The commission recommends a bicameral legislature with a 400 seat lower house, or the National Assembly, and a 105 seat upper house or the Senate. The tenure of both houses are set at four years. Of the 400 assembly members elected directly, 100 will be reserved for women.

Political parties will be required to nominate at least 10 percent candidates in the lower house from among the youth. The minimum age to run in the

elections will be reduced to 21 years from the existing 25.

There will be two deputy speakers with one coming from the opposition.

The recommendations stipulate that a member of parliament can only hold the post of prime minister or the leader of the house or the party chief at the same time.

Modifying, the much discussed article 70, the commission recommends that parliamentarians be allowed to vote against party line except finance bills.

To strengthen parliamentary watchdogs, the commission proposes that the standing committees be always led by members of the opposition.

The Senate will consist of 105 members, of whom 100 will be determined by the proportion of votes in the national election.

Political parties will nominate up to 100 Senate candidates of whom at least 5 will have to include representatives of marginalised communities.

The remaining 5 seats will be filled by presidential nominees who are not members of either house or affiliated with any political party.

A political party must secure at least 1 percent of the total votes in the national election to be eligible for representation in the Senate.

The Senate speaker will be elected by a simple majority from among its members.

There will be one deputy speaker elected from the opposition.

The commission recommends a National Constitutional Council (NCC) to ensure transparency and accountability in state functions and establish balance among the branches and institutions of the state.

This council will include representatives from all the three branches of the state. Council members will be the president, the prime minister, the leader of the opposition, the speakers of both houses, the chief justice, one deputy speaker of the National Assembly from the opposition, and the Senate deputy speaker, and one member elected by members of both houses, who do not belong to either the ruling party or the main opposition.

This council will remain in office even after dissolution of the parliament until the chief adviser of the interim government (charged to conduct national election) takes the oath. During the absence of the legislature, the NCC will consist of the following members: the president, the chief adviser, the chief justice, and two members of the advisory council nominated by the chief adviser.

Modifying, the much discussed article 70, the commission recommends that parliamentarians be allowed to vote against party line except finance bills.

To strengthen parliamentary watchdogs, the commission proposes that the standing committees be always led by members of the opposition.

The interim government's head, the chief adviser, will have to be appointed either 15 days before the expiry of the assembly or within 15 days of dissolution of the assembly.

The reform proposals lay down elaborate provisions for the appointment of a chief adviser for the interim government.

There are seven options for the appointment that the constitutional council will prioritise sequentially as laid out. The first option, requiring seven of the commission's nine votes, is to appoint any individual who is not in the commission. If that is not possible, the commission may resort to the second option, requiring six votes out of nine, to appoint any former chief justice or any former judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. If that is not possible then, the commission may, with unanimous agreement, appoint the president as the chief adviser. Failing that, the commission may then appoint the last retired chief justice as the head of interim government.

However, if the former top judge who retired last, declines, then the commission will have to approach the one who retired immediately before and work backwards. If none of the former chief justices are available or if all of them decline the appointment, then the commission will consider the last retired Appellate Division judge and failing that work backwards till they find one willing to shoulder the responsibility.

The chief adviser will carry out functions through an advisory council not exceeding 15 members.

TIPU MURDER  
'It was revenge killing'

Say police on death of ex-Khulna councillor; 3 more arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Sheikh Shahriar Islam Pappu, 27, allegedly shot and killed former Khulna City Corporation councillor and a Swecchhasebok League leader Golam Rabban Tipu in Cox's Bazar to avenge his uncle's murder. A woman named Ritu, 24, was reportedly used as bait in the planned killing.

Police disclosed these details after arresting three individuals -- including Pappu and Ritu -- from Moulvibazar on Tuesday. The other arrestee is Golam Rasul, 25.

Tipu was gunned down near Cox's Bazar Seagull Point on January 9.

Superintendent of Police Rahmat Ullah at a press conference in Cox's Bazar yesterday said the incident stemmed from the 2013 murder of Haji Shahidul, a leader of the extremist group Purba Banglar Communist Party in Khulna. Tipu was allegedly involved in that murder.

Pappu, a nephew of Shahidul, reportedly killed Tipu to avenge his uncle's murder, said the SP, adding that issues of local dominance and influence

played a role in the murder.

According to police, the three arrested individuals were in Cox's Bazar at the time of the incident. The woman, Ritu, tracked Tipu's movements and informed Pappu. Pappu and Golam Rasul stayed at a resort in Cox's Bazar.

the resort before fleeing. The police later recovered the weapon. The police are investigating the source of the weapon and other potential connections, he said.

They are also examining why Sheikh Hasan Iftikhar Chalu, another former Khulna councillor currently in jail, traveled to Cox's Bazar.

Dhaka to urge Beijing to lower interest rates  
Says Touhid ahead of 4-day China tour

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka will ask Beijing to lower the interest rates on Chinese loans and extend the loan repayment period to up to 30 years to ease the pressure on the economy during the upcoming visit of Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain.

Bangladesh will also seek quota and duty-free access to China for at least three years after graduation from the least-developed country bracket in 2026, he said in a media briefing yesterday at the foreign ministry ahead of his tour on January 20-24.

"Commerce and economy will be the main focus of my visit. As we have problems, we will discuss those and see how they can help. We will also talk about project loans. We will see how we can benefit the most."

He said he would seek the lowering of interest rates, the easing of loan conditions and the full withdrawal of the commitment fee, which China charges for keeping a line of credit available.

Officially, China is Bangladesh's largest trade partner. Annual trade between the two countries is \$25 billion, with Bangladesh exporting less than \$1 billion.

"We heavily import from China but that is also very important because much of the materials we import is used for our exports," he said, adding that Bangladesh will try to increase its export to China.

During his four-day tour of China, Hossain will hold a bilateral meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, deliver speeches at two research organisations in Beijing and Shanghai, and visit

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Hamid, Hasina sued over attack on protesters

STAR REPORT



A case was filed against former president Abdul Hamid, former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and 122 others for their alleged involvement in an attack on anti-discrimination students during the recent mass uprising in Kishoreganj.

Tohmul Islam Mazharul, 27, of Kishoreganj Sadar filed the case with Kishoreganj Sadar Model Police Station, said Abdullah Al Mamun, officer-in-charge of the police station.

Sheikh Rehana, Sheikh Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy and daughter Saima Wazed Putul, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader and several AL leaders have also been named as accused.

Since the fall of the AL government on August 5 last year, approximately 50 political cases have been filed in the district, with 11 of these filed with the Kishoreganj Sadar Police Station, the OC said.

Around 4,000 named and more than 10,000 unnamed persons have been made accused in the cases.

This is the first time Hamid has been named in such a case.

The case statement alleged that the accused, both in the country and abroad, planned a mass killing to suppress the uprising sparked by Hasina's regime.

It said the accused in Kishoreganj supplied firearms, local weapons, and funds to suppress the protests and ordered the massacre.

The incident reportedly occurred on August 4 last year at noon when the complainant and several others joined a student-led protest.

A new chapter for the nation begins

FROM PAGE 1

Prof Ali Riaz, chief of the Constitution Reform Commission; Badiul Alam Majumdar, chief of the Electoral Reform Commission;

Iftekharuzzaman, chief of the ACC Reform Commission; and Safar Raj Hossain, chief of the Police Reform Commission; and other members of the commissions were present during hand-over of the reports.

After assuming office in August, the interim government formed at least 15 reform commissions to strengthen weak democratic institutions, and establish a state system grounded 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.

Later, the deadline for the judiciary and the public administration reform commissions was extended to January 31, and that for the remaining four was stretched till January 15.

Prof Yunus said, "A devastated nation has suddenly risen again, standing tall with renewed vigour. History has been created from this resurgence. The question remains whether we can fulfil the commitments with which we have begun our work. We have confidence that we can."

Commenting that the commission reports would create a charter for a mass uprising, he added this will be the charter of a new Bangladesh, built through consensus.

Elections will take place, everything will happen; but this charter will remain a part of history, he observed.

"This is not a partisan commitment. I hope all parties will sign it. This is the manifesto of Bangladesh, and

we will move forward with it. We will implement as much of it as quickly as possible.

"The upcoming election will be based on this charter. A government on consensus will be formed based on this charter. We want continuity and implementation of our dreams. Without consensus, the charter will be lost. It is crucial for us to realise that."

TALKS WITH PARTIES

The government may start formal discussions with the political parties in mid-February for a consensus about the reform initiatives, said Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan.

She was speaking at a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy after reports of the four commissions were submitted.

In view of the demands and expectations of the people and political parties, Rizwana said the government will be able to declare a roadmap over reforms in one month, reports BSS.

Responding to a question, the adviser said all political parties gave their opinions and the commission reports were prepared considering their opinions.

She added that the chief adviser has made it clear that the next commission would be the "Political Consensus Commission," led by him.

At the press briefing, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said, "We expect we will be able to accomplish all these tasks [within our tenure]. But it depends mainly on the consensus of the political parties -- how much reforms they want."

He added that the International Crimes Tribunal would be able to complete at least the trial proceedings before the next polls.

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Khaleda's liver transplant depends on test reports  
Says her personal physician

BSS, Dhaka

The medical board formed for Khaleda Zia's treatment will take the decision regarding her liver transplant after observing medical test reports in the next few days, said Prof Dr AZM Zahid Hossain, her personal physician, yesterday.

"Madam's medical tests for major complications will continue today, tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. The doctors will plan for her next course of treatment depending on reports," he said while briefing journalists at the London Clinic.

Responding to a question about the liver

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PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

This banner lists all the children and young people killed during the July-August mass uprising last year. The banner was placed in front of the Dhaka University library yesterday by the Anti-discrimination Student Movement, as part of their initiative to honour all of the martyrs.

10-year-old girl raped in Dhaka

One held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 10 year-old girl was allegedly raped under Shahbagh Metro Station in Dhaka last night.

Police arrested a youth named Raihan, 19, in connection with the incident that took place around 8:00pm, said Tarekul Islam, inspector (investigation) of Ramna Police Station.

On information, police admitted her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Mobarak, another homeless child at the hospital, said the girl sells flower garlands in the Shahbagh area. After hearing her screams, many gathered under the metro station and caught the youth.

"I saw her lying in a pool of blood... Later, police took her to the hospital," he said.

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Before mercilessly beating 35 year-old Tofazzal Hossain at Dhaka University's Fazlul Haque Muslim Hall, the attackers demanded Tk 35,000 from his family as compensation for stolen mobile phones.

When Tofazzal's uncle, Abdur Rob Mia, refused to pay, the accused became enraged and severely beat the mentally unstable man with a cricket stump and bamboo stick on his shoulders, back, legs, and thighs.

Tofazzal died due to severe injuries and blood loss. These findings were detailed in the charge sheet for the murder, which occurred on September 18 last year.

