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## 71 Bangladeshis without valid papers held in Malaysia

AGENCIES

The Kuala Lumpur Immigration Department arrested 71 illegal immigrants, including 71 Bangladeshi nationals, during a raid in the Jalan Alor area of Bukit Bintang on Wednesday night, reports Malaysia's national news agency Bernama.

Kuala Lumpur Immigration Director Wan Mohammed Saupee Wan Yusoff said the operation, conducted in collaboration with Kuala Lumpur City Hall, began at 7:15pm (local time) following public complaints and investigations.

In addition to the Bangladeshis, the arrestees included 60 individuals from Myanmar, 24 from Indonesia, 16 from Nepal, three from Pakistan, and one each from Egypt and Sudan, Yusoff said.

The detainees are being investigated under Malaysian laws related to the absence of valid documentation and overstaying in the country, the report said.

All those arrested were taken to the Kuala Lumpur Immigration Headquarters, the immigration official told reporters after the operation.



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus talks to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk yesterday on the sidelines of World Economic Forum summit in Davos, Switzerland. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: PTD

## Titas Gas sinks further in red on system loss

FROM PAGE 1

Most of the pipelines of Titas were installed in 1968-69 and have leaks in many places, he told The Daily Star.

Titas Gas, which accounts for two-thirds of the gas distributed in Bangladesh, has prepared the tender documents to replace the pipelines in Dhaka and Narayanganj. The tender will be floated next month.

"We will need overground and underground detectors to identify the leakages in pipelines. Then we will replace those pipelines under small clusters through the tender process," he said, adding that the small leakages will

be resolved immediately.

However, it will not be possible to replace the pipelines that are below 6-7 meters underground.

"We will try to install new pipelines there."

Titas Gas has 35 vigilance teams that conduct drives regularly to remove illegal connections.

"We are trying as per our capacity. There are syndicates consisting of locals, contractors and some workers of Titas itself. We are identifying them."

Titas has ramped up its drive after the ministry of power, energy and mineral resources recently got its own executive magistrate.

"We have an area-wise routine for conducting drives. We are focusing

on the illegal pipelines connected to the industries as those consume much higher volumes of gas – sometimes 2,000 more than a household user," Parvez said.

Since September last year, Titas's vigilance teams have removed about 100 kilometres of illegal pipelines in Keraniganj, Kamrangirchar, Munshiganj, Narayanganj, Savar, Tongi, Gazipur, Dhanmondi, Mirpur, Gulshan, Mymensingh, Meghnaghat and Narsingdi.

Last fiscal year, about 2.5 lakh illegal connections were snapped, down from 3.27 lakh connections a year earlier, according to Titas's annual report.

About 420 km of illegal pipelines were removed, up from 390 km in fiscal 2022-23.

Connections to 110 industrial, 186 commercial, 54 captive and four CNG stations were disconnected in those drives.

Legalising the existing illegal connections would help reduce system loss and increase Titas's revenue, Parvez said.

"It's like whitening the black money."

For example, some households have legal connections for two to three burners but use the line for 10 to 12 connections.

"We couldn't charge for the extra use. If we legalise those connections, we could charge them,"

he said, adding that the policymakers have to make a call on this. The company has about 30 lakh customers at present.

To reduce gas theft, enforcement of the law should be strengthened.

For instance, the Gas Act has the provision to jail a person for illegal gas use. But this provision is never enforced.

"If we can set examples in some areas, illegal gas use may come down. Besides, we face obstacles from the locals. There have been some incidents where people attacked our staffers and officials. We only file regular cases against them but there are hardly any examples of due penalty," Parvez said.

Ijaz Hossain, former dean of engineering at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, said theft, with the help of Titas officials, is the main cause of system loss, although some leakages do take place due to old pipelines.

"Some set up pipelines at night – strict actions should be taken against them. Besides, we do not have proper metering systems in many places. Meters should be installed in the offtake points to identify the places where most of the losses take place."

Besides, replacing the old pipelines is one of the major ways to reduce system loss, Hossain added.

## Uprising leaders, BNP at odds

FROM PAGE 1

fascism had emerged. His [Fakhrul] statement indicates the possibility of another 1/11-style government, a continuation of parliamentary majoritarianism, submissive foreign policy, absence of justice for enforced disappearances, murders, and the July massacre," the post read.

This is for the first time that any July uprising student leader has directly addressed any comments of a BNP leader by name.

In an interview with BBC Bangla published on Wednesday, Fakhrul said, "If the interim government fails to remain neutral, it cannot hold the election. In that case, a neutral government would be needed."

He added that questions of neutrality might arise given some student leaders' plan to set up a political party.

"If representatives of

these students are part of this government, neutrality cannot be maintained. If they think they can hold elections keeping their representatives in the government, political parties will not accept it," Fakhrul said.

Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan, youth and sports adviser, shared Nahid's post with a short caption: "There are many things I cannot say being a part of the government. However, it is also right to keep people in the dark."

In his own Facebook post, Asif also said that if any adviser engages in politics, they will do so after they have quit office.

"At the same time, it is inappropriate for political parties to interfere in government activities. Lobbying or putting pressure for appointments to various important government or constitutional positions is also unacceptable," he

added.

Hasnat Abdullah, convener of the Student Against Discrimination (SAD), Abdul Hannan Masud, chief organiser of the SAD, and Sarjis Alam, chief organiser of Jatiya Nagorik Committee, also shared Nahid's post.

In a separate post, Hasnat said the BNP is willing to allow the Awami League to regain its foothold, but it refuses to accept the formation of a new political party by students.

**FAKHRUL DOUBLES DOWN**

Fakhrul yesterday reiterated his earlier comment about the neutrality of the government.

"In an interview yesterday [Wednesday], I said that if the interim government can't remain impartial, a neutral government will be required during the elections. There is a reason why I said this. We can see that the interim

government is unable to maintain neutrality on several issues," he told a discussion at the Jatiya Press Club.

Fakhrul added that the government should make arrangement for the election as soon as possible after carrying out the minimum necessary reforms.

The BNP leader said his party is demanding elections not to go to power, merely, but also out of fear that evil forces may exploit the situation if the election is unnecessarily delayed.

Fakhrul said some people want elections only after reforms. "But, should we wait four to five years or until the reforms are done? In that case, people would be deprived of their voting rights for another long period."

**'BUSY IN CANTONMENT'**

In his long Facebook post, Nahid also said there is a plan to sideline student

leaders since August 5.

"While students and the mass people were fighting on the streets and police were shooting them, many national leaders were busy in the cantonment planning a new government, excluding the people (although some of them spoke about the students)," he said.

"Since August 3, we have been saying that we will not accept any form of military rule or emergency. Although we were repeatedly asked to go to the cantonment, we refused to do so. Eventually, through discussions and negotiation at Bangabhaban, the decision to form an interim government led by Dr Yunus was made."

He said students are the only factor that distinguishes the current government from the 1/11 government.

"Although the BNP has been talking about a

"Minus Two" formula, they are now proposing another 1/11-style government under the guise of a neutral government to pave their way to power," Nahid wrote.

"At various levels, pro-BNP individuals hold positions from top to bottom of the government. When you are speaking of neutrality of election, this reality should be kept in mind."

Nahid also said that the BNP took stance against the removal of the president, reforms, drafting a new constitution, and the July proclamation.

"None of these were partisan demands of the students. Yet, for the sake of national stability, greater interests, and unity, students have repeatedly backtracked from their positions. But that does not mean we will compromise even a bit if there is a move that is anti-democratic or if it goes against the desires of the uprising."

## 10 eminent writers to get Bangla Academy awards

UNB, Dhaka

Recipients of the Bangla Academy Literary Award 2024 have been announced, honouring 10 individuals for their notable contributions to various genres of Bangla literature.

Bangla Academy announced the names of the winners yesterday, according to a press release.

Salimullah Khan has been honoured for essay writing, Masud Khan for poetry, Selim Morshed for fiction, Subhasish Sinha for drama, Faruk Newaz in the children's literature category, and GH Habib has been recognised as the best transcript writer.

Muhammad Shahjahan Mia was recognised in research category, Rezaur Rahman in Science category, Mohamamd Hannan in Liberation War category and Syed Jamil Ahmed in folklore category.

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus is expected to hand over the awards during the inauguration of Amar Ekushey Book Fair-2025.

## JULY UPRISING Dreams dented by joblessness

AFP, Dhaka

Bangladeshi students braved bullets to overthrow an autocratic government, but six months after the uprising, many say finding a job is proving a harder task than manning the barricades.

Dhaka University student Mohammad Rizwan Chowdhury's dreams of ample opportunities for youth have been badly dented, saying he had seen little action from the caretaker government of Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus.

"I can't see any fruitful initiatives taken by the government so far," Rizwan grumbled, a 25-year-old student who took part in the protests that drove autocratic ex-leader Sheikh Hasina into exile on August 5.

Unemployment was a key driver of protests last year. Since the uprising, it has only grown worse.

At the end of September 2024, the number of people seeking employment in the country of 170 million hit 2.66 million, a six-percent increase from 2.49 million the year before, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

Educated Bangladeshis make up 87 percent of those without work, according to the BBS data.

The International Monetary Fund warned in September that economic activity had "slowed markedly, while inflation remains at double-digit levels", with tax revenues down while spending pressures had increased.

For many, the euphoria of Hasina's ouster is fading.

## High growth

FROM PAGE 1

Hasina, who had ruled Bangladesh since 2009, is being investigated there on suspicion of crimes against humanity, genocide, murder, corruption and money laundering and Dhaka has asked New Delhi to extradite her.

Hasina and her party deny wrongdoing, while New Delhi has not responded to the extradition request.

"She was in Davos telling everybody how to run a country. Nobody questioned that," Yunus told Reuters in an interview on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in the Swiss Alpine resort. "That's not a good world system at all."

"The whole world is responsible for making that happen. So that's a good lesson for the world," he said. "She said, our growth rate surpasses everybody else. Fake growth rate, completely."

Yunus did not elaborate on why he thought that growth was fake, but went on to stress the importance of broad-based and inclusive growth, and the need to reduce wealth inequality.

Annual growth in Bangladesh accelerated to nearly 8% in the financial year 2017/18, compared with about 5% when Hasina took over in 2009, before the impact of Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine pulled it down.

In 2023, the World Bank described Bangladesh as one of the world's fastest-growing economies.

"Since its independence in 1971, Bangladesh has transformed from one of the poorest countries to achieving lower-middle income status in 2015," it said.

**HURT BY STRAINED INDIA TIES**

The student-led movement in Bangladesh grew out of protests against quotas in government jobs that

spiralled in July, provoking a violent crackdown that drew global criticism, although Hasina's government denied using excessive force.

The student protesters recommended Yunus as the chief adviser in the interim government tasked with holding fresh elections.

Yunus, who has promised to hold elections by the end of 2025 or early 2026, said he was not interested in running.

Known as the "banker to the poor", Yunus and the Grameen Bank he founded won the Nobel for helping lift millions from poverty with tiny loans of less than \$100 offered to the rural poor, too poor to gain attention from traditional banks.

"For me, personally, I'm not very driven by growth rates," Yunus said. "I'm driven by the quality of life of the people at the very bottom level. So I would rather bring an economy which avoids the whole idea of wealth concentration."

Ties between Bangladesh and India, who have strong trade and cultural links, have become fraught since Hasina was ousted and she took refuge in New Delhi.

Yunus has demanded that India send Hasina back to Bangladesh so she can face trial for what it says are crimes against protesters and her opponents, and crimes she is accused of committing during her tenure.

Calling India's rival China a long-term friend of Bangladesh at this difficult time, Yunus said the strained relationship with New Delhi "hurts me a lot personally".

"Bangladesh-India relationship should be the strongest possible. You know, you cannot draw the map of India without drawing the map of Bangladesh," he said, referring to how Bangladesh's land border runs almost entirely alongside India's.

## Polls likely by year end

FROM PAGE 1

Local elections are not our priority at this moment," he said at a discussion meeting at the district election office in Patuakhali town yesterday.