Md Asaduzzaman, inspector (investigation) of Shahbagh Police Station, submitted the charge sheet on January 1 to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

Following a three-month investigation, 21 Dhaka University students were named

## SAVAGERY AT DU

# 'They took turns beating Tofazzal'

Police press charges against 21 students



Police press charges against 21 DU students; six in jail, 15 fugitives

Attackers demanded Tk 35,000 from family, before beating him

Though DU proctorial team delayed response was not mentioned in charge sheet.

A second case was filed against the hall's former provost and 14 students, but proceedings stayed.

as accused in the case filed by the university authorities against unidentified perpetrators on September 19 at Shahbagh Police Station.

Six accused – Jalal Mia, 24; Ahsan Ullah alias Bipul Sheikh, 24; Al Hossain Sazzad, 21; Motakkin Sakin Sah, 21; Md Sumon Mia, 21; and Wajibul Alam, 21 – are in jail and have given confessional statements in court.

The remaining 15 accused – Firoz Kabir, 23; Abdus Samad, 23; Sakib Rayhan, 21; Yesin Ali Gain, 21; Yamuzzaman Yam, 21; Fazle Rabbi, 23; Shahriar Kabir Shovon, 24; Mehedi Hasan Imran, 24; Ratul Hasan, 20; Sultan Mia, 23; Nasir Uddin, 22; Mabsud Billah, 24; Shishir Ahmed, 21; Mohsin Uddin, 22; and Abdullahil Kafi, 21 – are on the run.

The charge sheet does not mention any political affiliation of the accused.

Confirming the development, Inspector Asaduzzaman told The Daily Star yesterday, "We have mentioned all findings from the investigation in the charge sheet."

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## BANGLADESH EYE HOSPITAL

# Doctor operates on child's wrong eye

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 18-month-old child underwent a procedure on the wrong eye at the Bangladesh Eye Hospital in Dhaka on Tuesday.

The procedure, intended to address an issue in the child's left eye, was performed on the right eye first. Upon realising the error, the doctor performed a second procedure on the correct eye.

The incident has left the family of the child, Irtiza Ariz Hasan, deeply upset and demanding accountability.

According to Irtiza's father, Md Mahmud Hasan, they brought their son to the hospital on Tuesday afternoon due to a problem in his left eye. A doctor diagnosed the issue as dust in the eye lens, which required surgical removal. The procedure was conducted around 8:30pm.

"After the surgery, we were shocked to see that the operation had been performed on his right eye. When I pointed out the mistake, the doctor admitted it, saying, 'Oh my God, sorry,'" Mahmud recounted.

The doctor then took the child back to the OT to perform procedure on the left eye.

Mahmud claimed the hospital refused to

give discharge report admitting the mistake. "The doctor admitted the error verbally but did not document it. Later, the doctor and her colleagues left the hospital without informing us," he said.

The procedure was conducted by Shahedara Begum, a consultant pediatric ophthalmologist and strabismus surgeon. Despite repeated attempts, she could not be reached for comments.

Qazi Mesbahul Alam, chief operating officer at the hospital, described it as a grave mistake. "Our doctor made an error by operating on the right eye first without consulting the family. This incident is both disappointing and unfortunate," he said.

He clarified that the procedure was not a major operation but the removal of dust from the eye lens. "A committee has been formed with senior hospital officials to investigate... If the family files a formal complaint, we will take appropriate action," Alam added.

The child's family has urged the hospital to take responsibility for the error and ensure such incidents do not recur. "We want justice not just for our child, but to prevent other families from experiencing this nightmare," Mahmud said.



Children play a traditional game of "Phul Tokka" on a winter morning in their school. Many of them choose to come here before classes start so that they can have some fun and games before getting to the more serious business in the classrooms. The photo was taken from the premises of the Beel Pabla Line Government Primary School in the Dumuria upazila of Khulna recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Elect DUCSU president from among students

Proposes JCD, submits reform proposals to DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has proposed that the president of DUCSU be an elected student representative instead of the vice chancellor of Dhaka University to ensure a balance of power.

They also proposed creating two vice president posts – one for male students and another for female students.

Currently, the VC automatically serves as the president of Dhaka University Central Students' Union without an election, and there is one vice president post.

A group of JCD leaders, led by DU unit President Ganesh Chandra Roy Sahos and General Secretary Nahiduzzaman Shipon, submitted the DUCSU amendment proposal to the university authority.

This came after the university authorities sought amendment suggestions from all active student organisations.

JCD proposed several reforms – including election of the DUCSU president and hall unions' executive committees through direct student voting, and formation of an "Advisory Council" comprising teachers, administrators, alumni, and students to oversee and balance the powers of president.

Under the current constitution, the Advisory Council is responsible for approving the budget and assisting with some duties of the vice president.

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## Destiny MD, 18 others jailed for 12 years

COURT CORRESPONDENT



A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced Destiny Group Managing Director Rafiqul Amin and 18 others to 12 years' imprisonment in a money laundering case.

Judge Md Rabibul Alam of the Special Judge's Court 4 of Dhaka delivered the verdict, a court staffer said. It also fined all the 19 accused Tk 4,515.57 crore, in total.

According to the judgement, the accused were directed to deposit the fined money to the state within six months. If they fail to do so, necessary steps will be taken against them.

Among the accused, Rafiqul Amin, his wife Farah Diba, Destiny Group Chairman Mohammad Hossain and Destiny 2000 President Lt Gen (retd) Harun-Ar-Rashid are now in jail custody. Fifteen other accused have been absconding since the case was filed.

Earlier, the court recorded statements of 141 prosecution witnesses, including the complainant.

The Anti-Corruption Commission pressed charges on May 4, 2014 against 51 individuals in two cases, accusing them of misappropriating

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# Jhenaidah man hacked to death

## Family, locals say he was an Awami League activist

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A man was hacked to death by unidentified criminals in the Kotchandpur upazila of Jhenaidah district early yesterday.

Kawsar Lashkar, 52, was from Chanpara village.

He was an activist of Awami League, although he did not hold any official party position, said family and locals.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Kawsar's wife, Ozula Begum, shared that Kawsar had gone into hiding after the fall of the AL government on August 5 but had returned home a few days ago.

She recounted that a group of 10-12 individuals, claiming to be policemen, knocked on their door. When they opened it, the group forcefully took Kawsar away, and she could not identify any of them.

About an hour later, Kawsar was found lying on a road near a rail line in the same village, brutally stabbed but still alive. The villagers and police were alerted, Ozula added.

Police took him to a nearby health complex where he later died, confirmed Kabir Hossain Matubbar, officer-in-charge of Kotchandpur Police Station.

## Man detained with Yaba at Dhaka airport

UNB, Dhaka

The Airport Armed Police Battalion (APBn) detained a man with 2,009 pieces of yaba tablets concealed inside his body yesterday.

The detainee was identified as Md Shah Alam Sheikh, 41.

Acting on a tip-off, an APBn team conducted a drive in the northern area of the Balaka Building at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport and detained him.

During interrogation, he admitted that he was carrying the yaba tablets. Later, 2,009 pieces of yaba were recovered from inside the rectum of the detainee.

He was transporting the yaba tablets on a domestic Bangladesh Airlines flight (BG-434) from Cox's Bazar to Dhaka.

A case was later filed against him under Section 36(l), Subsection 10(b) of the Narcotics Control Act 2018 at the Airport Police Station.

Authorities said that Alam Sheikh has been involved in drug trafficking and sales for a long time.



A little bee meticulously extracts nectar from a marigold flower. This delicate process is just the beginning of the remarkable journey in crafting honey. The photo was taken at Alankarkathi village in Pirojpur recently.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## They took turns in beating Tofazzal

FROM PAGE 3

The charge sheet is now pending a court hearing, scheduled for February 2.

According to the charge sheet, the incident began around 2:00pm on September 18 with a cricket match on the Fazlul Haque Muslim Hall field, during which six mobile phones were stolen. Later that evening, during a football match, Tofazzal arrived at the field around 7:45pm.

Suspecting him of being the thief, the students started punching and kicking him. They then took him to the guest room of the hall's main building, as mentioned in the charge sheet.

### TOFAZZAL ASKED FOR FOOD

In the guest room, Yamuzzaman and Imran slapped and punched Tofazzal indiscriminately.

At one point, Tofazzal, extremely hungry, asked for food, said court sources citing the charge sheet.

In response, the accused Wajibul, Suman, and Yamuzzaman took him to the hall canteen and gave him rice to eat. While Tofazzal was eating, the other accused gathered in the canteen to discuss their plans.

After the meal, the accused took the victim back to the guest room.

There, Ratul brought a cricket stump, while Yamuzzaman and Sakib brought bamboo sticks. They then asked Tofazzal to provide the contact numbers of his relatives. He gave them the numbers of his sister-in-law and uncle.

The accused called his uncle and demanded money. When his uncle refused, the torture escalated. The beatings continued until Tofazzal lost consciousness, police mentioned in the charge sheet citing investigation findings.

### IGNORED HOUSE TUTOR'S INTERVENTION

Upon hearing about the incident, house tutors Zahir Raihan, Mahbub Alam, Shafiqul Alam, and Alamgir Hossain arrived at the guest room and attempted to stop the accused. However, their intervention was ignored, stated the charge sheet.

When Tofazzal became unconscious due to the beating, the accused brought him back to the guest room. There, they took turns beating him with cricket stumps,

targeting his legs, thighs, waist, and back, causing severe bleeding and injuries.

They tied one of the victim's hands to a window with a rope, pressed his right hand underfoot, and beat him all over the body with cricket stumps, according to the charge sheet.

They also cut his hair with a scissor, it added.

When the university's proctorial team arrived, the house tutors insisted that Tofazzal be taken to the hospital. However, the accused delayed putting him into the proctorial team's vehicle, police investigation found.

The unconscious Tofazzal was eventually transported to Shahbagh Police Station by the accused -- Mostaqin, Sazzad, Wajibul, and Suman -- along with the house tutors, using the proctorial team's vehicle.

Police, seeing the victim's critical condition, advised immediate medical treatment.

The accused then took Tofazzal to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where the on-duty doctor pronounced him dead after

examination.

### OMISSIONS AND ADDITIONAL CASE

Police dropped the names of Roki, Saqlain, Robotic Sohag, Parvez, Ashraf Munshi, Abu Raihan, and Rabibul Riyad from the charge sheet, despite their involvement being mentioned in the confessional statements of the six accused, according to court sources.

Police stated in the charge sheet that no evidence was found to prove these individuals' involvement.

The charge sheet also did not mention anything about the proctorial team or the hall house tutors.

When asked about it, Inspector Asaduzzaman said multiple incidents took place on campus

at the time, delaying the proctorial team's response to the scene.

Separately, on September 25 last year, Asma Akter, a cousin of Tofazzal, filed another case with the court accusing Prof Shah Md Masum, former provost of Fazlul Haque Muslim Hall, and 14 students.

However, the investigation into this case has yet to begin, as the court ordered to stay the proceedings under section 205 (D) of The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898.