The Election Commission wants to give the nation a fair and impartial election, he said. "There is no scope of

any interference. The election will be held within the timeframe announced by the chief adviser and a smooth voting environment will be created," he said.

The discussion meeting was held on voter list update with Senior Election Officer Khan Abi Shahanur Khan in chair.



## Step up fight against misinformation

CA urges Meta; UN report on July atrocities by mid-Feb

AGENCIES

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday asked Meta to take steps to tackle the spread of misinformation and fake news through Facebook in Bangladesh.



The chief adviser made the call when he held talks with Sir Nick Clegg, the head of global affairs at Meta, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum annual meeting in the Swiss city of Davos, Chief Adviser's Deputy Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad Majumder told BSS.

Prof Yunus said oligarchs and politicians linked to the ousted government led by Sheikh Hasina siphoned off tens of billions of dollars from Bangladesh during her 15 years of rule.

"These people are now spending their fortune to spread lies and misinformation about Bangladesh," Yunus told Clegg, who is also a former deputy prime minister of England.

Clegg said Facebook would continue to do fact-checking and digital verification in Bangladesh.

During the half-an-hour-long meeting, Clegg also offered Meta's expertise in drafting a new cyber security law. "We have a lot of experience here," he said.

The meeting was one of the over a dozen engagements

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Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz-Zaman being adorned with the 17th "Colonel of the Regiment" of the traditional East Bengal Regiment in Chattogram Cantonment yesterday.

PHOTO: ISPR

## Army chief adorned with 'Colonel of the Regiment'

BSS, Dhaka

Chief of Army Staff General Waker-Uz Zaman yesterday urged all the members of the armed forces to be ready to face the challenges of 21st century through modern training.

He said this during his visit to Chattogram Cantonment where he was adorned with the 17th "Colonel of the Regiment" of the traditional East Bengal Regiment.

Colonel of the Regiment is a prestigious military position signifying leadership and guardianship over a specific regiment within the army, often with historical significance, said a release of the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

On his arrival at the parade ground, the army chief was also given a guard of honour.

## We should focus on narrowing the trade gap

Foreign affairs adviser tells event in China

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain, who is now in China on an official visit, yesterday laid emphasis on narrowing trade gap and fostering regional connectivity with China to promote equitable growth.

He made the remark while delivering a keynote address at a seminar titled "Our Shared Vision for Peace, Stability, and Prosperity" in the Shanghai Institute for International Studies in Shanghai, said a foreign ministry press release.

He outlined a forward-looking vision for global peace, and stressed that economic cooperation is a cornerstone for sustainable development and stability.

Reflecting on global challenges, he noted that peace and security are collective responsibilities that demand inclusive economic frameworks and greater emphasis on empowering



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## Tk 250cr assets of Salman F Rahman seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Financial Crime Unit of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has seized assets worth Tk 250 crore belonging to Salman F Rahman, adviser to ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The CID said the Beximco Group owner laundered money by exporting goods worth \$260,14,984 to his son's Dubai-based company, RR Global Trading FZE, under the names of Apollo Apparels Limited and Kanchpur Apparels Limited through 21 LCs/Sales contracts between 2020-2024.

A money laundering case is under investigation. Following a court order, approximately 2,000 decimals of land in Dhaka's Dohar and structures built on it have been seized. The current market value of these properties is Tk 250 crore.

The Financial Crimes Unit of CID has filed 17 cases against Salman and his associates for laundering \$83 million to various countries.

## Worker dies falling from ladder

UNB, Dhaka

A power company worker died after falling from a ladder while setting up an electric line behind the BSMMU hospital in Dhaka yesterday.

The deceased, identified as Zahid, 35, was employed by Moon Power Company. He was from Jamalpur, said Inspector Md Faruk, in charge of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital Police Outpost.

Zahid was rushed to BSMMU hospital, before being transferred to the DMCH emergency department for advanced treatment at 3:20pm. Doctors declared him dead at 4:25pm, the police officer said.

## Woman held for arson in Bangshal

UNB, Dhaka

Police yesterday arrested a woman for allegedly setting fire to a shoe factory in the Ganguli Lane area of Dhaka's Bangshal.

The arrestee, identified as Asma Begum, 28, was held while attempting to ignite a shoe factory. She was detained with a gas lighter around 10:30am, police said.

The fire broke out on the balcony of the second-floor room of Sanjid Shoe Factory. The blaze was brought under control by locals and firefighters, said Talebur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of DMP.

"Shortly after the fire, Asma Begum was found attempting to set fire to another factory in the vicinity. She was detained with the help of locals," Talebur said, adding that four of her accomplices managed to flee the scene.

Efforts are underway to arrest the other suspects, he said. A case was filed.

## 2 held with 10,000 govt textbooks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrested two members of a syndicate involved in stockpiling government textbooks.

Speaking at a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre yesterday, Mohammad Nasirul Islam, joint commissioner of DMP (DB-South), said the two were arrested from the Banglabazar area in Sutrapur on Wednesday.

Acting on a tip-off, the DB conducted the raid and seized two trucks carrying 10,000 textbooks meant for free distribution to primary and secondary school students.

The arrestees are Sirajul Islam Ujjal, 55, and Md Delwar Hossain, 56.

The government provides free textbooks to primary and secondary school students at the start of each academic year.

However, a group has been undermining this initiative by illegally hoarding the free textbooks and selling them on the open market, said the joint commissioner.

The Kotwali Zonal Team of Lalbagh DB also conducted raids in several warehouses in Isphani Lane, Banglabazar, Sutrapur, and recovered the textbooks.

The seized textbooks are valued at around Tk 8 lakh.

These books, published by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), were of various subjects meant for students of classes one to nine.

The DB official said they would continue operations to arrest other members of the syndicate.

## ACC offices, special courts in all districts

Proposes reform committee

DIPAN NANDY

The Anti Corruption Commission Reform Commission has proposed a nationwide expansion of the ACC's activities to strengthen the anti-graft body's operations.

In its report submitted to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on January 15, the commission, led by Dr Iftekharuzzaman, recommended establishing ACC offices in every district and setting up special judge courts.

Currently, 36 regional ACC offices operate across 34 districts, with two regional offices each in Dhaka and Chattogram.

The districts without ACC offices include Rajbari, Manikganj, Netrokona, Natore, Chapainawabganj, Sirajganj, Nilphamari, Gaibandha, Satkhira, Narail, Meherpur, Barguna, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Khagrachhari, Brahmanbaria,

**We hope that if these recommendations are implemented, the ACC will become more dynamic.**

DR IFTEKHARUZZAMAN  
Head of ACC Reform Commission

Bhola, Feni, Bandarban, Shariatpur, Munshiganj, Sherpur, Jhalokati, Lakshmipur, Magura, Chuadanga, Joypurhat, Rangamati, Panchagarh, and Lalmonirhat.

The commission advised establishing

### KEY SUGGESTIONS



- Form offices in all districts
- Special courts in all districts
- Avoid delays in probes
- Streamline complaint management

district ACC offices in a phased manner, ensuring each office is adequately equipped with the necessary logistical support.

The commission suggested establishing "special judge courts" in all districts with existing ACC offices.

They also proposed establishing such courts as soon as possible in districts where new ACC offices will be set up.

The report also suggested how to streamline complaint management and minimise delays in ACC investigations and inquiries.

To enhance efficiency, the commission recommended that recommendations from district or divisional review committees should not be re-evaluated by the central review committee of the ACC.

Furthermore, it advised granting district or divisional offices the authority to take post-complaint actions in cases involving offenses below a certain threshold, as determined by the ACC.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, also the executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh, said, "The reform commission has made several recommendations, including forming offices in all districts, to avoid delays in ACC investigations and inquiries and to streamline complaint management."

"We hope that if these recommendations are implemented, the ACC will become more dynamic."

## Historic Mass Upsurge Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The historic Mass Upsurge Day will be observed today to commemorate the 1969 movement against the Pakistani military ruler Ayub Khan, which eventually led to the Liberation War and the emergence of Bangladesh.

On this day in 1969, Matiur Rahman Mallik, a grade-IX student of Nabakumar Institution, and Rustam Ali, a rickshaw-puller, were killed in police firing on demonstrators in Dhaka as the Pakistani rulers tried to suppress the uprising. The killings sparked protests that eventually saw the fall of General Ayub Khan.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin and Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus issued separate messages marking the day.

The president said the mass upsurge of 1969 has inspired the people in all democratic movements and struggles, including the July-August student-people-led mass uprising in 2024.

The chief adviser said, "The mass upsurge of 1969 against misrule and exploitation still inspires us."

It is responsibility of all, including the government that came into being as a result of the mass uprising of students, workers, and public, to remain respectful of the values of 1969 in building a democratic social system, he said.

## Most people lost trust in interim govt: GM Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Majority of people in the country have lost trust in the current government, said Jatiyo Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday.

He also questioned whether the current government is capable of conducting a credible election.

"Jatiyo Party is being victimised by neo-fascism. Efforts are being made to exclude us from the election. If elections are held excluding political parties that represent the majority of people, no legitimate government can be formed," he said.

He made the remarks while speaking at a views-exchange meeting with Munshiganj district



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## WAR CRIMES

## Azharul's review petition deferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday deferred the date for hearing of the review petition filed by Jamaat-e-Islami leader ATM Azharul Islam, challenging the verdict that upheld his death sentence in a war crimes case, to February 20.

A full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed was scheduled to hold the hearing.

But the bench passed the deferment order as a judge of the bench is on a leave, advocate Mohammad Shishir, a lawyer for Azharul, told The Daily Star.

Barrister Abdur Razzaq, Barrister Ehsan A Siddiq and Advocate Mohammad Shishir Manir appeared for Azharul at the court.



A boy rides a bike through a road dug up for drainage work in the Janata Housing area of Adabor yesterday. Despite the project running for over a week, there are no proper safety measures or barricades in place, putting pedestrians at risk.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



## Koko's 10th death anniv today

UNB, Dhaka

The tenth death anniversary of Arafat Rahman Koko, the younger son of ex-president Ziaur Rahman and former prime minister Khaleda Zia, the founder and current chairperson of the BNP respectively, will be observed today.

BNP and its associate bodies have taken various programmes to mark the day with due solemnity.

Koko, also a sports organiser, died of cardiac arrest in Malaysia on January 24, 2015. He was 45 years old. He was buried at Banani graveyard.

## Two houses, 11 shops burnt

BSS, Noakhali

At least two houses and 11 shops were burnt in a fire that broke out at Hatiya on Wednesday night.

The fire originated from a cosmetic shop after an electric short circuit at Afazia Bazar of Shukchar union around 11:45pm. Two units of Hatiya Fire Service station brought the blaze under control after two hours, said Harun-Ar Rashid, an official of Hatiya Fire Service station.

## Most people

FROM PAGE 3  
leaders in Dhaka.

Accusing the government of discrimination against his party, GM Quader said, "False murder cases are being filed against us. Whenever our leaders and activists take to the streets, false cases are lodged against them."

"The political situation in the country is unstable and uncertain. Even those running the country do not know what will happen a month from now. Before August 5 last year, the Awami League seemed to dominate the country, but within a day, they disappeared."

"People are also annoyed with different groups showing off their strength these days. They are acting like ruling parties. Jatiyo Party is the only one standing against this tide in the field," he added.

Criticising the government for its failures in various areas, GM Quader said, "Price hikes have left people unable to manage their expenses with their income. Thousands of workers are becoming unemployed as factories are shut down."

**ফ্ল্যাটের শেয়ার বিক্রয়**  
পল্লী বাড়ি নিম্নলিখিত মনোয়ারা হাউজিং এ নির্মাণাধীন বিভিন্ন এর গাড়ি পার্কিং সহ ১৪০০ বর্গফুট ফ্ল্যাটের ২টি ফ্ল্যাটের শেয়ার বিক্রয় করা হবে।  
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A bus parks to pick up passengers right next to a sign saying "No Bus Parking Here". In Dhaka, irony sometimes knows no bounds and blatant disregard for rules is the norm. The photo was taken opposite Dhaka College yesterday.  
PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

# Medical waste poses severe health risks in Phulbari

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinaipur

Improper management and lack of disposal facilities for the medical waste in Phulbari upazila of Dinaipur have led to serious environmental pollution and health risks due to negligence from the local authorities.