It stated that the magistrate shall stay the proceedings of such inquiry or trial and call for a report on the matter from the police officer conducting the investigation on the same offence.

DHAKA THURSDAY JANUARY 16, 2025

MAGH 2, 1431 BS

The Daily Star

5

## Khaleda's liver

FROM PAGE 3

transplant issue, he said everything depends on the medical reports and her fitness. She is under the supervision of renowned liver specialist Prof John Patrick Kennedy.

He said physicians from various fields including nephrology, hepatology

and liver transplantation are examining her daily and that specialist physicians from Johns Hopkins Hospital in the US will come to London if needed.

"Once she gets the discharged, she will directly go to Tarique Rahman's residence, where she will stay for some days," he said.

## Destiny MD

FROM PAGE 3

over Tk 4,200 crore from investors.

Charges were framed against Rafiqul Amin and 50 others on August 24, 2016. They were charged for misappropriating funds through Destiny Tree Plantation (DTPL) project from Destiny Multipurpose Cooperative Society Ltd (DMCSL), according to

ACC.

On May 12, 2022, the same court sentenced all 46 accused, including Rafiqul Amin and Harun, to different terms of imprisonment in another money laundering case.

Among them, Rafiqul Amin was sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment and Lt Gen (retd) Harun-Ar-Rashid to four years.

## Elect DUCSU president

FROM PAGE 3

JCD recommended that if the executive committee election is not held within the specified timeframe, the Advisory Council will take over the committee's responsibilities and

organise the election as soon as possible.

The proposal also suggests removing the strict 30-year age limit for voters and candidates in central and hall union elections.

Instead, it advocates for all regular Dhaka University students to be eligible to vote and run as candidates.

On January 2, the DU authorities requested 22 active student organisations in the university to submit constitutional amendment proposals. The deadline was initially set on January 8 and was later extended to January 14.

Key suggestions from the proposals included bringing a balance of power to the DUCSU constitution.

## PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 16

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:00 5:36 7:00  
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:40 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Government of the people's Republic of Bangladesh  
Bangladesh Police  
Rapid Action Battalion Forces Headquarters  
Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229  
[www.rab.gov.bd](http://www.rab.gov.bd)

## Invitation For e-Tender

For financial year 2024-2025, e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of:

SL	Tender ID No & Reference No	Description of goods	Last selling Date & Time	Closing/ Opening Date & Time
1.	1063598, RABHQ/CPS/2024-2025/3258116/68 Date:14-01-2025	Repairing & Procurement of Software Assurance (SWA) License for IP Telephone	30-Jan-2025 10:00	30-Jan-2025 12:00
2.	1063374, RABHQ/CPS/2024-2025/3211117/64 Date:14-01-2025	Data Connectivity (Installation and Maintenance) for DMR Trunking Base Stations and others Points	30-Jan-2025 10:00	30-Jan-2025 12:00
3.	1062492, RABHQ/CPS/2024-2025/3258116/50 Date:12-01-2025	Repairing and Procurement of VHF Communication Spare Parts and Accessories	30-Jan-2025 10:00	30-Jan-2025 12:00
4.	1060277, RABHQ/CPS/2024-2025/3211117/55 Date: 12-01-2025	Procurement & Maintenance of Internet Connectivity for RAB Forces	30-Jan-2025 10:00	30-Jan-2025 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-tender, registration in the national e-GP system portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](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 helpdesk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd))

Tenderer having clarity requirements are requested to contact at 01777-720118 (Senior Assistant Director, Central Procurement Section).

  
(KAMRUL HASAN)  
Commander, BN  
Director(Admin & Finance)  
RAB Forces Headquarters, Dhaka.

GD-164

০১. মসজিদ	:	প্রাচীন কলাগু ও বৈদেশিক কর্মসংস্থান মন্ত্রণালয়
০২. সংস্থা	:	জনশক্তি কর্মসংস্থান ও প্রশিক্ষণ বৃত্তো
০৩. দরপত্র আহবানকারী প্রতিক্রিয়ার নাম ও ঠিকানা	:	জনশক্তি কর্মসংস্থান ও প্রশিক্ষণ বৃত্তো, ৮৯/২, কার্টারাইল, ঢাকা-১০০০।
০৪. সেবা / কাজের বিবরণ	:	আটোসেরিং প্রক্রিয়ায় সেবা গ্রহণ নীতিমালা, ২০১৮ অনুযায়ী সেবামূল নির্ধারণ হবে;
০৫. জনবলের শিক্ষাগত যোগাযোগ ও অভিজ্ঞতা	:	সিডিউলে উল্লিখিত শিক্ষাগত যোগাযোগ ও অভিজ্ঞতা (সিডিউলে বিস্তারিত উল্লেখ আছে)।
০৬. অর্থের উৎস	:	জিওবি (জাতীয়)
০৭. দরপত্র অহবানের বিজ্ঞপ্তি নথর ও তারিখ	:	১৫,০১,০০০,০০০.০০, ০৫,৩০,২৪,৯১ তারিখ ১৫,০১,২০২৫টিঃ
০৮. দরপত্রের ধরণ / প্রক্রিয়া	:	উম্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদক্ষি (OTM)
০৯. দরপত্রদাতার যোগাযোগ	:	(ক) জনবল সরবরাহের হালনাগাদ কাটারী লাইসেন্স ২০২৪-২০২৫ (গ) হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স ২০২৪-২০২৫ (গ) বাল নাগাদ আয়কর সনদ ও নিম্ন নম্বর ২০২৪-২০২৫ (ঘ) ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ ও ১৩ সংখ্যার বিন নম্বর (ঙ) বালক সম্পত্তি সার্টিফিকেট কন্ট্রুক্ট ইন্সুলেট করণ হবে (চ) সরকারী / আধা সরকারী প্রতিক্রিয়া প্রতিক্রিয়া কেন্দ্রে জেনেভা প্রতিক্র

## 'LIVING ROOM SESSION 2' Pavel aims to go global from London

Musician Pavel Areen has expanded his *Living Room Session* project with a multi-season partnership with Creative Event and Management Ltd, a new production and events company based in London.

The first season, blending local talent with international production values, in a unique 'living room' setting, garnered widespread praise from both industry professionals and the public.

The partnership was formalised at a signing ceremony held at the prestigious restaurant The Ivy Tower Bridge, on January 11, attended by key figures including Pavel Areen, Md Imtiaz Ahmed Zimi, Chairman Mohammad Rahat Amin of Creative Event and Management Ltd, and Shah Mohammad Farhad, the organisation's executive director.

This collaboration marks a significant step towards elevating Bengali music onto the global stage. Md Rahat Amin, who migrated to



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHE

the UK in 2008 and has successfully established multiple businesses, expressed that this partnership fulfills a long-held vision of supporting the creative industry in Bangladesh.

Pavel Areen echoed this emphasis on the project's ambition, "We aim to take Bengali music to unprecedented heights, uniting people worldwide through the magic of music."

The upcoming season of *Living Room Session* is tentatively scheduled for release during Eidul Azha 2025, and pre-production along with contract signings are already underway. Several prominent artists have confirmed their participation.

This collaboration aims to rejuvenate Bengali music, captivating local and global audiences. Pavel hopes to attain global recognition from established international platforms with this move.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHE

### WHAT'S THE HAPS?

#### Joler Gaan Live

Musical platform Dhaka Sessions' *Sheeter Adda* (Winter Conversations) is all set to present captivating performances by the renowned band Joler Gaan — known for their storytelling prowess with the use of music.

The event will be held at Raaga Art Cafe, Uttara, offering an evening of enchanting music followed by an exquisite buffet dinner.

DATE: SATURDAY, JANUARY 25  
TIME: 7:30PM-10PM  
VENUE: RAAGA ART CAFE

## Apex court clears Khaleda, Tarique

FROM PAGE 12

"Accordingly, the judgements of both the High Court Division and the trial court are, hereby, set aside. Consequently, all the appellants having not been found guilty of the charges levelled against them, stand fully acquitted."

"The proceedings constituting the subject matter of these appeals are found to manifest contrived misapplication of the law as tantamount to malicious prosecution," a five-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed observed.

The verdict, read out by the chief justice, added, "This judgement shall also extend to other convicted persons who, however, did not prefer any appeal. This decision shall, resultantly restore the appellants' and all other convicts' dignity, reaffirm their innocence, and thereby, put an

end to the unwarranted proceedings initiated against them".

"All appellants on bail shall necessarily stand discharged from their respective bail bonds," the apex court said, ordering authorities concerned to communicate and send down the records immediately.

Detailed observations will be available when the complete verdict is released.

The top court delivered the judgement after holding hearings on two appeals filed by Khaleda and one each by Saleemul Huq alias Kazi Kamal and businessman Sharafuddin Ahmed challenging the HC verdict.

"There was no merit in the case. Sadly, the High Court Division had extended Khaleda Zia's five-year jail sentence to 10 years. ... The High Court verdict was given on the fascist government's instructions," Khaleda and Tarique's lawyer Zainul Abedin

told reporters after the Appellate Division's verdict.

"However, things are different now. It seems that the judiciary works independently. Those who could not appeal, including Tarique Rahman, have been acquitted," he said.

Kayser Kamal, another lawyer for Khaleda and Tarique, said his clients and all the other accused have been served justice by the Appellate Division verdict.

The verdict has proven that Sheikh Hasina implicated Khaleda Zia, Tarique Rahman and other accused in the case to achieve her political ambitions and establish fascism. Everything was part of a political scheme," the lawyer added.

When contacted, the Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Ashif Hassan said he would convey the SC verdict to the commission.

The commission will take its decision accordingly, he said.

his brother-in-law that day.

"My brother joined the victory rally at noon. But in the afternoon, police opened fire and he hid behind a wall. Police took my brother from there and shot at him. My husband was there -- he followed the body, which was taken towards the police station." Later, the body was not found.

"Five months have already gone, but we still didn't get justice. We received no government aid -- nobody even enquired how our parents are," she added.

The prosecutor team is working very hard and is optimistic that the trial process will likely commence within weeks, said Asif Nazrul, the law adviser to the interim government.

"Our first responsibility is to ensure justice. But we need to maintain the due process of the judiciary procedure. We need to ensure that our justice is different from the justice of Sheikh Hasina. Our justice will be according to all the international standards," he said.

Chief Prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal Muhammad Tajul Islam thanked the team who investigated the two incidents.

"The way the investigation is done, our team still doesn't have that much technical knowledge and capacity."

The investigation of only two incidents took five months, so the ICT team would need more time to complete the procedures.

"We are trying our best to ensure

### Task force

FROM PAGE 12

laundered money, dodged taxes and invested money abroad without approval, according to BFIU officials.

The other businesses involved in such crimes will also be investigated in phases, they said.

A government-commissioned white paper committee on the economy estimated that \$234 billion was siphoned off from Bangladesh between 2009 and 2023.