Despite government guidelines mandating proper waste management and incineration, these regulations remain largely ignored.

Medical waste – including used needles, syringes, expired medications, and blood-contaminated materials – is often dumped openly near healthcare facilities. Stray animals scatter the waste, creating foul odours and attracting disease-spreading mosquitoes and flies.

Experts warn that if immediate action is not taken, the current practices could lead to a public health crisis.



Locals said drug users collect discarded syringes for reuse, raising the risk of spreading diseases such as Hepatitis B, C, and HIV/AIDS.

Phulbari upazila hosts one health complex, four private clinics, and 13 diagnostic centres, none of which possess environmental clearance certificates. Most facilities lack

proper waste management systems, and licences remain unrenewed.

At the Phulbari Upazila Health Complex, medical waste is stored near the premises and collected by municipal vehicles only twice a week.

Dr Moshir Rahman, health and family planning officer at the health complex, admitted that

the lack of incinerators and staff shortages exacerbate the issue.

Abdul Malek, a patient's relative, expressed concern over open dumping within the health complex, saying it pollutes the environment and spreads diseases.

Managers of private clinics, including Sabuj Kumar Mahanta and Faruk Hossain, said they have complained repeatedly to the Department of Environment, but to no avail.

Without proper disposal facilities, waste is often buried or dumped into rivers.

Contacted, Dinaipur Civil Surgeon Dr Md Asif Faisal emphasised the importance of incinerating medical waste. He said they have plans to coordinate with clinics to hire specialised waste disposal services.

DoE inspector Prabhathi Rani said they are currently in process to hire a waste management contractor in this regard.

## 5 Bangladeshi women conquer Himalayan peaks

STAR REPORT

In celebration of Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain's "Sultana's Dream" being recognised as a Unesco "Memory of the World," five Bangladeshi women mountaineers embarked on a special Himalayan expedition, said a press release.

Inspired by "Sultana's Dream Unbound," the team recently returned to Bangladesh after overcoming the challenges of the Himalayan peaks.

Organised by Abhijatri and endorsed by Unesco, in association with the Liberation War Museum, the expedition was supported by Mastercard and led by Nishat Mazumder, the first Bangladeshi woman to conquer Mount Everest.

The journey highlighted Begum Rokeya's vision of women's emancipation.

Local organisers in Kathmandu announced plans to publish a Nepali translation of "Sultana's Dream," with Unesco's Memory of the World office in Bangkok celebrating the initiative.



## We should focus

FROM PAGE 3  
underrepresented groups, particularly the youth and women.

Touhid also stressed creating a congenial atmosphere in Myanmar's Rakhine State for a dignified return of the displaced Rohingyas sheltered in Bangladesh. "Both Bangladesh and China have vital interests in resolving the conflict, and we must cooperate wholeheartedly to bring about the resolution," he said.

He underscored the transformative role of China's development assistances and investments in Bangladesh's various sectors which have significantly contributed to the country's socio-economic development.

He underscored the need for working towards strengthening multilateral institutions,

expanding investments, deepening people to people exchange and championing global trade system.

The programme brought together a distinguished group of participants, including scholars, diplomats, government officials, young researchers, media representatives, senior leadership and experts of SIIS, and officials from the Shanghai Foreign Affairs Office.

It featured a welcome address by SIIS President Dr Chen Dongxiao, and speeches from key participants, including Director of the Academic Advisory Board at SIIS Dr Yang Jiemian, and presentations by six renowned experts.

The event concluded with closing remarks by Bangladesh Ambassador to China Md Nazmul Islam, the release added.

## Step up fight against

FROM PAGE 3  
the chief adviser was scheduled for yesterday, the third eventful day since he arrived in the Swiss city on January 21.

In another meeting, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk told Yunus that the UN fact-finding report on the atrocities during the July-August uprising will be released by mid-February.

Türk said the report would be shared with the Bangladesh side ahead of its publication from the UN rights office in Geneva.

The chief adviser urged the UN human rights chief for his support in resolving the Rohingya crisis, which has worsened in recent months following the influx of new refugees from Myanmar.

Türk said he was in conversation with relevant stakeholders, including the UN special envoy on

Myanmar, Julie Bishop, in this regard.

Meanwhile, Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shahidul Alam told reporters in Davos that Prof Yunus urged global investors to invest more in Bangladesh, highlighting the country's business-friendly climate.

Alam said Bangladesh has eased condition on investment and improved capacity of Chattogram port. With a huge young population, Bangladesh can become an export hub, he added.

Agnes Callamard, secretary-general of Amnesty International also met the chief adviser.

Meanwhile, DP World Group Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem met Yunus yesterday and discussed issues of mutual interest, said CA's Deputy Press Secretary Apurba

Jahangir.

DP World is a multinational logistics company based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. It specialises in cargo logistics, port terminal operations, maritime services and free trade zones.

Over 50 heads of state and government gathered at the WEF being held from January 20-25.

The Summit is being held under the theme of "Collaboration for the Intelligent Age" and it welcomed close to 3,000 attendees from over 130 countries.

**PRAYER TIMING**  
JANUARY 24  
Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5:30 12:30 4:15 5:43 7:15  
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:30 5:47 7:45  
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

**Luxury Apt. for Sale**  
3000/4000 Sft. Residential Luxurious Apartment For Sale In North Gulshan. Pls Contact Real Buyer Only. (No Media Allowed)  
01711531664/ 01715407668

**পাত্র চাই**  
O/A- Level, Master's in Computer Science from USA জনা সাল: ১৯৯৮ (৫-৬) পাত্রের জন্য Background O/A- Level কৃত পাত্র চাই। স্বাগত # nusratjahan.nipa1406@gmail.com

**BRIDE WANTED**  
We are Looking for a suitable Hindu bride for the Canada Government Engineer and Permanent Resident. The Groom is about 44 years old and divorced (No Kid). If interested, please send the Biodata at rkroebd@gmail.com.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Principal  
Mymensingh Engineering College, Mymensingh  
E-mail: mec.ac.bd@gmail.com  
Ref. 57.03.0000.020.20.069.24-25  
Date: 30.07.20224  
**e-Tender Notice**  
e-Tenders are invited through e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of goods mentioned below:  

e-Tender ID No	Description of goods	Last Selling Date and Time	Opening Date and Time
1065332	Supply of Engineering & Other Equipment for CE	12/02/2025, 17:00	13/02/2025, 14:00
1065331	Supply of Engineering & Other Equipment for CSE	12/02/2025, 17:00	13/02/2025, 15:00
1065330	Supply of Engineering & Other Equipment for EEE	12/02/2025, 17:00	13/02/2025, 16:00
1065327	Supply of Raw Materials & Spare parts for CSE	09/02/2025, 17:00	10/02/2025, 14:00
1065322	Supply of Other Stationary	09/02/2025, 17:00	10/02/2025, 15:00

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

(Prof. Engr. Md. Mizanur Rahman)  
Principal (Addl. Charge)

GD- 263

**RADIANT PHARMACEUTICALS**

**Medical Information Officers for New Affiliate**

Radiant looks forward to recruiting a significant number of qualified young professionals to join its **new affiliate** for further strengthening its presence in the pharma market. The candidates should have the competence of promoting the products to the health professionals, willing to work as Medical Information Officers (MIO) and be prepared to be based at any place within Bangladesh. The incumbents will be responsible for the promotion of pharmaceutical products to the medical professionals in Bangladesh.

The candidates are required to have the following eligibility to apply:

- Masters/Honours (4 years) degree in any discipline with biological science up to HSC level. Candidates with concentration in Pharmacy, Biochemistry, Zoology, Biotechnology will be given preference.
- Good communication skills in both Bangla & English.
- Below 32 years of age.

Candidates whose credentials meet the requirements, may reach their resume along with a cover letter to the following address or to the e-mail: [info.hr@radiant.com.bd](mailto:info.hr@radiant.com.bd) by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025. Please inscribe the position 'Medical Information Officer' on the top of the envelope or as the subject of your email.

**Radiant Pharmaceuticals Limited**  
SKS Tower (7<sup>th</sup> Floor), 7 VIP Road, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1206  
[www.radiant.com.bd](http://www.radiant.com.bd)



# Shops running illegally on CWasa lands

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

At least 16 shops are being run illegally on lands of Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority in different areas of the port city.

Allegedly, the CWasa Employees Co-operative Society Limited built the shops on the government lands without permission.

Sources said the society receives Tk 2.5 lakh in advance payment and Tk 2,000-4,500 as monthly rent for each shop.

As per data from CWasa's estate department, there are seven shops on its land in Bolirhat, five in Monsurabad and four in Technical Intersection area, all constructed by the society between 2019 and 2023.

The society was launched in 1988, and currently has over 150 members.

Visiting the CWasa's colony in Technical Intersection area, this correspondent observed several businesses being run in the newly constructed shops.

"I rented the shop, paying Tk 5 lakh in advance and Tk



4,000 monthly," said Yeasin Akram Rabby, who runs a grocery shop.

Several other shopkeepers echoed the same.

"Initially, the society rented shops to its members to avoid internal conflict. Then the member rented it to me," said an occupant of a shop in Monsurabad pump house area.

The CWasa's estate department wrote a letter to the society in February last year, requesting it to stop constructing shops on its lands. A probe body was also formed by the ministry concerned to investigate the issue last year.

"We are yet to get the probe report. We also wrote to the society to stop this illegal activity. They, however, ignored the call," said Babul Alam, estate officer of CWasa.

Asked why they built shops by occupying state's land without permission, Mohammed Yousuf, president of the society, said they are doing commercial activities for the welfare of society members.

However, if these shops are built illegally, the CWasa can take action as per the rules, he added.

Contacted, Muhammad Anwar Pasha, managing director of CWasa, said, "I will look into the issue. Action will be taken as per rules if any irregularities are found."

# 8 years on, bridge remains incomplete

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Residents of 16 villages in Phulbari upazila of Dinajpur have been suffering for the past eight years due to the incomplete construction of a bridge over the Chhoto Jamuna river.

The bridge, intended to facilitate local travel, remains unfinished, forcing villagers to take a 7-kilometre detour for what would otherwise be a 2-kilometre journey.

The project began under the leadership of former union parishad chairman Abdul Aziz Master. Using funds from the UP and community voluntary labour, six concrete pillars were constructed on the river. A temporary bamboo and wooden platform were then installed between the pillars to allow pedestrian use.

However, the lack of additional funding left the project incomplete, exposing the structure to weather damage and making it increasingly dangerous to cross.

Villagers from Polipara and Harhariapara in Phulbari upazila, as well as neighbouring areas in Nawabganj, expressed frustrations over the incomplete bridge, citing the significant impact it has on their daily lives.

They said long detours have made accessing schools, markets, and government offices more



challenging for hundreds of residents, including students and farmers, leading to reduced efficiency and financial strain.

Farmers from the affected villages also face increased transportation costs when bringing their produce to markets in Madilahat and Khayerbari Hat, cutting into their profits.

Shamsher Ali, a resident of Harhariapara village, said, "Vehicles can't pass through the bridge, and it's only a matter of time before it collapses."

Abdul Aziz Master said approximately Tk 15 lakh had already been spent on constructing the pillars and estimated that an

additional Tk 10 lakh would be needed to complete the bridge.

He said despite repeated attempts to secure funding from the upazila parishad, political indifference has hindered progress. He also alleged that local Awami League leaders were unwilling to support the project as they would not receive political credit for it.

Contacted, Upazila Engineer Shafiqui Islam said he will visit the site soon to witness the situation firsthand.

Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mir Md Al Kamah Tamal said appropriate measures will be taken to alleviate the villagers' suffering.

## JUDGES' APPOINTMENT

## Ordinance flawed, discriminatory

Says SCBA president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recently formulated Supreme Court Judge Appointment Ordinance is flawed and discriminatory, said SCBA President AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon yesterday.

"There is no provision in the law for keeping representative from lawyers in the Supreme Judicial Appointment Council, who will select candidates for the posts of Supreme Court judges and recommend them to the president. The law is defective and discriminatory. I demand amendment of the law," he said while talking to reporters at the SC premises.

The interim government has issued an ordinance for recruitment of competent judges in the two SC divisions through a seven-member Supreme Judicial Appointment Council led by the chief justice.

Even though the constitution mandates formulating a law for appointments of judges, none of the previous governments did it.

## Toddler dies in freak accident

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A three-and-a-half-year-old girl was killed after she got entangled in the blades of a paddy-threshing machine at her house in Dinajpur's Birganj upazila yesterday afternoon.

The deceased is Jannatul, daughter of Md Ziaurul Islam.

The incident happened around 3:00pm in the courtyard of her home.

According to locals, the family was using a thresher in their courtyard. Jannatul wandered out of the house and became entangled in the machine's blades and sustained severe injuries.

She died on the way to a hospital.

Officer-in-Charge of Birganj Police Station Md Abdul Gafur said they are looking into the incident.

## Ex-whip Iqbalur among 692 AL men sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Former Jatiya Sangsad whip Iqbalur Rahim, also former Awami League lawmaker from Dinajpur-3, and 691 other AL men have been sued for allegedly attacking a procession brought out by BNP men in the district on July 21 last year.

Local BNP leader Mostafa Mahmud Rinku, a resident of Balubari in Dinajpur, filed the case against the named 192 AL leaders and activists and some 500 unidentified people yesterday, said Motiur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Dinajpur Sadar Kotwali Police Station.

According to the case statement, on July 21, 2024, leaders and activists of AL and its affiliated organisations attacked BNP supporters near the main gate of Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University (HSTU) when they brought out a protest procession.

Former AL MP Iqbalur instructed them to carry out the attack, Rinku said in the case.

The attackers used firearms, rods, sticks, machetes, petrol bombs, and crude bombs to carry out the attack. They also allegedly vandalised the vehicles carrying them.

## Man held over rape of 7-year-old boy

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Police yesterday arrested a man in Gazipur's Kapasia upazila on the charge of raping a seven-year-old boy.

The arrestee is Joy Chandra Das, 23, a Nasimom driver.

The child's father filed the case with Kapasia Police Station, said Sub-inspector Moslem Uddin.

The child was initially taken to Kapasia Upazila Health Complex and later referred to Gazipur Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital for better treatment, said Mamunur Rahman, health and family planning officer of Kapasia Upazila Health Complex.

Quoting the child's father, the SI said the victim was playing near his home when the accused took the child to a nearby area under the pretext of showing him a bird's nest and raped him.

Hearing his scream, locals later rescued him.

## 2 held for hoarding OMS rice

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Authorities on Wednesday night seized 600 sacks of government subsidised rice from a warehouse named "Majumdar Bhandar" in Karamat Ali Market.

In a joint operation by Fakirhat police and the Food Department, they also arrested two persons involved in its illegal storage and intended sale.

The arrestees are Ashatit Majumdar, 21, a co-owner of the warehouse, and an employee, Abdur Rasul, 45.

Each sack contained 30 kilogrammes of rice, as part of the Open Market Sale (OMS) programme, and the total amount seized was worth Tk 9.34 lakh, said Fakirhat Model Police Station's Officer-in-Charge Alamgir Kabir.

He said the two were arrested for embezzling government subsidised rice and planning to deceive consumers.

A case has been filed against them.

**Centre for Advanced Research in Sciences (CARS)**  
University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000.

**Invitation for Tender (National)**      Date: ০৭-১০-১৪৩১ বঙ্গাব্দ  
21-01-2025 খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

SL No.	Name of supply	Last date of sale of Tender Documents	Last date of Submission of Tender Documents	Date & time of Opening of Tender Documents	Place where detailed Information will be found
01	<b>Tender Ref. No. CARS/ST/P-374/OTM/2025</b> Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Equipment for Genomics and Proteomics Core Facility at the CARS	<b>17-02-2025</b> Up to Office Hour	<b>18-02-2025</b> Up to 10.30 am	<b>18-02-2025</b> 11.00 am	<a href="http://www.cars.du.ac.bd">www.cars.du.ac.bd</a> Or Notice board at the CARS University of Dhaka

Director  
Centre for Advanced Research in Sciences (CARS)  
University of Dhaka

GD-260

**বাংলা একাডেমি**  
৩ কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম এভিনিউ, রমনা, ঢাকা ১০০০

**অমর একুশে বইমেলা ২০২৫**  
**শিশু-কিশোর চিত্রাঙ্কন, আবৃত্তি এবং সংগীত প্রতিযোগিতা**

অমর একুশে বইমেলা ২০২৫ উপলক্ষে বাংলা একাডেমি শিশু-কিশোর চিত্রাঙ্কন, আবৃত্তি এবং সংগীত প্রতিযোগিতার আয়োজন করেছে। এবার বইমেলায় প্রতিপাদ্য 'জুলাই গণঅভ্যুত্থান: নতুন বাংলাদেশ বিনির্মাণ'। প্রতিযোগিতা তিনটি শাখায় (ক, খ ও গ) অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

**প্রতিযোগীর বয়স**  
ক শাখা: সর্বোচ্চ ৮ বছর।  
খ শাখা: সর্বোচ্চ ১২ বছর।  
গ শাখা: সর্বোচ্চ ১৫ বছর।

উক্ত তিনটি শাখার প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক শিশু-কিশোর বা তাদের অভিভাবকদের আগামী ২৮শে জানুয়ারি থেকে ৬ই ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ পর্যন্ত (শুক্র ও শনিবার বাদে) প্রতিদিন সকাল ১১:০০টা থেকে বিকাল ৪:০০টার মধ্যে বাংলা একাডেমির ডক্টর মুহম্মদ শহীদুল্লাহ ভবনের নিচতলার অভ্যর্থনা কক্ষ থেকে আবেদনপত্র সংগ্রহ করে নাম তালিকাভুক্ত করতে হবে এবং জন্ম সনদ জমা দিতে হবে।

**যোগাযোগ**  
চিত্রাঙ্কন প্রতিযোগিতা: ০১৯১২৯৫৭১৩৪  
আবৃত্তি প্রতিযোগিতা: ০১৭১৬০৮০৯৯৩  
সংগীত প্রতিযোগিতা: ০১৭২৩৪৩২৩৫

- চিত্রাঙ্কন প্রতিযোগিতা ৭ই ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ শুক্রবার সকাল ৮:৩০ টায়, আবৃত্তি প্রতিযোগিতা (প্রাথমিক বাছাই) ৭ই ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ শুক্রবার সকাল ৯:৩০টায় এবং সংগীত প্রতিযোগিতা (প্রাথমিক বাছাই) ৮ই ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ শনিবার সকাল ৯:৩০টায় অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।
- প্রতিটি শাখার প্রথম তিনজন বিজয়ীকে পুরস্কার এবং অংশগ্রহণকারী সকল প্রতিযোগীকে স্মারক উপহার প্রদান করা হবে।

**ড. সরকার আমিন**  
সদস্য-সচিব  
অমর একুশে বইমেলা পরিচালনা কমিটি ২০২৫

GD-265

**GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER (East)**  
**BANGLADESH RAILWAY, CHATTOGRAM.**

Invitation No: 54.01.1500.110.07.073.25      Dated: 22-01-2025

**e-Tender Notice (OTM)**

SL No	Tender ID No	Tender Ref. No	Name of the works	Tender Publication Date & Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date & Time
1	1054106	WR2/OTM-cleaning/24-25	Cleaning, washing, servicing & fumigation of passenger carriages and supply of mobile cleaners in intercity trains at dhaka carriage depot under DME/C&W/Dhaka.	23-Jan-2025 10:00 am	13-Feb-2025 02:30 pm

This is an online tender where only e-tender will be accepted in e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the national e-Gp system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for Tender/Proposal document to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-Gp system portal and from e-Gp help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)) .

এস(২৫)(২৯৯)

(Kazi Md. Salim)  
**Chief Mechanical Engineer (East)**  
**Bangladesh Railway, CRB, Chattogram.**  
**e-mail: [cmee@railway.gov.bd](mailto:cmee@railway.gov.bd)**

GD-268

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভূগোল ও পরিবেশ বিভাগের ৭৫ বছর পূর্তি উদযাপন অনুষ্ঠান  
৩১ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫ এর পরিবর্তে ২৮ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ তারিখ পুনর্নির্ধারণ করা হয়েছে।  
রেজিস্ট্রেশন ১৫ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ পর্যন্ত চালু থাকবে।

**Department of Geography and Environment**  
**University of Dhaka**

**75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**  
**28 February 2025**  
**Central Playground**  
**University of Dhaka**

**Registration**

<b>Starts:</b> 9 December 2024	<b>Fees:</b> Alumni 1500 BDT With Spouse 2500 BDT Per Child (10+ yrs) 1000 BDT Per Child (below 10yrs) 500 BDT
<b>Ends:</b> 15 February 2025	Current Students 500 BDT PMEPMSD Students 1000 BDT Driver 500 BDT
<b>Mode:</b> Offline: Department Office Online: Google form: <a href="https://forms.gle/YoYiXqScTp2Hg9JY8">https://forms.gle/YoYiXqScTp2Hg9JY8</a>	

**Payment Methods:**

bKash (payment) +88 01575077033

Bank A/C Name: 75 Years Celebration Event  
Bank A/C No.: 0200023065045  
Bank SWIFT Code: AGBKBDDH  
Routing Number: 010271724  
Agrani Bank PLC, Dhaka University Branch, Dhaka

bKash payment

**Highlights**

- Grand Opening
- Souvenir
- Academic Seminar
- Remembrance
- Networking
- Food and Beverage
- Exhibition
- Food Corner
- Cultural Program
- Raffle Draw

**Organized by:**  
Department of Geography and Environment, University of Dhaka  
In collaboration with Geography and Environment Alumni Association & 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee

GD-257



## KUBRA KHAN to tie the knot

Popular Pakistani actress Kubra Khan has announced that she will be tying the knot in February, according to a report by Geo News.

Rumours of Kubra's impending marriage had been circulating for some time. However, the actress remained tight-lipped about the matter. Recently, during an event, she confirmed the news while responding to questions from journalists.

The groom is actor Gohar Rasheed. The duo has shared the screen in several dramas, including *Jannat Se Aage*, which gained significant praise from audiences.

Kubra Khan, whose real name is Rabia Iqbal Khan, made her television debut in 2016. Aside from her work in dramas, she is also a regular face in films.



### WHAT'S THE HAPS?

#### 'It's in Our Nature'

Pathshala South Asian Media Institute presents *It's in Our Nature*, a photography exhibition featuring eight stories by students. The exhibition sheds light on the struggles, adaptations, and acceptance required to maintain nature's balance while also exploring societal issues that affect individuals and communities, ultimately shaping collective human experiences.

DATE: SUNDAY | JANUARY 26

TIME: 6PM-9PM

VENUE: DRIKPATH BHOBON, PANTHAPATH



## 'Boli: The Wrestler' to be screened at Burning Crab Festival



The critically acclaimed Bangladeshi film *Boli: The Wrestler*, directed by Iqbal Hossain Chowdhury, will be screened at the Burning Crab Festival in Cox's Bazar from January 29 to 31. The film, which won the top award at the Busan International Film Festival, has been showcased globally, including in Shanghai, Toronto, Los Angeles, and Dhaka. Representing Bangladesh in the Best International Feature Film category at the 97th Academy Awards, *Boli* highlights Chattogram's wrestling culture and coastal folklore, and features Nasir Uddin Khan alongside a stellar ensemble cast.

The Burning Crab Festival, curated by Japanese artist Jiro Endo, will take place at Mermaid Beach Resort along the Marine Drive under the theme "Take a Break".