## Indigenous group attacked

FROM PAGE 12

The indigenous group first announced to hold their programme in front of the NCTB office.

In response, the Students for Sovereignty also decided to lay siege to the office at the same time.

### HOW IT HAPPENED?

According to witnesses, the indigenous group went to the NCTB office around noon.

Meanwhile, members of the Students for Sovereignty, carrying cricket stumps with national flags tied to them, had already taken position in front of the office. At one point, they swooped on the indigenous group, leaving over a dozen injured.

Rahee Nayab, one of the injured, alleged that the attackers chanted slogans like "Tumi ke, ami ke? Bangalee, Bangalee" (Who are you, who am I? Bangalee, Bangalee) and "Naraye Takbeer, Allahu Akbar" during the assault.

Shaily, another injured, said the attackers particularly targeted women.

Witnesses corroborate these accounts, saying the violence could have been avoided had law enforcers acted decisively.

Alik Mree, one of the organisers of the Aggrieved Indigenous Student-Masses, alleged, "We were leading a peaceful march when the Students for Sovereignty group attacked us in front of the police."

Yaqub Mazumder, joint convener of Students for Sovereignty, denied the allegations. "We were inside the NCTB office when the incident began. When we came out, we found our activists injured. We immediately calmed the situation," he claimed.

However, Shahadat Hossain Kifat, a journalist present at the spot, said, "They put bandages on their bare heads and applied violin (ointment) over them to make it appear as blood."

When asked, Yaqub denied the allegations.

Md Shahriar Ali, deputy commissioner (Motijheel division) of police, said law enforcers present there intervened when one group suddenly attacked the other.

Sub-inspector Alimul Islam of Motijheel Police Station told The Daily Star last night that two people have been taken into custody for interrogation. They are being questioned now.

No case has been filed as of yet, he said.

Meanwhile, Aggrieved Indigenous Student-Masses announced to lay

siege to the state guest house Jamuna, the residence of Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, tomorrow, protesting the attack.

### WHO ARE 'STUDENTS FOR SOVEREIGNTY'?

The group was formed on August 28, 2024.

In their Facebook bio, it wrote, "The popular platform for Dhaka University students, 'Students for Sovereignty' is dedicated to upholding the sovereignty of the nation. InshaAllah!"

On the same day, they organised a protest rally in response to a speech by Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, where he used the term "Adivasi" to refer to the indigenous community.

The group claimed that indigenous communities should be recognised in the CHT as "indigenous" would lead to the separation of the CHT from Bangladesh.

Notably, Md Abu Shadik, the former president of the Chhatra Shibir's DU wing, was also a former president of "Parbatya Chattogram Chhatra Sangsad" before revealing his affiliation with Shibir.

Similarly, SM Farhad, the current president of the DU Shibir wing, previously held a leadership role in "Parbatya Chattogram Chhatra Sangsad".

These associations have led many to allege that Shibir activists are running both the organisations.

Armanul Hoque, president of the Chhatra Federation's DU wing, said after the attack, "Shibir, under the guise of 'Students for Sovereignty', attacked the students today."

In a Facebook post, Shadik denied the allegations against Shibir.

"We demand immediate punishment for the attackers," he added.

On the other hand, Shahadat Farazi Sakib, a leader of Nagorik Committee's Dhamondi wing, is the founding president of Parbatya Chattogram Chhatra Parishad.

On Tuesday, he shared the NCTB siege programme of 'Students For Sovereignty' on his Facebook wall, and urged his followers to join.

Many of the victims have said that he was present at the time of the attack. The Daily Star could not reach him as his phone was switched off.

However, he posted on Facebook, "At least 14 general students were injured when Upojati miscreants and leftists attacked us when we were protesting inclusion of the controversial and anti-national word 'Adivasi' on textbooks. Some of them have been admitted to Pan Pacific Hospital in critical conditions."

Contacted, Samanta Shermin, spokesperson of Jatiya Nagorik Committee, said, "We have received allegations against Sakib. We will form a probe body. If allegations are true, we will take necessary actions as per protocol."

## Dhaka to urge Beijing

FROM PAGE 2

some Chinese industries, including electric vehicle and food processing plants.

Bangladesh will also renew a memorandum of understanding on the provision of hydrological information on the Brahmaputra/Yalunzangbu river in flood season by China. The MoU was signed in 2008.

Hossain, however, was elusive when asked if Bangladesh would revisit discussions about the Teesta river development project.

He will also seek Chinese support for creating a conducive environment in Rakhine for Rohingya repatriation.

"China has a strong influence on Myanmar. So, they can help. Given the security situation in Myanmar, repatriation may not start now, but we should continue to work."

On Bangladesh's joining the Chinese Global Development Initiative, he said Dhaka looks at it positively. "This is a continuous process."

On the recent tension over India's border fencing at some points along the border, he said Bangladesh will resolve the issues when there are some problems. "We cannot solve those overnight."

India says it is building barbed wire fencing based on mutual understanding.

Asked about this, Hossain said the general understanding is that no country will do fencing within 150 yards of the international border.

"In some cases, consciously we have made some exceptions where necessary. This is possible. So, when we said the fencing was done beyond our understanding, we are aware of the issue and will talk about it with them."

The US, China and India are very important, so Bangladesh will maintain balanced relations with all of them for national interest, Hossain added.

## UK PM grilled

FROM PAGE 2

door remains open for you going forward".

Referring to the controversy surrounding Tulip, Kemi Badenoch questioned PM's handling of the issue.

"At a time when the market is in turmoil, the prime minister has lost focus on the issue because of the crisis surrounding the former city minister," Beidnock said.

"He (prime minister) said yesterday that he is deeply saddened by the resignation of her close friend (Tulip Siddiq). What does this tell us about his decision? And the fact was that the minister in charge of anti-corruption was being investigated for corruption," she said.

## Deaths on July 19 three times

FROM PAGE 12

and Uttara. The rest died in other areas.

Among the deceased, 42 were students and 99 were from varying professions, found the report.

At the programme, two documentaries were screened "Jatrabari: Evidence of Atrocities" and "Riddoy: Evidence of A Murder".

The documentaries were based on the mobile phone videos captured by eyewitnesses on August 5 last year after months of detailed forensic investigation.

The first one is a 15-minute film that showed how police brutally shot unarmed people in front of Jatrabari police station from close range between 1.56pm and 3.30pm on August 5 last year.

The second one is about the cold-blooded killing of a college student named Mohammad Riddoy by police officials in Gazipur's Konabari area. A police official shot him from behind with a very close range while a couple of other officials held him tight.

The investigative team collected several mobile phone footage from locals, but the family is yet to find the body of Riddoy, an intermediate student of Hemnagar Degree College in Tangail's Gopalpur.

His sister Jesmin Akter appealed for his mortal remains at the programme. The family wanted to find at least a bone of Riddoy to bury in front of their eyes.

Riddoy, the lone earner of the family of three, was in Konabari with

justice," he added.

There is no doubt that the targeted use of force by the police was unlawful and constitutes gross violations of human rights, said Yasmin Sooka, executive director of ITJP.

If proven in a court of law, it amounts to crimes against humanity, she added.

It is shameful that the government is yet to create a complete list of the deceased and injured even after five months of the protest, said Shahidul Alam, a photographer and activist.

"There is no doubt about the earnest efforts of those who are working on it, but there are doubts on their competence," he said.

Sabhanaz Rashid Diya, executive director of TGI, moderated the event. Journalists David Bergman and Frances Harrison of ITJP, and Syed Gazir Rahman, father of Syed Muntasir Rahman, the victim of the Jatrabari incident, also spoke.

The prosecutor team is working very hard and is optimistic that the trial process will likely commence within weeks, said Asif Nazrul, the law adviser to the interim government.

"Our first responsibility is to ensure justice. But we need to maintain the due process of the judiciary procedure. We need to ensure that our justice is different from the justice of Sheikh Hasina. Our justice will be according to all the international standards," he said.

Chief Prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal Muhammad Tajul Islam thanked the team who investigated the two incidents.

"The way the investigation is done, our team still doesn't have that much technical knowledge and capacity."

The investigation of only two incidents took five months, so the ICT team would need more time to complete the procedures.

"We are trying our best to ensure

### Task force



## Address the issues long plaguing JnU

### Proper academic, residential facilities vital for students' welfare

It is heartening to see the authorities respond positively to the demands of the protesting Jagannath University (JnU) students. The decision to involve Bangladesh Army in constructing the university's second campus in Keraniganj, while not an ideal one, meets a key demand of the students who, since Sunday, have staged a hunger strike, held sit-ins in front of the Secretariat Building, and enforced a campus shutdown. The army's expected involvement in constructing steel-based buildings at Bani Bhaban and Habibur Rahman Hall for temporary accommodation also meets another demand. While these steps only partially address JnU's long-standing infrastructural challenges, they should provide sufficient incentive for the students to lift their shutdown for now and return to class.

However, the students' call for written assurances is also reasonable, given the chronic nature of these issues as well as earlier instances of unfulfilled promises. For too long, JnU—now in its 20th year, having been upgraded from college status in 2005—has had to cope with inadequate facilities and spaces that are, frankly, unbecoming of a public university. Over 17,000 students are currently enrolled across 38 departments and two institutions. Despite this, there is only one residential hall for female students and none for male students. Eleven halls of the erstwhile Jagannath College in Old Dhaka remain occupied to this day, despite years of protests and legal efforts. The university also has no playground, and no common room for male students. The absence of adequate residential facilities means that many students must undertake gruelling commutes daily, leaving them physically and mentally exhausted.

These are just some of the problems plaguing JnU and its students. It is unfortunate that the decision to set up a second, more spacious campus in 2016 has taken so long to gain traction, which only shows how badly the ousted Awami League government handled the infrastructural and accommodation challenges of this institution, with corruption, mismanagement, and inefficiency all playing a role in this crisis. The lack of sound academic planning, necessary for the transformation of a college-turned-university, also contributed to this. Going forward, it is imperative that the authorities proactively address all these issues—not just the ones raised by students—so that this institution can fulfil its potential.

We, therefore, urge the authorities to undertake a comprehensive review of the present state of JnU and formulate an action plan prioritising the establishment of necessary facilities and amenities as well as the reclamation of old, occupied halls. For now, they must properly engage with the protesting students to ensure that academic activities are resumed without delay.

## Bring Cumilla gang rape perpetrators to book

### Police should use technology to track down all the accused

We are disturbed by the news of the gang rape of two teenagers by a group of men in Cumilla's Nangalkot upazila. Among the alleged perpetrators was a leader of Jubo Dal, the youth wing of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), according to locals. However, BNP denied any link to the person. According to a report by this daily, the crime occurred on January 9, with a case being filed on January 12. As of this writing, only one person has been arrested.