## Kaavish to headline 'Dhaka Dreams' concert today

The much-anticipated *Dhaka Dreams* concert is set to take place today at Senapranan. The event will feature a lineup of artistes, including Level Five, Ghashphoring Choir, Shunno, and Arnob alongside singer Sunidhi Nayak, and the celebrated Pakistani band Kaavish as the headliner.

Kaavish landed in Dhaka last Wednesday and shared their excitement with fans through their verified Facebook page. They posted a photo taken at the Dhaka airport and captioned it, "See you on January 24."

The organiser, Blue Brick Communications, offered refunds for this rescheduled event, with requests closing on January 23 at 1:30pm.

Initially, a two-day occasion scheduled for January 10 and 11, *Dhaka Dreams* was postponed due to technical issues and has been lessened to a one-day event.



## Uma Thurman joins Michael C Hall in 'Dexter: Resurrection'

Hollywood veteran Uma Thurman has joined the cast of *Dexter: Resurrection*, starring Michael C Hall. She will play Charley, head of security for billionaire Leon Prater, and a former Special Operations officer.

Hall reprises his role as Dexter Morgan, the notorious serial killer. Returning cast members include David Zayas as Detective Angel Batista, James Remar as Harry Morgan, and Jack Alcott as Harrison Morgan. *Dexter: Resurrection* is a continuation of 2021's *Dexter: New Blood* and is set to premiere this summer. The franchise also includes a prequel, *Dexter: Original Sin*, which explores Dexter's early life, connecting the overall franchise's timelines.



## DiCaprio, Scorsese to adapt 'The Devil in the White City' for the screen

Leonardo DiCaprio and Martin Scorsese are set to reunite as the iconic star-director duo, to adapt Erik Larson's book *The Devil in the White City* for the silver screen under 20th Century Studios.

The true crime story follows serial killer HH Holmes and his "Murder Castle" in Chicago's 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. DiCaprio has held the rights since 2010, but the project faced several unforeseen delays.

The movie adaptation, yet to have a script, is gaining traction with 20th Century's support under David Greenbaum and Steve Asbell. DiCaprio and Scorsese will produce the project, joined by Stacey Sher, Rick Yorn, and Jennifer Davisson from Appian Way.

# NEWS

## Country may face shortage

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result in disruption of irrigation when cultivation of paddy begins, they added.

"This can even make food security uncertain," Imran said at the event at a hotel in the capital.

BIPPA President David Hasanat said, "We met government high-ups several times and asked for arrears, but found no solution yet. It will not be possible to meet the national demand during the summer if the payments are not cleared."

Do not portray power generators as villains then, he told reporters, adding that the summer was likely to be very hot this year.

The government owes independent power producers around Tk 16,000

crore.

BIPPA estimates that power demand will reach 18,000MW on hot days and heavy fuel oil-based plants will generate up to 4,149MW if the fuel is available.

In a presentation, Imran Karim said, they have been getting delayed payments since the last quarter of 2022, and currently they do not have the means to import fuel oil to generate electricity.

As per the contracts between power plants and Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB), the IPPs have rights to suspend power generation.

When the interim government has been planning on how to reduce power generation costs, saying the

ousted Awami League government has increased the cost illogically, the BIPPA recommends increasing electricity prices at retail level.

Comparing the pricing data of four countries, including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, Imran said, the price in Bangladesh is the lowest and the subsidy the highest.

"We want a logical price here as the lower price left the PDB to depend on the government subsidies which is why they are not able to pay the power producers."

David Hasanat said they also want investigation into who made excessive profit from the power sector with the help of unsolicited contracts with the PDB.

Beximco Garment Division, at the press conference.

Beximco, one of the most talked about industrial giants in Bangladesh, landed in hot water following the ouster of the Awami League government in early August last year.

Banks curbed finances owing to the default of a huge amount of loans, alleged to have been taken by the group using the influence of its Vice Chairman Salman F Rahman, who was an influential adviser to deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina. Salman is now behind bars.

attacks since August 4 last year.

It said that 15 cases and 29 GDs were filed with different police stations in these connections. A total of 23 suspects have been arrested.

Hasan Shah Dipu Noore, however, said many of the victims could not lodge cases fearing reprisal.

Among those present at the press briefing were members of the Global Sufi Organisation's central executive committee, including Mohammad Ahsanul Haque, a teacher at Dhaka University's Persian language and literature department; Aftab Alam Zilani, Nasir Uddin Chishti, Maulana Tauhidul Islam Chishti, and Shah Alauddin.

those involved.

It also demanded heightened security for all religious establishments.

The organisation called for measures to protect religious harmony, coexistence, and peace and order of the country. It urged the authorities to issue directives through the Islamic Foundation and relevant ministries to ensure that no negative sermons about mazars, darbar sharifs, and Sufism are delivered at mosques or religious gatherings (Waz Mahfils).

On January 18, the government said at least 40 mazars and darbar sharifs have been targeted in 44

## Israel continues West Bank raids

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could enter at any moment."

The Israeli military launched an operation in Jenin on Tuesday, saying it aims to "uproot militants in the camp and the city".

The offensive began just

days after a ceasefire deal paused fighting in the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli assault has killed at least 10 Palestinians and injured 40 more, according to the Ramallah-based Palestinian health ministry.

Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu said that "Operation Iron Wall", as it has been dubbed, will "eradicate terrorism" in the West Bank city.

Violence has surged throughout the West Bank since the Gaza offensive

erupted on October 7,

2023. According to the Palestinian health ministry, Israeli troops or settlers have killed at least 850 Palestinians in the West Bank since the conflict began.

## Ziaul Ahsan got Antiguan citizenship

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accused him in two separate cases while his wife Nusrat Jahan faces charges of acquiring illegal assets worth Tk 41 crore.

Her accounts in 12 bank accounts saw transactions totalling Tk 342.5 crore, anti-corruption officers said.

The family acquired citizenship of Antigua and Barbuda, a tax haven, in 2017. On their behalf, \$200,000 was paid by Martil Consulting Malaysia Berhad to C&C Consultancy and Management Services.

Investigators found that Ziaul had transactions of approximately 6 million dirhams, around TK 20 crore, in his accounts with First Abu Dhabi Bank, approximately 23 million dirhams, around Tk 75 crore,

with Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank, and approximately 7 million ringgit, around Tk 75 crore, with Affin Bank Berhad, Malaysia.

Additionally, he has an account in the Bank of America. The ACC has evidence that he laundered a significant amount of money using that account, officers said.

Ziaul owns a farmhouse, an eight-storey building in Dhaka, an eight-storey building in Barishal, a house in Jhalakathi, three flats and 3333.51 decimals of land in Dhaka. He has an investment of Tk 5 crore in the stock market and Tk 1 crore in savings bond, officers said.

The value of these properties acquired between 2009 and 2024 is Tk 15.77 crore.

According to the cases, Ziaul acquired assets worth Tk 22.27 crore which is inconsistent with his known sources of income.

There were suspicious transactions of approximately Tk 120 crore in eight of his bank accounts. He deposited \$ 55,000 into an account, violating the Guidelines for Foreign Exchange Transactions 2018 and the FEOD Circular-6 dated February 3, 2020.

The complaint filed against Ziaul's wife, Nusrat Jahan, said she acquired assets worth Tk 18.59 crore that are inconsistent with her known sources of income.

There were unusual transactions of approximately Tk 222.50 crore in four of her accounts.

Ziaul was arrested on August 15.

## Produce in US or pay tariffs

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Trump is always a top draw in Davos, making waves at two previous in-person appearances during his first term in 2018 and 2020.

But showing up this year was tougher as the forum happened to start on the day of his inauguration in Washington on Monday.

Scores stood in line to hear him

speak. Some in the audience included European Central Bank chief Christine Lagarde, Polish President Andrzej Duda and Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic.

Trump already gave Davos a taste of what is to come since his inauguration on Monday.

He has threatened tariffs on China, the European Union, Mexico

and Canada, pulled the United States from the Paris climate pact and renewed his claim the Panama Canal, just to name a few.

His plans to cut taxes, reduce the size of the US federal government and deregulate industries likely found a sympathetic ear amongst many businesses, though economists warn the policies could rekindle inflation.

suspension letters were yet to be issued.

Earlier, on the night of July 14 and the afternoon of July 15, members of the now-banned Chhatra League were accused of attacking students involved in the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement.

On the same day, the central coordinator of the movement was reportedly pulled off a shuttle train and assaulted. There were also allegations of

students involved in the movement being searched and beaten at different times.

Furthermore, on July 31, there were allegations of a bomb attack on a teacher's residence, reportedly carried out by Chhatra League members. Additionally, allegations of assault on Shah Riyaz, a journalist from Dainik Purbodhesh working on campus, were also raised against Chhatra League members.

## 80 shrines, Sufi centres attacked

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their establishments will be met with strong resistance.

Representatives from various shrines and darbar sharifs in Dhamrai, Sirajganj, Mymensingh, Narsingdi, and Gazipur, which were attacked, also shared their accounts of the attacks at the press briefing.

To further illustrate the gravity of the situation, the organisation presented a documentary on the attacks.

Describing its four-point demand, the organisation called for a judicial investigation into the attacks. It urged the authorities to identify and ensure exemplary punishment of







## Deliver on assurances to stranded workers

### Govt should work with Malaysia to fast-track their travel

Our heart goes out to the over 18,000 Bangladeshis who missed the deadline to fly to Malaysia for work around eight months ago through no fault of their own, and are still waiting to travel, despite various assurances given to them over time. It can be recalled that Malaysia reopened its labour market to Bangladeshi workers in 2022—after a four-year suspension due to recruitment irregularities—but then announced a freeze on hiring foreign workers in March 2024. This affected prospective workers from 14 countries, including Bangladesh, who were asked to enter the country by May 31. However, despite obtaining clearance from the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), completing other necessary paperwork, securing visas, and even purchasing plane tickets in some cases, thousands of Bangladeshis failed to enter Malaysia by that deadline.

The failure was primarily due to mismanagement by the previous regime and local recruiting agents. Since June, numerous promises have been made, but none have been fulfilled. To be fair to the current government, it appears to have made sincere efforts to address the grievances of these prospective migrants. However, the reality remains that these individuals have faced significant hardships to prepare for their travel. Many have incurred substantial debts—with some even selling their land—to cover travel-related expenses. As they continue to wait, some have had to take on further loans, while others are struggling to cope with mounting interest on their existing debts. The psychological toll of this prolonged uncertainty has also been immense, with many families facing anxiety about their financial stability and future. Under these circumstances, the longer they have to wait to travel to Malaysia, the more debt-ridden and vulnerable they will become.

Recently, Law Adviser Asif Nazrul assured prospective migrants that they would be sent to Malaysia in phases, starting in late March or early April. He stated that those with BMET clearance and visas would begin travelling by the end of March, while those without BMET cards but with visas would be prioritised next. He further mentioned that individuals without BMET cards or visas should reclaim their passports and funds from the recruitment agencies, with ministry support in the process if necessary.

While we are encouraged by the law adviser's assurance, it is essential that these promises translate into action without further delay and that the timeline is followed without exception. Transparency and regular updates on the progress of the phased travel plan would help rebuild trust among the affected workers. Additionally, the government should ensure strict oversight of recruiting agents and agencies to prevent similar lapses in the future.

## Take steps to re-form river commission

### Why has it not been done despite passing of five months?

It is deeply concerning that the National River Conservation Commission (NRCC), the so-called guardian of our rivers, remains virtually nonfunctional even though over five months have passed following the fall of the Awami League government. According to a report by *Bonik Barta*, the interim government revoked the appointment of its then chairman in early September. Since then, this position has remained vacant, as have other posts in the five-member commission (the tenure of the remaining members ended in August). Moreover, several key office posts including secretary and director also remain unfilled. With only a skeleton staff available to keep the lights on, the commission has virtually become a rudderless ship, totally incapable of fulfilling its mandate to prevent river encroachment and pollution.

This is alarming considering how—despite there being a non-political government in place and a celebrated environmentalist at the helm of the environment ministry—degradation of rivers continues unchecked. The NRCC is supposed to play a leading role in this fight. Established in 2014 following a High Court ruling that granted rivers the status of “living entities,” it is supposed to coordinate with all relevant institutions to guide state efforts against any encroachment or pollution, and bring those responsible to book. Unfortunately, even a fully-staffed NRCC could not live up to that expectation, due partly to its lack of power and partly to the noncooperation of other agencies.

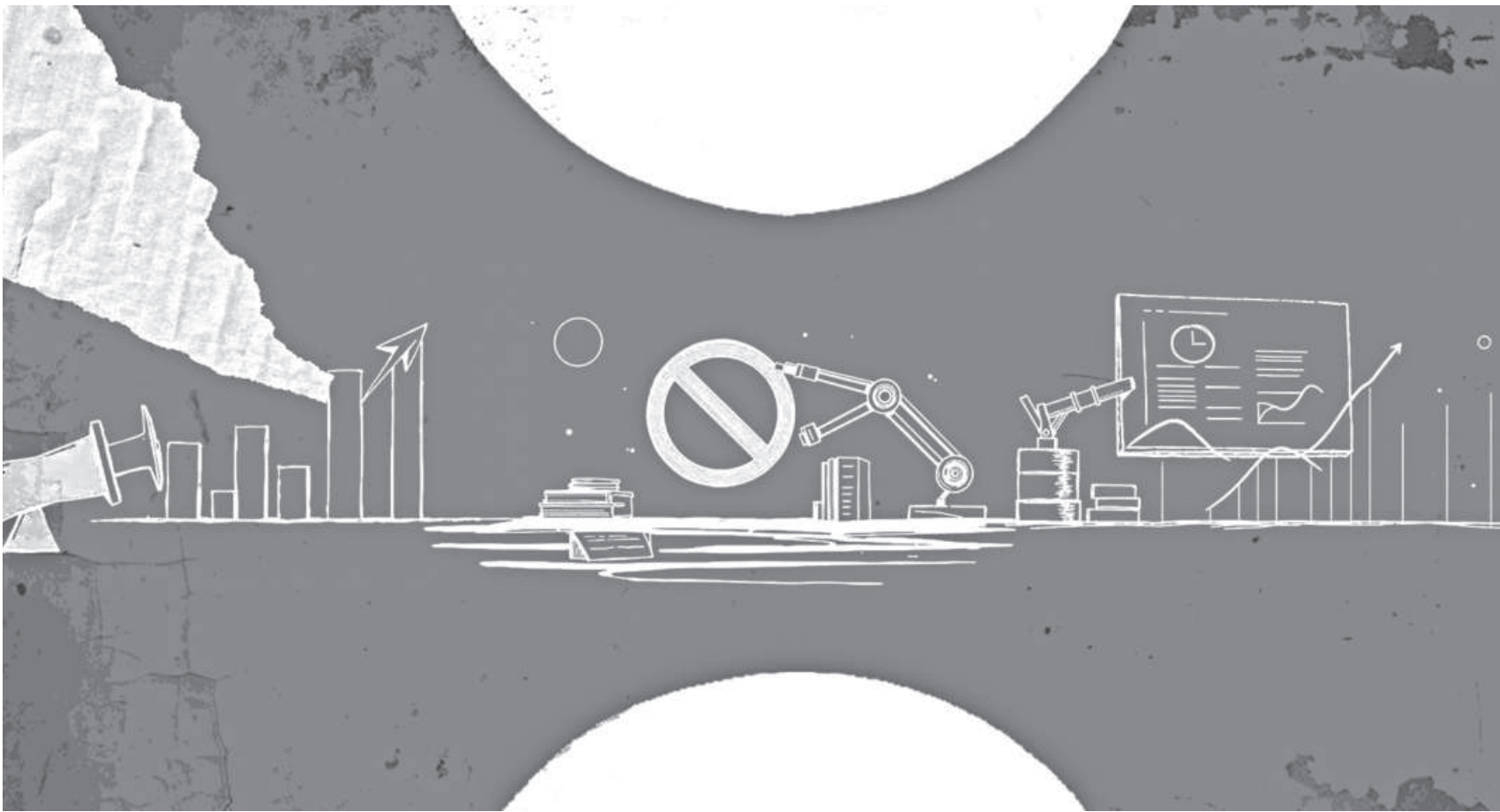
Despite that, activists warn that the current leadership vacuum has left rivers further vulnerable, and it is already having dire consequences. Over the past five months or so, we have witnessed how new politically connected individuals came into the fray to exploit rivers for their own gain. The unchecked pollution of our waterways is another alarming issue, threatening aquatic ecosystems and public health. Despite these pressing concerns, no effective steps have yet been taken to restore the commission's functionality. This is unacceptable. We urge the government to immediately appoint a competent leadership for the NRCC and ensure it has the authority, independence, and resources necessary to carry out its mandate.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Opportunity's Mars landing



On this day in 2004, launched in mid-2003, the six-wheeled robotic rover Opportunity landed on Mars and—like its twin rover, Spirit, which had landed on January 3—analysed rocks and soils and relayed pictures back to Earth.



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

### PREVENTING TAX EVASION

# How advanced analytics and proper automation can help

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### M SOHEL RAHMAN, ANINDYA IQBAL and A. B. M. ALIM AL ISLAM

The year 2025 started with disappointment for Bangladesh, with the announcement of a significant increase in indirect taxes—value-added tax (VAT) and supplementary duty (SD)—affecting people from all income groups. Was it unavoidable? Couldn't the deficit of tax revenue be addressed by detecting and preventing tax evasion by unscrupulous wealthy individuals? A 2023 study by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) revealed that tax evasion costs Bangladesh up to Tk 223,000 crore a year. CPD further identified the loopholes through which tax evasion happens, such as: i) individuals reporting lower incomes; ii) unethical support from tax practitioners; iii) claim for more investment allowances; and iv) higher informal or cash-based transactions. It is understandably difficult, if not impossible, to close these loopholes with manual interventions. Proper automation, particularly the use of advanced AI-based data analytics techniques, can go a long way to deal with them.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR), the central authority for tax administration in the country, uses different software applications for collecting tax from various instruments, namely, income tax (e-return, recently introduced e-TDS), VAT (iVAS for organisational and EFD for retail), and customs duty (ASYCUDA). In spite of the apparent advancement in this regard, Bangladesh still has one of the lowest tax-GDP ratios in the world—around 7.5 percent (2022), compared to the Asia-Pacific average of 19.3 percent. Notably, for developing and developed countries, this ratio is 24.72 percent and 35.81 percent, respectively. In fact, according to data, only 43 lakh individuals submitted tax returns in FY2023-24, which is around 41 percent of the total TIN holders (1.04 crore, as of June 2024). Only a small portion of these returns—around seven percent, according to NBR data—go through post-assessment eventually. This low number can be attributed to a manual assessment system and a lack of enough manpower to carry it out comprehensively. Despite the NBR using several software applications for tax collection, this crucial part is still manual. Hence, the true benefits of using these software still elude us to a great extent.

Now, let's take a look at something interesting. According to informed sources, 50-80 percent of flats in Dhaka are not shown in the tax return submission of their owners. Moreover, 60-80 percent of shops across the country don't pay any tax at all, according to different sources. Relevantly, like many other ill-planned initiatives, the implementation of electronic fiscal device (EFD) to collect VAT from retail shops was surprisingly (and questionably) given to a single

vendor (as a public-private partnership contract). And as we have learnt, that vendor has been able to achieve less than 15 percent of the target installation.

The NBR has taken initiatives to increase online tax return submission, suggesting that its top officials believe this would go a long way to solve our low tax-GDP ratio problem. The chief adviser also expressed hope that such an automation would reduce corruption. However, based on the perceived online adoption rate of the submitters, it can be safely assumed that there will still be more than 75 percent paper-based returns (currently more than 90 percent) in near future. Also, most of the wealthy people would submit paper-based returns through tax lawyers unless, of course, measures are taken to ensure their inclusion to the online submission filter, e.g. through appropriate incentivisation. Hence, the actual impact of online tax return submission is not likely to increase significantly as far as detecting tax evasion is concerned. So, we need to have a back-up plan.

### The existing software used and offered by the NBR are merely designed to automate some workflows without much forethought on performing advanced tasks of identifying undeclared incomes or tax frauds.

Efficiently digitising paper-based tax returns could be an option in this context, which, albeit challenging, is still possible with reasonable accuracy with the current advanced image processing technology.

Irrespective of their type, without assessing the tax returns automatically and cross-checking them with relevant data, such as mutation, electricity, gas, stock, bond, etc, it is not possible to detect tax evasion either for income tax or VAT. This demands extensive use of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML)-based data analytics. It's high time we applied these state-of-the-art technologies to increase our national revenue. We believe that the current cabinet, being free of corruption and biases, is in a good position to make the NBR transparent and efficient.

Applying AI- and ML-based analytics to identify anomalies (e.g. non-taxpayers having significant assets, shops providing low VAT with huge electricity/gas consumptions, etc) and thereby detecting tax frauds and/or evasions is a standard practice in developed countries. But to do this meaningfully, proper integration with relevant external systems (e.g. mutation and census data, electricity and gas meter ownership, etc) and automated assessment of all tax returns (submitted online or physically) are essential. Online tax returns do help

in systematically assessing the data in an automated way, which is definitely a progress towards the final goal. And what's positive is that some relevant external systems are already in a good shape to be interfaced with. For those systems, where online systems are still not available, we need to come up with a protocol to digitise and upload data at least once a year, particularly during or before the automated tax assessment event.

We have already alluded to a “Plan B” of efficiently digitising the offline tax return submission. This can be better facilitated with a carefully designed formatted spreadsheet, which should be downloadable and easily fillable by the assesseees or their lawyers. It may be made mandatory that this spreadsheet must be filled up and printed if someone wants to avail the offline submission system as well. In parallel, we need to take a research and development (R&D) initiative to read, recognise and digitise such formatted printouts accurately.

The existing software used and offered by the NBR are merely designed to automate some workflows without much forethought on performing advanced tasks of identifying undeclared incomes or tax frauds. Considering the traditional (re)action of the NBR (and most other government machinery, for that matter), a cautionary note is in order: foreign off-the-shelf software will not be that effective in our somewhat peculiar context as the nature of our

could be saved and better quality and contextually-appropriate software could be developed by the local industry using non-licensed, open source technology. Also, NBR needs to involve local experts in the planning and designing phase as well.

Changing NBR's mindset is also crucial in the context of strengthening its in-house IT team. The majority of the 83 members of the NBR IT team were promoted from the operator post. Around 40 engineers, who are supposed to take part in developing applications, are not involved in any significant application development, to the best of our knowledge. Are they intentionally left out? Even the simple e-TIN registration process has been developed and is maintained by vendors. Due to poor planning and technological decisions, NBR is vendor-locked in most of the cases. Most alarmingly, they are locked to some foreign vendors (e.g. for iVAS) where millions of foreign currency has been wasted. Needless to say, a number of these extravagant projects involved influential people of the last regime. We can only hope that this will change under the current management in the post-July uprising era.

Historically, NBR never involved reputed IT experts from academia in planning for development. The suggestions and recommendations of academicians and IT experts from different (procurement-related) committees, where government rules dictate the inclusion of such external experts, were usually ignored citing the limited scope of the committees. Now, under the auspices of the current apolitical interim government, there should be immediate intervention from the top to ensure proper automation and transparency. We believe that to reach the stage of a true IT-enabled revenue authority, there is no alternative to involving and engaging IT experts and academicians in the process. This may be in the form of a vibrant IT team with resident ML experts therein with involvement of one or more eminent researchers and academicians in an advisory role. An alternative and perhaps more sustainable approach could be to appoint a renowned IT expert from academia or industry as a member of NBR so that they could lead the IT transformation on a full-time basis, forming and guiding the in-house IT team of NBR. Often, engaging a reputed (local) organisation as a consultant for supervision, monitoring, and testing of to-be-developed IT systems becomes a barrier between the success and failure of an IT project. A full-time IT expert as a member would be in the right position and mindset to make such a decision prudently.