Reportedly, the perpetrators held the girls captive in a sawmill for over four hours, subjected them to horrific physical abuse, and filmed it to blackmail them into silence. Clearly, these individuals felt they could get away with it, not only committing a gruesome crime but also keeping evidence of it. This sense of security, one can imagine, was partly nurtured by societal tendencies to shame rape survivors, coupled with the failure of law enforcement to make arrests and the country's extremely low conviction rates for sexual assault. Although the complainants in this case named several suspects, police say they could not arrest anyone because of the three-day delay in filing the case, which supposedly allowed the accused to flee. However, reporters from at least two dailies managed to contact the sawmill owner, one of the accused, by phone.

During the previous regime, we often saw how political connections shielded rapists from accountability. Now that the Awami League has fallen from power, we expect all political parties to learn from past mistakes. They must disassociate from criminals, if they belong to their party and take punitive action to demonstrate their commitment to upholding ethical standards within their ranks. This is not only vital for their credibility ahead of the upcoming elections but also for the integrity of their organisations.

As for the police force, they have an opportunity to restore their tarnished reputation by efficiently performing their duties. If rapists can use technology to blackmail victims and their families, law enforcement agencies should be equally adept at using technology to track down criminals and secure convictions.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY



### Persian Gulf War begins

On this day in 1991, the Persian Gulf War, triggered by Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in August 1990, began with a US-led air offensive against Iraq that continued until a ceasefire was declared on February 28.

# How education enhances human development



**Selim Jahan**  
is director of the Human Development Report Office and lead author of the Human Development Report.

**SEЛИM JAHAN**

The notion of human development encompasses dimensions that refer directly to enhancement of human capabilities and also contexts conducive to improving such capabilities. Dimensions like leading a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable, enjoying a decent standard of living, etc refer directly to human capability enhancement, whereas dimensions like participation, human security, environmental sustainability, gender equality, etc provide the contextual atmosphere conducive to such enhancement.

Education is valuable for human development for three fundamental reasons. First, education is intrinsically valuable as it contributes to cognitive development, develops knowledge dimension, and provides people with confidence and self-esteem so that they can, to paraphrase Adam Smith, interact in public without shame. Second, it is a critical element in direct enhancement of human capability—through human resources development, building up human capital for effectively contributing to the production process and economic growth. Education, therefore, provides us with the necessary skills for productive employment, earning a living, and enjoying better living standards. Third, education also influences the contextual aspect of human development, through providing people with the means to participate effectively in social and political life.

In measuring human development—whether in terms of human development accounting or the composite index of the Human Development Index (HDI)—the role of education is clear and concrete. Educational indicators, whether they measure outcomes or represent inputs, are part of human development accounting. Thus, literacy rate, as an outcome measure, belongs to human development accounting; so does public expenditure in education, as an input measure. From a different angle, it contains both stock variables (e.g. out-of-school children) and flow variables (e.g. enrolment ratios). All these are part of human development accounting, because directly or indirectly, they contribute to education and knowledge to build

up human capabilities. In the HDI, however, education's role is even more sharply focused. Educational attainment enters the HDI to reflect the knowledge dimension of it. Two indicators—mean years of schooling and the expected years of schooling—represent the educational attainment variable. A couple of observations may provide more insights into the issues concerned.

A review of educational strategies in countries that attained high human development and where education made a difference clearly indicates at

which are prerequisite for further skill development and thus are the foundation stone for human capital formation. Furthermore, it has often been argued that the rate of return from primary education accrues over a longer period of time compared to other levels of education.

Thus, in a longer term vision for human resource development, policies and resources must be geared towards ensuring universal primary education for all. In all countries, irrespective of income levels, both the private and social rates of return to primary education have been found to be the highest. Secondary education has been argued, both in analytical and empirical work, to contribute most to form the content and nature of any specific skill formation. If primary education is fundamental to cognitive development, secondary education is basic to skill formation. The importance of secondary education has increased as countries

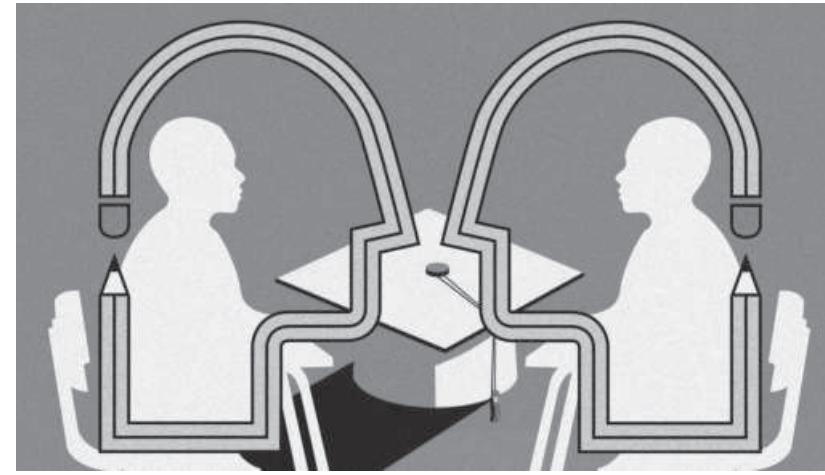
The critical point is not to follow a path that represents an unbalanced priority and structure and does not take into account the linkages among the three levels. For example, if countries put all their efforts into primary education and neglect the secondary level, then after five years, pupils coming out of the primary level will find an inadequate secondary education system. Similarly, if universities are built without strengthening the secondary system, they will have empty classrooms.

If education is to make a significant contribution to human development, the content and orientation of education are critically important. In today's world, secondary and tertiary education has to be linked to meet the new challenges of the network age—in terms of taking advantage of the opportunities it provides and also to manage its risks. In fact, the process must start from the primary level. In order to achieve the target of linking education with the new challenges, it is argued that the contents and modus operandi of the education system at every level must be rethought. Some of the elements in the rethinking process would be: computer penetration and school enrolment; digital literacy and digitalisation of literacy through computerisation of schools and school nets; digital literacy of teachers; and virtual universities.

In terms of content and orientation, education reforms have been placing new emphasis on helping people adapt to the new skill demands that come with shifting employment patterns, particularly in advanced economies. Lifelong learning or continuous training is considered a key to developing human skills in the context of rapid technological change. As countries become more sophisticated, pressures are building upon governments and firms to provide effective education and training.

In the area of education content, one burning issue is the quality of education. Low quality of education has adverse impact on several fronts. First, it disturbs the flow of education; low quality secondary education leads to low completion and then low university enrolments. Second, it produces low quality skills. And third, it destroys the potential for taking advantage of the opportunities presented by network age.

Hence, it is critical to set the right vision that is aided by long-term strategies, formulate pragmatic policies, provide resources on time, and design the correct content and orientation so education has the optimal impact on human development.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

have embarked on export orientation to take advantage of globalisation and also to meet the new challenges presented by the new network age. And in secondary education, it is not general education but skills in science and technical areas that can make a difference.

Tertiary education is crucial for highly specialised skills, technology development, and expansion of the frontiers of knowledge. University education creates highly skilled individuals who reap the benefits through higher salaries. But it is also at the heart of creating national capacity to innovate jobs, to adapt technology to the country's needs, and to manage the risks of technological change—benefits that touch all of society.

How countries would prioritise among the three levels and what the optimal trade-offs would be would depend on the countries' own aspirations, levels of development, achievements in education and needs.

## Rural women must be recognised for their contribution



**Md. Al-Mamun**  
is social scientist at BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD).

**MD. AL-MAMUN**

Gender discrimination in rural areas across Bangladesh continues to be a formidable barrier to both social and economic development, particularly in the agricultural sector. Despite their critical roles in farming, processing, and post-harvest activities, rural women face entrenched inequalities in wages, opportunities, and recognition. As Shahnaz Begum, a farmer from Khulna, poignantly states, "We work just as hard as men, but the pay is never the same. While men often earn up to Tk 200 per day, women receive Tk 70 for similar work."

This wage disparity reflects a broader trend in which rural women are disproportionately affected by social, cultural, and economic inequalities. According to a 2023 report by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), gender pay gap remains a significant issue in rural areas, with women in agriculture earning an average of 30-40 percent less than their male counterparts for the same work. The report further emphasises that women in rural Bangladesh perform up to about 60 percent of the labour in agriculture, but remain largely invisible in leadership and decision-making roles.

Despite their significant contributions to the agricultural economy, rural women are often marginalised. They are excluded from access to land, credit, and technology—resources that are essential for improving productivity and achieving economic independence. According to a 2022 Oxfam study, only 13 percent of rural women in the country own land. This lack of access to land and resources limits women's ability to invest in farming and start their own businesses. "I've never been able to buy land or take a loan without my husband's signature," shares Laila, a rural entrepreneur from southwestern Bangladesh. "Without access to resources, how can we grow our businesses or improve our lives?"

Sexual harassment in rural workplaces is another pervasive issue that compounds these challenges. A 2021 study by ActionAid found that 45 percent of rural women in South Asia, including Bangladesh, experience harassment in the workplace. However, many women remain silent due to fear of retaliation and lack of support. One such case is Ayesha, a farm worker from Satkhira, who was forced to quit her job after facing harassment from her supervisor. "I

couldn't keep quiet anymore, but no one supported me," she recalls. "I had no choice but to leave." This type of harassment not only undermines women's well-being, but also has long-term economic consequences, as they are forced to withdraw from the workforce.

The implications of such gender-based discrimination are far-reaching, not just for individual women but for the economy at large. According to McKinsey, closing gender gaps in labour markets could add \$12 trillion to the global economy. In Bangladesh, where agriculture employs over 40 percent of the workforce, advancing gender equality in rural areas could significantly boost national productivity and reduce poverty. As Hasina, a leader of a rural women's cooperative in Satkhira, says, "If we had equal opportunities, we could improve not only our families but also our communities." Women's economic empowerment can lead to the development of rural economies, better health outcomes, and improved quality of life for all.

Addressing these inequities requires robust policy interventions. The government must prioritise wage transparency and enforce equal pay for equal work in rural sectors. Furthermore, rural women must have equal access to land, credit, technology, and training to improve their productivity and economic independence. "We need financial independence," says Rina, a small-scale farmer from Jashore. "Only then can we break the cycle of poverty." Providing women with access to microfinance and ensuring

that they can take out loans without the need for male co-signers would empower them to invest in their farms or start small businesses, ultimately improving their families' living standards.

Encouraging women to take leadership roles in rural cooperatives and agricultural enterprises is another vital step in addressing gender inequality. As Salma, a rural cooperative leader, aptly puts it, "Gender equality is the foundation of a prosperous Bangladesh. We cannot afford to leave women behind." By addressing gender discrimination in rural workplaces, Bangladesh can harness the power of its women to drive sustainable economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve the quality of life for all its citizens.

Furthermore, addressing the issue of sexual harassment in rural workplaces is crucial for creating safe and supportive environments for women. The government must establish and enforce clear legal frameworks to prevent harassment, ensure women's safety, and encourage reporting of such incidents without fear of retaliation. Local authorities and rural development programmes must work closely with women's organisations to create awareness and provide support for victims of harassment.

By addressing gender discrimination, we can unlock the potential of millions of women, enabling them to contribute to a more equitable, prosperous future. Gender equality in rural Bangladesh is not merely a goal—it is a necessity for the nation's development.

# An ode to Prof Anisur Rahman



## AN OPEN DIALOGUE

is an economist and works for Change Healthcare, Inc, an information technology company. He also serves as senior research fellow at the US-based International Sustainable Development Institute (ISDI).

ABDULLAH SHIBLI

Prof Anisur Rahman, a founding father of the "Two Economies" theory, which formed the intellectual foundation of Bangladesh's Liberation War, passed away on January 5, 2025 in Dhaka. An economist's economist, he was a scholar of immense influence across the social divide, and renowned for his lifelong commitment to the emancipation of the masses. Until his last days, he stood up for his cause and commitment to social democracy and people's participation in the development of this nation.

Born in 1933 in Brahmanbaria and laid to eternal rest in his ancestral home in Netrakona, Prof Rahman was the son of Hafizur Rahman, a former civil servant and cabinet minister in Pakistan. He received his early education in Kolkata and passed his matriculation from St Gregory's High School in 1949, where he was a classmate of Amartya Sen, another noted economist and Nobel laureate. He then attended Dhaka College and received his BA Honours and MA in economics from Dhaka University in 1955 and 1956, respectively. He then joined the Department of Economics of DU in 1957 as a faculty member, where he taught for three years before leaving for Harvard University, where he obtained his PhD in economics in 1962.

When he returned from Harvard, he began a very creative sojourn. He rejoined DU, serving as the chairman of the economics department in 1974-75. Simultaneously, his talent as an exponent of Rabindranath Tagore's artistic forms started to take shape and he bloomed as a musician and taught briefly at Chhayanaut.

"He excelled in every area he

took an interest in, athletics, music or academic research," said Zafar Ahmed Caesar, formerly of the World Bank. Zafar, a former student of Prof Rahman, has researched the professor's life and career. He offered some memorable anecdotes about the professor. "His multifaceted talents blossomed at an early age, during his high school years."

My connection with Prof Rahman began as a first-year student in DU's economics department. At that time, we were in the thick of the Six-Point Movement, a political programme first outlined by the Awami League (AL) and embraced by people during the period leading up to the 1970

Pakistan. I rummaged through all the issues of the *Forum* magazine and found a few articles by Prof Rahman, among others. The expositions in this platform piqued my interest in data-based economic analysis. I also explored his papers in *Pakistan Development Review*, a peer-reviewed journal, and thus began my lifelong journey as an economist. As a fruit of this labour, I was able to summarise my findings on the economic disparities between then East and West Pakistan (now Bangladesh and Pakistan) and the ongoing transfer of resources from the East to the West since 1947.

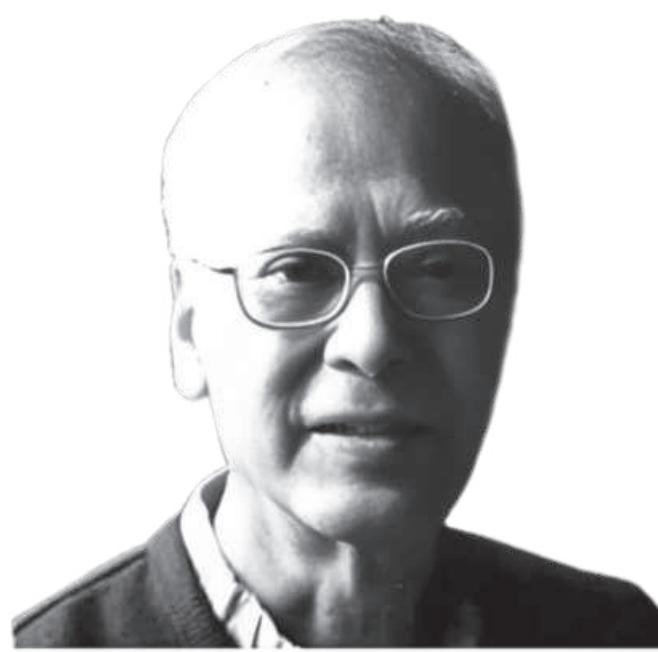
Prof Rahman devoted his energy to research and training a cadre of economists, civil servants, and scholars both at Dhaka University and at the University of Islamabad in Pakistan, in 1967-70. Among his noted students during his tenure at Islamabad were Wahiduddin Mahmud and Anisul Islam Mahmud.

His contribution to our nation's journey to independence began in the early 1960s. Along with Prof Rehman Sobhan and Akhlaqur Rahman, he developed the 'Two Economies' theory, which highlighted the significant economic disparities between then East and West Pakistan. They articulated this theory and analysed the imbalances between the two regions of Pakistan in professional journals as well as in other print media.

general election in Pakistan. As an aspirant economist, I became aware of Prof Rahman's seminal contribution to the "Two Economies" theory, the keystone of the Six-Point campaign, which led to AL's landslide victory in November 1970.

In the spring of 1970, the economics students of DU launched a newsletter named *Optima*, and I took a keen interest in the prevalent disparities between the two wings of

Rehman Sobhan and Akhlaqur Rahman, he developed the "Two Economies" theory, which highlighted the significant economic disparities between then East and West Pakistan. They articulated this theory and analysed the imbalances between the two regions of Pakistan in professional journals as well as in other print media, particularly *Forum*. Other economists who shaped the theory were Dr A Sadeque,



Prof Anisur Rahman (1933-2025)

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Nurul Islam, and Habibur Rahman.

I was fortunate to have him as my teacher during my final years as an MA student in 1974-75. After Bangladesh gained independence, Prof Rahman became a member of the first Planning Commission of the newborn nation. But, frustrated by the lack of political will of the government to take actionable steps to ameliorate the condition of workers and peasants, he soon left the Planning Commission and returned to teaching.

We were all excited to have him teach us the Economic Theory course and his chosen topic was capital theory. We had many talented teachers at DU, but his course was a capstone. In capital theory, he gave us an introduction to the Cambridge controversies, raging then between two camps on either side of the Atlantic. Paul Samuelson, a Nobel laureate in economics and a faculty member of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and

When Prof Rahman decided

Joan Robinson of the University of Cambridge in the UK, were leading the charge in a well drawn-out decade-long battle for the heart and soul of the theory of economic growth. The essays were long and very mathematical. We were totally unprepared for the complicated theorems and proofs that were part of the professional journal.

Fortunately for us, Prof Rahman, true to his commitment to his Marxist theory and his dedication to his students, considered that we should get a flavour of the field of theoretical economics and see how the profession handles disagreements and comes to a conclusion. He simplified the maths and brought every aspect of the ongoing battle to our level of understanding. He gave us a quick baptism by fire, and we felt empowered to see the frontlines of a debate between Samuelson, Solow, Robinson, and Sraffa, the titans of the field.

As we mourn this loss, we can hope that at this critical juncture of our nation, a leader resembling the vision of Prof Rahman will come forward and rise to the occasion to serve *dukhi manush*, as he called the downtrodden people of this country, and have the courage to tackle the problems and issues that needed to be addressed to make a safe passage for Bangladesh to emerge into a prosperous, democratic and equitable society.

The author acknowledges the resources made available by Zafar Ahmed Caesar.

## Viewing the defaulted loan saga through a micro lens



Tahsin Sahriar is assistant director (research) at the Bangladesh Bank. Views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not reflect that of his employers.

TAHSIN SAHRIAR

Over the years, the volume of non-performing loans (NPLs) in Bangladesh has increased so significantly that it has become a major reason for Bangladesh's economic woes. According to the recent data of Bangladesh Bank, NPLs rose to a record Tk 284,977 crore in September 2024, surpassing the earlier record of Tk 211,391 crore just three months prior, making up around 17 percent of the total outstanding loans.

The increasing trend of NPLs can be attributed to several factors, including poor governance, inadequate business and industry analysis, political influence, and the borrowers' inability to repay debt due to internal economic conditions, all of which are widely recognised even to a layman. Instead, let's look into whether the defaulted loan culture has evolved into an institutionalised practice at the micro level that ultimately translates into a higher NPL ratio at the aggregate level.

A brief introduction to institutional economics is needed to delve further into this discussion. Institutional economics encompasses a broad idea of institutions beyond what we typically understand. Rather, it deals with formal and informal institutions; officially recognised rules and written laws and regulations formulated by the government, organisations and other formal entities fall under formal institutions, and socially constructed rules and norms, customs and traditions, and unwritten ethical standards are viewed as informal institutions. Briefly, institutional economics explores how laws, regulations, social norms, customs and organisations shape and influence economic behaviour and outcomes. In light of this framework, a

link can be established between informal institutions at the micro level and the prevalence of NPLs at the macro level, questioning whether the practice of defaulted loans has become ingrained deeply enough to be considered an institution.

In the context of Bangladesh's economy, if we look around,

enables smoother transactions, allowing consumers to acquire their desired products without paying the full amount upfront while giving sellers confidence in securing a sale, thereby reducing risks for both sides. At first glance, this may appear to be a positive phenomenon, as trust fosters regular transactions that contribute to economic growth. However, on the flip side, the lack of evidence for these transactions, such as receipts or written documentation, creates a chance for consumers to avoid repaying the money after fully maximising the utility from the product they have consumed. At micro level transactions, the story of defaulting starts simply from here.

Although specific data on

receiving a service has become so deep-rooted at the micro level that people no longer think much of it. It suggests that the reluctance to make payments has already become a norm, to the point where it can be considered an institution, according to institutional economics.

This is the question policymakers must explore to determine if defaulting on loans has already become an institutionalised practice. The similarity between avoiding payment at the micro and macro levels should not be overlooked. If loan-defaulting has indeed become institutionalised, addressing NPLs requires a whole new approach, confronting the core issue. In order to do that, mismatches in smaller-scale transactions should not be ignored. Last but not the least, taking steps to foster an ambience of goodwill in the micro sphere could create an institution capable of deterring the practice of loan default and NPLs in the macro sphere.



FILE ILLUSTRATION: BIPLOB CHAKRABORTY

the retail-level demand and supply are largely met through informal mechanisms, with most transactions occurring outside of established formal institutions, without any receipt. This serves in the interest of both consumers and sellers, who often benefit from the leverage provided by asymmetric information. As a result, the lack of evidence of transactions heightens the potential for both consumers and sellers to engage in deceptive practices.

For instance, in the absence of formal institutions, a sense of trust often develops between customers and sellers in grocery stores and road-side tea stalls. This trust

is one that almost anyone can relate to through their day-to-day experiences. Another common example, frequently featured in the media, is students with political ties who fail to make timely payments at their universities' cafeteria and other shops on the campuses. One report from last year cited how a student with political affiliation was suspended for allegedly attacking the cafeteria owner at a residential hall in Dhaka University for requesting the payment of dues amounting to Tk 2,650.