We suggest preparing a master plan/roadmap for the complete automation of NBR, perhaps in phases. This needs to be planned by IT experts, preferably through an institution with high IT expertise and fairness and transparency standards, to have the institutional backing, with a goal to identify the short-term and long-term doables for the complete transformation of the organisation. The ultimate aim would be to increase revenue, ensure transparency, prevent wastage of money, and provide better services to the stakeholders.



# Singapore’s role in recovering stolen assets is crucial



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SYED MUNIR KHASRU

Impressive global rankings and statistics are a testament to Singapore's accomplishments as the world's fifth least corrupt country and the only Asian nation in the top 10. The country is also a leader in the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index, ranking 16th out of 142 countries globally and fourth regionally in 2024, indicating its strong legal and regulatory framework.

Bangladesh and Singapore share a friendly and dynamic relationship, with Bangladeshi workers being a significant part of Singapore's 1.5 million migrant workers and a substantial addition to the country's economy. Over 160,000 Bangladeshi nationals are contributing to essential sectors such as construction and marine industries in Singapore. In 2022 alone, 64,383 Bangladeshi workers were hired in Singapore, setting a record, and their remittances contribute substantially to Bangladesh's economy.

Construction contracts worth \$32 billion to \$38 billion are anticipated

to be awarded in Singapore in 2024, with a substantial portion benefiting from Bangladeshi labour. Meanwhile, Bangladesh trains around 5,000 workers annually at specialised centres certified by the Singapore authorities to meet the country's workforce demands. These collaborations underscore interdependence of their economies and a relationship based on mutual growth.

**Bangladesh at a crossroads**

The ousting of Sheikh Hasina on August 5, 2024 has unleashed a wave of uncertainty as well as opportunities in Bangladesh. The interim administration, led by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, has vowed to root out corruption and restore good governance. The government has also formally requested the United Nations' investigation into the mass killings and human rights violations during Hasina's final months in power.

Yet, the remnant of embedded systemic corruption looms large in

Bangladesh against the backdrop of social, political, and economic reforms. Allegations against the Awami League government, including mismanagement of megaproject funds and money laundering, underline the overwhelming challenges that are to follow while restructuring the nation. The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has launched extensive investigations into key figures of the former administration for alleged embezzlement and laundering of billions of dollars. Specific projects under scrutiny include the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) suspected of financial irregularities amounting to around \$5 billion. Hence, these probes, though wearisome, represent a crucial effort to address years of unrestrained corruption, involving not only former politicians but also prominent business tycoons who have managed to evade justice by fleeing the country or stashing cash in convenient overseas destinations.

**A case in systemic corruption testing Singapore's institutional integrity**

At the heart of the arising corruption allegations lies the S Alam Group, led by Mohammed Saiful Alam, who has been accused of laundering over \$1 billion through entities in Singapore and other countries. Alam's case has become a glaring indicator of financial systems being exploited

for illicit purposes. In fact, latest investigations have revealed that Alam funnelled significant sums through shell companies, leveraging his influence to secure questionable loans worth thousands of crores from Bangladeshi banks like Islami Bank, often coupled with collateral compensating for only a fraction of the loan value.

Building on S Alam's case, Singapore's role as a destination for the said laundered funds has raised concerns about its advanced financial infrastructure being exploited to channel and shelter illicit

wealth. Reports indicate that funds from Bangladesh were routed to Singapore via offshore mechanisms, raising concerns about regulatory loopholes that might have facilitated such transactions. In this regard, the ACC has requested Singapore's cooperation in tracking these funds and ensuring accountability. Addressing these allegations can help Singapore set a precedent for combating transnational financial crimes, consistent with the country's standing in global finance. There are also other controversial Bangladeshi industrial conglomerates who have

built a base in Singapore.

**A moral and strategic imperative for Singapore**

By taking just, fair, and decisive action and ensuring its financial systems are not exploited, Singapore has an opportunity to solidify its role as a leader in upholding justice and transparency. This is no less a moral test for the country as it is of legal consequences for a nation that is globally applauded for its rule of law. Singapore cannot afford to be perceived as a safe harbour for illicit wealth, especially embezzlement of public funds that exacerbate poverty and foment political instability elsewhere. At this critical juncture of the country, it is natural for Bangladesh to expect Singapore to address these allegations by freezing suspect assets and cooperating with Bangladeshi authorities.

By tackling these challenges head-on, Singapore will not only uphold the integrity of its own systems but will also support the global fight against corruption, defending rights of the less privileged, bringing to justice those who have plundered a nation's resources and drained the banking sector. As at least 10 Bangladeshi banks are on the verge of collapse and depositors scratch their heads for the money looted from their coffers, Singapore has a responsibility to help Bangladesh retrieve the ill-gotten money that has found its way into the Singaporean shore.



FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

A view of the Monetary Authority of Singapore's headquarters in Singapore.

## The purloined escape Bangladesh’s struggle with authority, absence, and illusion



Dr Faridul Alam writes from New York City, US.

FARIDUL ALAM

Sheikh Hasina's flight from Bangladesh under duress marked a momentous "event"—a term philosopher Alain Badiou employs to describe a "radical rupture" in the historical and political fabric. Her ignominious ouster, following a popular uprising, exposed deep political fractures. It seemed to signify the end of an era dominated by her authoritarian rule. Yet, its aftermath lingers like the spectral presence of a purloined letter: visible yet elusive, significant yet unresolved. Her escape, an act unfolding in plain sight, remains steeped in symbolic implications, clouded by the political and social dynamics it unleashed.

In Jacques Lacan's reading of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Purloined Letter*, the "lost letter" symbolises a hidden truth that remains elusive despite being in plain view. It is not absent in a literal sense, but displaced and misinterpreted. Similarly, Hasina's "purloined escape" embodies an act both present and absent. While her departure is a visible fact, its underlying significance remains deferred—a symbol open to multiple interpretations. Like the purloined letter, her flight disrupts the established order, evoking uncertainty and perpetuating the structures of power and resistance it was meant to dismantle.

Hasina's absence exemplifies Lacan's concept of deferred meaning, where significance is perpetually postponed. In Poe's story, the ongoing search for the letter creates the illusion of stability despite underlying turmoil. Similarly, Hasina's escape transforms her from a political leader into a symbolic figure whose influence lingers in her absence. The question of moving forward while grappling with the structures she left behind remains unresolved, caught in the paradox of her "absence of presence" and "presence of absence."

**Entrenched binaries and deferred relevance**

Major political parties, notably the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami, struggle to assert relevance, clinging to their unforeseen adversarial posture. Despite, or perhaps because of, Hasina's dramatic departure, they remain entrenched in the binary opposition of Awami League versus BNP, failing to adapt to

a shifting political reality. Their efforts to position themselves against the interim government, already accused of being mired in inefficiency and elitism, ironically amplify Hasina's lingering influence.

This inability to evolve underscores their reliance on a familiar, albeit antiquated, political script. Rather than reimagining their roles in a post-Hasina polity, they perpetuate old rivalries, allowing her symbolic shadow to dominate. Their reluctance to transcend the oppositional framework—built on decades of political polarisation—delays the potential for meaningful reform. In this stasis, they fail to address systemic challenges that demand attention, undermining their relevance in an evolving political landscape.

**Revolutionary fervour meets institutional inertia**

Meanwhile, the students who spearheaded the July uprising face the daunting task of translating revolutionary fervour into institutional change. The inertia of the very systems they sought to dismantle threatens to co-opt their idealism, reducing their efforts to yet another cog in the machinery of political stagnation. While their aspirations to launch a new political party reflect a desire for transformation, these efforts risk dilution through compromises with questionable political stakeholders, potentially undermining their revolutionary ethos.

The students' struggle is emblematic of a broader challenge: the collision between transformative aspirations and entrenched political structures. Their movement, though a catalyst for Hasina's ouster, now faces the task of sustaining momentum in a landscape rife with obstacles. The risk of becoming subsumed by existing political dynamics looms large, threatening to erode the revolutionary potential they embody.

**The interim government: Navigating fragile terrain**

The interim government—tasked with navigating this fraught transition—bears the weight of stabilising a fractured polity. Yet, the entrenched remnants of Sheikh Hasina's regime, particularly within the business and civil-military bureaucracies,

persist. These institutions, far from collapsing, perpetuate an illusion of continuity. Their complicity reinforces the structures Hasina built, making her absence paradoxically more pronounced. In this sense, her symbolic presence haunts the nation's politics, raising doubts about whether genuine change is possible or if the illusion of her authority will endure.

The interim government's inefficiency and elitism further complicate this precarious moment. Its increasing connivance, if not entanglement with, entrenched interests limits its capacity to enact transformative reforms, perpetuating the structures that enabled Hasina's authoritarian rule.

**Historical reckonings and structural flaws**

This moment must be contextualised within Bangladesh's broader historical trajectory. Sheikh Hasina's rule was characterised by consolidation of power, suppression of dissent, and the erosion of democratic institutions. Her escape represents not only a political rupture but also a profound challenge to the nation's collective psyche. It forces a reckoning with the deep-seated issues that allowed her authoritarian regime to thrive.

The remnants of Hasina's centralised power structure—entwined with businesses, civil and military bureaucracies, and law enforcement—pose a formidable challenge. These institutions must not merely adapt to her absence, but critically interrogate the systems that sustained her rule. Bangladesh's true challenge lies not in pursuing the illusory stability of her presence, but in confronting the foundational flaws that perpetuated her authority.

**Beyond the illusion: Seizing the moment**

The lessons of *The Purloined Letter* remind us that the endless pursuit of illusory truths delays meaningful progress. Bangladesh must look beyond Hasina's absence to address the systemic issues that sustained her rule. Only by doing so can the nation hope to transcend the shadow of her legacy and build a more accountable and democratic future.

The stakes are high, and the path ahead is fraught with uncertainty. Yet, within this uncertainty lies the potential for transformation—a chance to reclaim agency and forge a new political order. Hasina's escape, like the purloined letter, is a conspicuous truth resisting resolution. The pressing question remains: will Bangladesh seize this moment to confront its past and shape a new future, or remain trapped in cycles of deferred meaning and contested power?

**The shadow of authority: Lacanian insights on deferred meaning**

Lacan's notion of deferred meaning, grounded in the idea that meaning is always postponed through language and its inherent instability, provides a powerful lens through which to view the political situation in Bangladesh under Hasina's leadership. Her physical absence may be a clear reality, but the symbolic structures and institutions she built persist in shaping the political and social landscape. This creates a tension where the country is caught between the absence of a visible, authoritative figure and the continued, often oppressive, presence of the systems she put in place.

In Lacanian terms, Hasina's absence operates like the *petit objet a*, the object-cause of desire—an absence that nonetheless fuels desire and longing, as it remains unfulfilled. In this case, her absence becomes the catalyst for political stagnation and potential change. It paralyses the public, as they remain fixated on her legacy and the systems she left behind, unable to move past them. This paralysis is akin to the feeling of being trapped in the shadows of a once-dominant figure, where the country remains obsessed with a past it cannot escape.

Yet, Lacan also suggests that absence can open the door to a new kind of freedom. Just as Poe's *The Purloined Letter* remains hidden in plain sight, so too does the potential for transformation in Bangladesh. The systems that continue to operate in Hasina's name are not static—they are open to reinterpretation. But for this to happen, there must be a willingness to confront the shadows she left behind and embrace the ambiguity of her symbolic absence. The unresolved question is whether Bangladesh can move beyond the constraint of her legacy and reimagine its political future in a way that is not tied to her shadow.