The habit of not paying back the promised amount after

that he was going to assign the paper "Heterogeneous capital, the production function and the theory of distribution," written by a young Italian scholar named Piero Garegnani, I was not sure if he was being too bold. I came from the humanities background and was unprepared unlike most of my classmates—Ahsan (Mansur), Selim (Jahan) and Zafar (Ahmed), who came from a science background. But Anisur Rahman was a brilliant teacher and made it all so simple!

Years later, I registered for an advanced technical course titled Input-Output Analysis in my final years of coursework at Boston University. I felt such relief that my professor, Oldrich Kyn, assigned the article by Garegnani for the course and I winged it, thanks to Prof Anisur Rahman.

After he left Dhaka University in 1977, he joined the International Labour Office in Geneva, where he directed a programme on the participation of the rural poor in development until his retirement in 1990.

Prof Rahman was a strong advocate for self-development and participatory action research. He played an instrumental role in the introduction and promotion of participatory action research in Bangladesh through Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB), a research-funding agency.

As we mourn this loss, we can hope that at this critical juncture of our nation, a leader resembling the vision of Prof Rahman will come forward and rise to the occasion to serve *dukhi manush*, as he called the downtrodden people of this country, and have the courage to tackle the problems and issues that needed to be addressed to make a safe passage for Bangladesh to emerge into a prosperous, democratic and equitable society.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD)

Road Division, Pirojpur.

E-mail: [pirdivisionrhd@gmail.com](mailto:pirdivisionrhd@gmail.com)

Memo No. 35.01.7980.462.07.001.20-145

Date: 15/01/2025

### Invitation for e-Tender (LTM)

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP system portal for the following works:

Tender ID & Package No.	1062810, 11/e-GP/LTM/PRD/PMP-Minor/2024-2025
Name of Tender	Maintenance of existing pavement by Repair with seal coats works at Ch.1+650 to 01+800, Ch.2+00 to 02+200, Ch.2+500 to 02+800, Ch.3+00 to 03+200, Ch.3+500 to 03+700, Ch.4+100 to 04+600 and Ch.9+700 to 10+000 of Pirojpur-Nazirpur-Matiabanga-Patpati-Gopalganj (Z-7704) Road (Pirojpur portion) Under Pirojpur Road Division during the year 2024-25.
Tender Last Selling Date and Time	03-February-2025 & Time 16:00
Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	04-February-2025 & Time 12:00
Tender ID & Package No.	1062811, 12/e-GP/LTM/PRD/PMP-Minor/2024-2025
Name of Tender	Maintenance of existing pavement by Seal coat including necessary repair works at Ch. 05+00 to 06+100 km & Bulbah palisading with geo bags works at Ch. 04+350 to 04+400 km & Ch. 03+200 to 03+250 km of Pirojpur(Hularhat)-Sriramkathi-Swarupkathi Road (Z-7707) under Pirojpur Road Division during the year in 2024-2025.
Tender Last Selling Date and Time	03-February-2025 & Time 16:00
Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	04-February-2025 & Time 12:15
Tender ID & Package No.	1062812, 13/e-GP/LTM/PRD/PMP-Minor/2024-2025
Name of Tender	Maintenance of existing Damage Shoulder by BulbahPalisiding with Geotextile bags works at Ch. 0-050 to 0-150, Ch. 1-295 to 1-310, Ch. 2-300 to 2-320, Ch. 2-600 to 2-615, Ch. 2-800 to 2-815 & Ch. 3-300 to 3-312 km of Nujipur-Sriramkathi-Swarupkathi Road (Z-7706) under Pirojpur Road Division during the year in 2024-2025.
Tender Last Selling Date and Time	03-February-2025 & Time 16:00
Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	04-February-2025 & Time 12:30
Tender ID & Package No.	1062813, 14/e-GP/LTM/PRD/PMP-Minor/2024-2025
Name of Tender	Providing, fitting , fixing and Commissioning of Solar Street Light at Chirpara Bailey Bridge of Kawthali-Chirpara-Vitaraha-Bhanda Road (Z-8713), at Amraji ferry ghat of Gariarpur-Baranipara-Sawrapur-Kawthali-Naikati Road (Z-8033) and at Swarupkathi ferry ghat both approach of Pirojpur (Hularhat) Sriramkathi-Swarupkathi Road (Z-7707) under Pirojpur Road Division during the year 2024-2025
Tender Last Selling Date and Time	03-February-2025 & Time 16:00
Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	04-February-2025 & Time 12:45
Tender ID & Package No.	1062814, 15/e-GP/LTM/PRD/PMP-Minor/2024-2025
Name of Tender	Protective work at Chirpara Bailey Bridge Approach at ch: 0+720 Km of Kawthali-Chirpara- Bhitabura -Bhanda- Road (Z-8713) under Pirojpur Road Division during the year 2024-2025
Tender Last Selling Date and Time	03-February-2025 & Time 16:00
Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	04-February-2025 & Time 13:00

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline /hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-tender, please register on e-GP system. (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) For more details please contact e-GP help desk, ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd))

Tanvir Ahmed

ID No-602308

Executive Engineer (C.C.), RHD  
Road Division, Pirojpur

GD-153



## Women booters sign in for camp ahead of March FIFA window

SPORTS REPORTER

Out of 31 women footballers from the national team, only 13 have so far turned up for the residential camp as of yesterday, with Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) considering staging FIFA friendly matches in the March window.

The residential training camp will be supervised by local coaches, as the local governing body has yet to confirm the reappointment of British coach Peter Butler, who guided Bangladesh to triumph in the SAFF Women's Championship last year.

"Of the 31 players, 13 joined the camp so far [by 5:00 pm yesterday], and others are expected to join by night. However, some players took leave for personal reasons or illness and are expected to join by January 18," BFF general secretary Emran Hossain Tushar told reporters at the BFF House yesterday.

Asked about Butler, Emran said, "We can only confirm the coach, whether it is Peter Butler or someone new, once the deal is completed, which has not been done yet with anyone."

## Real 'want to react' after Clasico thrashing

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti on Wednesday demanded a rapid reaction from his team after their capitulation against rivals Barcelona in the Spanish Super Cup final.

The Catalans lifted the trophy on Sunday in Saudi Arabia with an emphatic 5-2 victory and Madrid's Italian coach welcomed Thursday's Copa del Rey last 16 clash against Celta Vigo as a chance to bounce back.

"It's a great opportunity to leave behind the bad game we played, which hurt us a lot, but has not sunk us," Ancelotti told a news conference Wednesday. "We want to react, it's good this game for us against a team that plays well, the team can have a strong reaction after that bad game the other day."

"It was a step backwards, but we have to keep going forward, we're in a good position in all competitions."

Ancelotti said his team made "a heap of errors" against Barcelona but had looked for solutions in the days since ahead of Celta's visit to the Santiago Bernabeu.



SPORTS REPORTER

Ahead of the Chattogram phase of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), news surfaced yesterday morning that Durbar Rajshahi players opted out of a scheduled training session owing to unpaid wages.

It gave rise to a crisis scenario, with Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) having to call an emergency online meeting to mitigate the issue.

Before the tournament began, it was reported that none of the franchises had paid the required fifty percent of player salaries in advance, as per tournament bylaws.

Rajshahi players had also remarked during press events that they were hopeful the matter would be resolved in the coming days. But, according to sources close to the team, local players' cheques bounced recently, and the players chose

**"Some payments were made, and the time by which local players were to receive payments has been pushed back by two days. Cheques did not bounce, or maybe one or two did. The owner is out of the country, and he was in Bangkok at that time, so there was an issue as he could not pick up the call."**

Durbar Rajshahi team management source said under conditions of anonymity.



Amid the hubbub of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) players not receiving their due payments and Durbar Rajshahi cricketers canceling their practice yesterday over the matter, Khulna Tigers' skipper Mehedi Hasan Miraz appeared to be in a pensive mood in their practice session in Chattogram yesterday. After a two-day break, the Chattogram phase of the BPL begins today with Khulna playing Chittagong Kings in the evening after Dhaka Capitals take on Fortune Barishal at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium. [Bottom] Meanwhile, Barishal skipper Tamim Iqbal looked focused in practice, adamant to help his side bounce back to winning ways after they lost a heated encounter against Rangpur Riders in their last game in Sylhet.

PHOTO: BPL



not to attend yesterday's practice session scheduled for 10 am at M. A. Aziz Stadium.

"Some payments were made, and the time by which local players were to receive payments has been pushed back by two days. Cheques did not bounce, or maybe one or two did. The owner is out of the country, and he was in Bangkok at that time, so there was an issue as he could not pick up the call," a team management source said under conditions of anonymity.

BPL governing council member secretary and BCB director Najmul Abedeen Fahim could not be reached when contacted by The Daily Star.

There was no guarantee money paid by the franchises before the start of the tournament. Guarantee money ensures that players receive due payments from the BCB in case the franchises cannot pay them their dues.

Rajshahi are set to play Sylhet Strikers on Friday, and there are concerns that players would want to boycott the game.

"Yes, an emergency meeting was called to discuss the overall issue of players' payment and how to pay the due payments," a BCB source informed on the matter, adding that the majority of the clubs have not paid the players.

It could be surmised that the payments would have to come from the board. Asked whether there was a real possibility, a BCB source confirmed under conditions of anonymity that "the majority of the clubs haven't paid, and it's one hundred per cent possible BCB will have to pay from their own coffers."

With payment crisis looming over, the Chattogram phase opens today with Dhaka Capitals facing Fortune Barishal. Barishal coach Mizanur Rahman remains optimistic despite the departure of key players Shaheen Shah Afridi and Kyle Mayers, stating the team are "in good position". Dhaka, languishing at the bottom of the table, must secure strong results in their remaining five matches to keep playoff hopes alive.

In the second game, Chittagong Kings will face Khulna Tigers, with both teams eager to make an impact as the tournament heats up.

## BRTC look to restore old pride

SPORTS REPORTER

While state-run organisations have turned their backs on the country's sports one after another, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) has decided to restore their old pride in football after applying for a club licence for the upcoming Bangladesh Championship League.

BRTC Sports Club once played in the country's top flight alongside giants like Mohammadan and Abahani and produced talented players like defender Ranjit, forward Prasenjit, midfielders Shamsuddin, Latu and Hare Krishna and forward Rizvi Karim Rumi in the 1980s and 1990s.

However, the club disappeared from the scene in 2014 after being relegated from the third division.

After a 10-year gap, the club is planning to come back to football through the second-tier, Bangladesh Championship League, and then plan to graduate to the top-tier football, a level where they last played in 2005.



Encouraged by BRTC chairman Md Tazul Islam, the club's president Dr. Anupam Saha is trying to give shape to their dream to restore the club's old pride.

"BRTC has reached a new high after overcoming financial issues. The financial condition of BRTC is now solid," Anupam told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We are going to revive BRTC for two reasons -- one is to install passion among our sports-loving employees. The second is that we want to restore our old pride because BRTC once played against Mohammadan, Abahani, Brothers Union," said Anupam, also a director of BRTC (finance and operations).

The BRTC director also added that they would try to form their team within their capacity in a bid to qualify for the Bangladesh Premier League and will try to find potential players from among their 5000 employees.

The club's president also informed that they have already prepared a practice ground and dormitory for the players in Gazipur.

However, the participation of the club in the BCL depends on the BFF professional league management committee, which will finalise the number of teams from among 14 clubs that have applied for club licencing.

Out of the 14 clubs, five clubs -- PWD, Wari Club, NoFeL SC, Farashganj SC, Uttara FC as well as BFF Elite Academy participated in the last edition. The eight other clubs are: City Club, Dhaka Rangers, Little Friends Club, Samaj Kalyan Sangstha, BRTC, Victoria SC, Arambagh KS and Uttar Baridhara Club. The last two clubs were once punished for online betting.

BFF's professional league manager Zaber Bin Taher Ansar informed that they are working on club licencing to declare the number of participants as soon as possible, adding that the BFF plans to start the league in February.

## Record-setting Djokovic trumps Federer

Novak Djokovic on Wednesday surpassed Roger Federer for the most Grand Slam singles matches played on his way into the Australian Open third round. The 37-year-old faced stiff resistance from fearless Portuguese qualifier Jaime Faria before winning 6-1, 6-7 (4/7), 6-3, 6-2 on Rod Laver Arena to set up a clash with Czech 26th seed Tomas Machac. It was Djokovic's 430th Slam contest to claim sole ownership of most singles matches played, men or women, in the Open era ahead of Federer (429) and Serena Williams (423), with none playing 400 or more. "Whether I win or lose, I will always leave my heart out on the court. I'm just blessed to be making another record," said Djokovic, who is into the third round in Melbourne for a 17th straight year.



PHOTO: REUTERS

## 'Outstanding' Liverpool deserved more: Slot

AFP, Nottingham

Arne Slot insisted Liverpool deserved to beat Nottingham Forest after the "outstanding" Premier League leaders needed Diogo Jota's equaliser to rescue a 1-1 draw against their title rivals.

Slot's side were rocked by Chris Wood's eighth-minute opener at the raucous City Ground.

But Jota came off the bench to head in fellow substitute Kostas Tsimikas' corner just 20 seconds after Slot sent on the pair in the 66th minute.

Although Liverpool had struggled to cope with Forest's intensity and rock-solid defending until Jota's leveller, they laid siege to the Forest goal in the closing stages.

It took a series of superb saves from Forest goalkeeper Matz Sels and a goal-line clearance from Ola Aina to ensure Nuno Espirito Santo's team held on.

"Their goalkeeper had to make a few incredible saves but their defenders also made some good blocks with quite a few chances. They blocked almost every shot," Slot said.

"I could not have asked for more. Second half was outstanding. There are not many

teams that can create so many chances against an opponent so defensively strong. Unfortunately, we couldn't get a second."

It was a pulsating clash that recalled the golden era when Liverpool and Forest won five European Cups between them from 1977 to 1981.

They were also both English champions during that period and, while Forest are unlikely to ever emulate the Brian Clough era, this tenacious display indicated a title challenge is not beyond them.

Forest had already beaten Liverpool 1-0 at Anfield in September -- the leaders' only



defeat in 20 league games -- and Slot needed no reminding of their qualities.

"To win games in the second half of the season is more difficult than in the first. Teams get used to playing you and they improve, they can even bring in new players or a new manager, and they fight for every point," Slot said.

Meanwhile, reigning champions Manchester City's resurgence came undone in a late collapse in west London as Brentford struck twice in the final 10 minutes for a 2-2 draw.

Phil Foden's double had City on course for a fourth consecutive win after a run of just one victory in 13 games.

However, the English champions' defending was not convincing all night and they were punished as Yoane Wissa and Christian Norgaard netted for the Bees.

Pep Guardiola will reflect on a missed opportunity to make up ground on the top four as City remain down in sixth, 12 points off the top.

Meanwhile, fourth-placed Chelsea's miserable run extended to five league games without a win after they salvaged a point in a 2-2 draw at home to Bournemouth.

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**BSRM**  
building a safer nation

**HIGHEST  
SELLING  
CEMENT** **for more than  
20  
YEARS**

**SHAH  
CEMENT**

## REMOVAL OF WORD 'ADIVASI'

# Indigenous group attacked at NCTB; 20 hurt

Two detained; no case filed yet

MASHFIQ MIZAN and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

At least 20 persons were injured yesterday in an attack on an indigenous group and its supporters protesting the removal of a graffiti from textbooks featuring the word "indigenous" (adivasi, in Bangla).

The attack was allegedly carried out by a group identifying themselves as "Students for Sovereignty" in front of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board office in Motijheel.

The attack ensued when some indigenous people and their supporters under the banner, Aggrieved Indigenous Student Masses, went to the NCTB office to hold a scheduled programme.

The injured include Rupaiya Shrestha Tanchangya, 24, a central leader of the Students Against Discrimination platform; Isaba Suhrat, 25; Rengiyong Mro, 27; Don Jetra; Futonto Chakma, 22; Dhanojatra, 28; Anonto Dhamay, 35; DBC journalist Jewel Marak, 35; Shaily, 27; Donoai Mro, 24; Tanichirang, 30; Toni Chiran; Rahee Nayab and more.

Critically injured -- Rupaiya, Don, and Jewel -- were taken to Bangladesh Specialized Hospital from Dhaka Medical College Hospital for advanced treatment.

Rupaiya required 12 stitches on her head, while both of Don's arms were fractured in the attack.

Footage from the scene shows Rupaiya bleeding profusely from her head and lying on the ground as attackers surrounded her, repeatedly striking her with cricket stumps and sticks.

Witnesses said Don sustained his injuries while trying to shield her from the assault.

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Activists of "Students for Sovereignty" encircle 2 protesters and beat them with sticks outside the NCTB yesterday. The protesters from indigenous communities demonstrated against the removal of an image of a graffiti with the word "indigenous" from a textbook. Left, attackers swoop on protesters. Right, bleeding profusely, a protester sits on the ground.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Rights bodies, student orgs slam attack  
Advisers pledge thorough probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several organisations yesterday strongly condemned the attack on indigenous students and their supporters protesting the removal of the term "adivasi" (indigenous) from textbooks.

They urged the interim government to take tough action, demanding the arrest and prosecution of those responsible for the attack.

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul and Adviser Mahfuj Alam also condemned the incident.

In separate Facebook posts, they said two persons have been detained over the incident already. The advisers also pledged action after a thorough investigation.

The incident occurred in front of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) office in Dhaka's Motijheel, where witnesses reported that members of the group "Students for Sovereignty" assaulted the protesters, using cricket stumps. The

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## ZIA ORPHANAGE TRUST CASE

# Apex court clears Khaleda, Tarique

### No legal bar for ex-PM to contest polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday acquitted BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, her son, BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, and four others of corruption charges in the Zia Orphanage Trust case.

With the Appellate Division scrapping the verdicts of the High Court and a trial court in the case, there is no legal bar now for Khaleda to contest the next national elections, Fahima Nasrin Munni, a pro-BNP lawyer and former deputy attorney general, told The Daily Star.

On February 8, 2018, the trial court sentenced Khaleda to five years imprisonment and others, including Tarique, to 10 years in jail in the graft case.

The HC doubled the jail sentence of Khaleda to 10 years and upheld the trial court's verdict on the others on October 30, 2018.

Tarique has been in London since 2008 while Khaleda travelled there this month for treatment.

The Appellate Division's verdict said, "All the appeals are, hereby, allowed by this division's unanimous decision."

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## GOAT SCANDAL

# Ex-NBR member Matiur placed on remand in arms case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former NBR member Mohammad Matiur Rahman, who stirred controversies after his son bought a goat for Tk 15 lakh last year, was placed on remand in an arms case yesterday.

A team of police detectives arrested Matiur and his first wife, Laila Kaniz Lucky, from a residence at Dhaka's Bashundhara Residential Area early morning.

Police also recovered a shotgun, 24 rounds of bullets, and three mobile phones from their residence.

Hours later, investigation officer Md Rubel Mia, a sub-inspector of Vatara Police Station, produced Matiur before the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Nazmin Akhter with a 10-day remand prayer.

The former member of the



People celebrate the news of a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. PHOTO: AFP



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## MASS UPRISING

# Deaths on July 19 three times the reported number

### Finds study by ITJP and TGI

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new report has unveiled the names of 148 people who were killed on July 19 during the July-August uprising -- three times higher than initially reported.

Of them, 40 are under the age of 18 years, according to a report by the International Truth and Justice Project (ITJP) and the Tech Global Institute (TGI).

"The unlawful and targeted use of force by the police directed against the protesters constitutes gross human rights violations and if proven could amount to crimes against humanity," the report said.

The report was unveiled yesterday at a programme titled 'The July Revolution: Evidence of Atrocities' held at the Bangla Academy auditorium.

Three children aged under 10, ten children aged between 10-15, 11 who were 16-17 and 33 who were 18-21 died that day across the country.

The highest number of deaths took place in Dhaka city: 124. Narsingdi and Narayanganj counted seven deaths each. Four died in Rangpur, two in Madaripur, and Mymensingh, Bogra, Sylhet and Savar counted one death each.

In Dhaka, 24 deaths were counted in Mirpur, while Rampura and Banasree areas counted 23 deaths. At least 13 died in Mohammadpur, 12 in Badda, 9 each in Jatrabari

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Won't tolerate delay in July proclamation  
Say students;  
Yunus sits with parties today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students Against Discrimination and its platform for citizens, the Jatiya Nagorik Committee, have said they will not tolerate any more delay in making the proclamation of the July uprising.

At a press conference at the organisation's offices in the capital last night, they threatened to launch a nationwide movement if the government continued to drag its feet on the issue.

"The issuance of the July proclamation is not merely an organisational issue for the Students Against Discrimination; it is directly tied to the present and future security and existence of our entire nation," they said.

They called for an immediate announcement of the proclamation

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## MONEY LAUNDERING

# Task force to probe Hasina's family, 10 business groups

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The family members of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have been included in the list for investigation along with 10 major business groups by a government task force.

Earlier on January 6, the financial institution division of the finance ministry asked the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) to form teams comprising members of the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC), the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and the Criminal Investigation Department of Police (CID) to investigate the country's 10 major business groups' alleged money laundering and other misdeeds.

The move comes as the interim government has intensified its efforts to recover money allegedly laundered by the corporate giants that thrived under the Awami League rule.

The BFIU last week restructured its teams and has asked the ACC, the NBR and the CID to form separate teams to probe the 10 groups and Hasina's family members.

The business groups and the Sheikh clan have allegedly

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