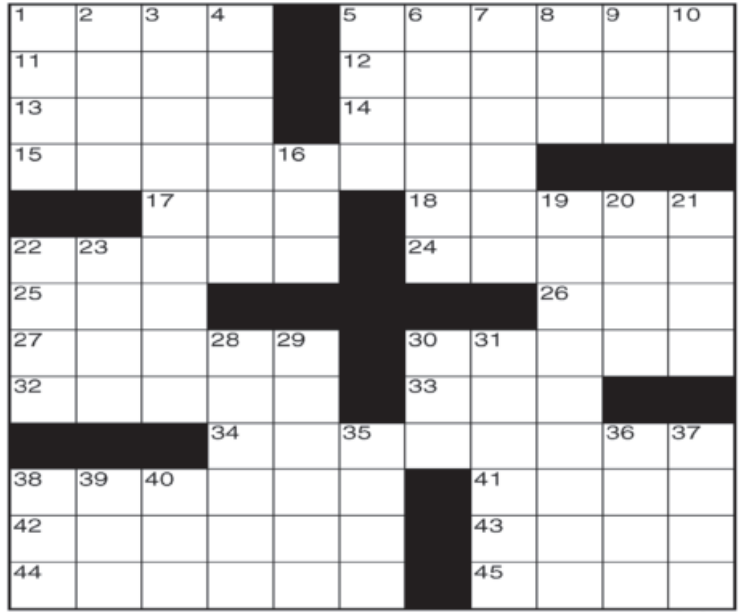
This process of redefining the nation would require confronting the fragmented meanings that linger in the wake of Hasina's influence. Lacan's theory reminds us that meaning is never stable; it is in constant flux, deferred, and subject to reinterpretation. The challenge for Bangladesh lies in whether it can seize the opportunity created by the gap left by Hasina's absence to reconstruct its identity on its own terms, no longer defined by the shadow of its former leader. This involves not just dismantling the systems of power she established but also reimagining the underlying symbols that continue to shape its political consciousness. Only then can the country begin the difficult process of liberating itself from the ideological structures that still hold sway and begin anew in a post-Hasina era.

### CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**

1 Road division  
5 High school events  
11 Harrow rival  
12 "The Stunt Man" star  
13 Blockhead  
14 Blew one's top  
15 Texas Panhandle city  
17 Tennis need  
18 Gate part  
22 Stable females  
24 Future fungus  
25 Frozen over  
26 May honoree  
27 Herring's cousins  
30 Nest builders  
32 Doctrine  
33 Shade
- 34 Boulder setting  
38 Sweet-talk  
41 White House office shape  
42 Homes  
43 Tear  
44 King's stand-in  
45 Sacred chests
- 16 "\_\_\_ Now or Never"  
19 Hall of Fame pitcher  
20 Riding whip  
21 Skirt edges  
22 Atomizer's output  
23 Dull pain  
28 Crack, in a way  
29 Hot  
30 Question of identity  
31 Dawn goddess  
35 For fear that  
36 Moist  
37 Early automaker  
38 Auto  
39 Penny prez  
40 Steady run
- DOWN**

1 Pollux's mother  
2 Bond component  
3 Hall of Fame pitcher  
4 Menu choice  
5 Toy store buy  
6 Coral isles  
7 "Forget it!"  
8 Guest's bed  
9 Ivy League student  
10 Determined



### JANUARY 17'S ANSWERS

E	B	B	S		V	I	E	F	O	R
Z	E	A	L		A	S	T	U	T	E
R	A	C	Y		P	R	O	N	T	O
A	R	K		J	O	A	N			
			S	P	A	R	E		W	A
D	E	W	E	Y		L	O	I	R	E
E	X	I	T				K	N	E	E
M	A	N	E	T		O	R	G	A	N
O	M	G		S	Q	U	A	B		
			S	H	U	T		A	I	R
U	T	O	P	I	A			A	C	R
S	A	L	A	R	Y			S	K	I
A	G	E	N	T	S			P	S	S

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Office of the Executive Engineer  
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Memo No: 25.36.9000.112-305

Dated: 22.01.2025

**e-Tender Notice**

e-Tenders is invited in the National e-GP system portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of following works, details are given below.

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Name of work	last selling (date & time)	Closing date & Opening time)
01	1067211	Construction of Model Mosque and Islamic Cultural Center at Shantiganj Upazila of Sunamganj District (Three storied building with three storied foundation (B-type) (Sub head: Main Building Civil, Internal Sanitary & Water supply, Electrical and Other Ancillary Works) Under the project of Establishment of 560 Model Mosques and Islamic Cultural Centers in each District and Upazila of Bangladesh.	23-Feb-2025 11:00	23-Feb-2025 12:30

This is an online tenders, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tenders, 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 Banks branches up to dated (mention in Notice). Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system and e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd))

(Nazmul Hasan Hera)  
ID No. 202013013235  
Executive Engineer  
PWD Division, Sunamganj

GD-258



CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF BANGLADESH  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
E/M DIVISION- 3, KURMITOLA, DHAKA.

File No- 30.31.0000.432.07.001.24/400

Date : 22.01.2025

**e-Tender Notice**

e-tender is invited in the national e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following goods:

Sl No	Name of Tender	Tender ID No	Last date & time of selling	Last date & time of closing
01.	Providing & Fitting/Fixing of Conveyor belt, Curve Belt & roller in/c other related tools & Accessories for departure baggage handling system at SAIA, Ctg.	167358	05-Feb-2025 16.00	06-Feb-2025 12.00
02.	Making, testing, Commissioning and adjusting of maintenance steir for passenger Boarding Bridge maintenance works at SAIA, Ctg..	1067094	05-Feb-2025 16.00	06-Feb-2025 12.00

This is an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no office/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the national e-GP portal is required. The fees, for downloading the e-tender document from the national e-GP system portal, have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches. Future information and guidelines are available in national e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

(Jahangir Arif)  
Executive Engineer (E/M)  
E/M Division-3, CAAB, Dhaka.

GD-269

**রেজিস্ট্রারের কার্যালয়****ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়****কুষ্টিয়া-বিনাইদহ, বাংলাদেশ**

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তারিখ: ২২/০১/২০২৫

Ref. No.

**নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

Date:

ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের বিধি মোতাবেক প্রদেয় বেতন ভাতাদিসহ নিম্নবর্ণিত পদগুলো পূরণের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট থেকে ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নির্ধারিত ফরমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

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০১.	আল-হাদীস এন্ড ইসলামিক স্টাডিজ	প্রভাষকঃ ০৫টি স্থায়ী [২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/= গ্রেড-৯]	আল-হাদীস এন্ড ইসলামিক স্টাডিজ
০২.	লোক প্রশাসন	প্রভাষকঃ ০৩টি স্থায়ী [২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/= গ্রেড-৯]	লোক প্রশাসন
০৩.	রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞান	প্রভাষকঃ ০২টি অস্থায়ী (সহযোগী অধ্যাপক পদের বিপরীতে) [২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/= গ্রেড-৯]	রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞান
০৪.	ডেভেলপমেন্ট স্টাডিজ	প্রভাষকঃ ০২টি অস্থায়ী (সহযোগী অধ্যাপক পদের বিপরীতে) [২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/= গ্রেড-৯]	ডেভেলপমেন্ট স্টাডিজ
০৫.	ফিজিক্যাল এডুকেশন এন্ড স্পোর্টস সায়েন্স	প্রভাষকঃ ০২টি অস্থায়ী (সহযোগী অধ্যাপক পদের বিপরীতে) [২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/= গ্রেড-৯]	ফিজিক্যাল এডুকেশন এন্ড স্পোর্টস সায়েন্স
০৬.	হিউম্যান রিসোর্স ম্যানেজমেন্ট	প্রভাষকঃ ০২টি অস্থায়ী (সহযোগী অধ্যাপক পদের বিপরীতে) [২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/= গ্রেড-৯]	হিউম্যান রিসোর্স ম্যানেজমেন্ট

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(এইচ.এম. আলী হাসান)  
রেজিস্ট্রার (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)  
ইসলামী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

GD-262

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার****বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ****উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ) এর কার্যালয়****চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, চট্টগ্রাম****উন্মুক্ত পুনঃদরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি : ০৫/২০২৪-২৫**

এতদ্বারা সিএমপি'র রেশন স্টোরে ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের ৩য় কোয়ার্টার (০১লা জানুয়ারি/২০২৫খ্রি, হতে ৩১শে মার্চ/২০২৫খ্রি পর্যন্ত)-এর জন্য উন্নতমানের ছোট দানার ১,৩৫,০০০ (এক লক্ষ পঁয়ত্রিশ হাজার) কেজি "মস্তুর ডাল" ক্রয়ের জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন দরপত্রাদাওগণের নিকট হতে সিলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে-

১.	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ			
২.	সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ			
৩.	মাল্যমাল ক্রয়কারী কর্তৃপক্ষ	পুলিশ কমিশনার, সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম			
৪.	দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ	০৩/০২/২০২৫খ্রি., বিকাল ১৭.০০ টা পর্যন্ত			
৫.	দরপত্র গ্রহণের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৪/০২/২০২৫খ্রি., সময়- দুপুর ১২.০০ টা পর্যন্ত			
৬.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	০৪/০২/২০২৫খ্রি., সময়- দুপুর ১২.৩০ টা			
৭.	বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	জিওবি (রাজস্ব)			
৮.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের নাম ও ঠিকানা	মোঃ তারেক আহমেদ, উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম			
৯.	দরপত্র খোলার দপ্তর	উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম-এর দামপাড়াস্থ পুলিশ লাইনস অফিস কক্ষ			
১০.	দরপত্রের যোগ্যতা ও দরপত্রের সাথে সংযুক্ত প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রাদি	দরপত্রের সাথে হালনাগাদ নিম্নবর্ণিত কাগজপত্রাদির সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি দাখিল করতে হবে- (ক) ব্যবসায়িক ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, (খ) আয়কর পরিশোধের সনদপত্র, (গ) ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশনসহ পরিশোধের হালনাগাদ সনদপত্র, (ঘ) ব্যাংক কর্তৃক স্বাক্ষরিত প্রত্যয়নপত্রসহ দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্ববর্তী ০৬ (ছয়) মাসের ব্যাংকের সাথে সেনসেনের স্টেটমেন্ট, (ঙ) এনআইডি কার্ড, (চ) ছবিসহ ফর্মের মালিকানার হস্তান্তরকারী কপি এবং প্রতিদিনের ক্ষেত্রে ছবিসহ প্রাধিকারপত্র, (ছ) মস্তুর ডালের ক্ষেত্রে এগ্রিকালচারাল লাইসেন্স, (জ) সিডিউলের বর্ণিত অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা বা কাগজপত্রাদি।			
১১.	সিডিউল প্রাপ্তির স্থান	(ক) সিএমপি রেশন স্টোর, প্রশাসনিক ভবন, রিজার্ভ অফিস, নীচ তলা, দামপাড়া পুলিশ লাইনস, চট্টগ্রাম। (খ) পুলিশ সুপার, চট্টগ্রাম-এর যোগাযোগ কক্ষ কার্যালয় (গ) জেলা প্রশাসক, চট্টগ্রাম-এর কার্যালয়			
১২.	দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	(ক) উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ), সিএমপি, চট্টগ্রাম-এর দামপাড়াস্থ পুলিশ লাইনস কার্যালয় (খ) পুলিশ সুপার, চট্টগ্রাম-এর যোগাযোগ কক্ষ কার্যালয়			
১৩.	দরপত্র গ্রহণ/মূল্যায়ন	পিপিএ-২০০৬ ও পিপিআর-২০০৮ এর সর্বশেষ সংশোধনসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট আইন ও দরপত্র দলিল অনুযায়ী			
১৪.	ক্রয়/বিক্রয়ের বিবরণ				
	লট নং	দরপত্রের বিষয়	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (অফার/ব্যয়গা)	দরপত্রের সাথে দরপত্র জামানত (ফেরতযোগ্য)	সময়সীমা
	০১	উন্নতমানের ছোট দানার "মস্তুর ডাল" ক্রয়	১,৫০০/- (এক হাজার পাঁচশত) টাকা মাত্র	৫,০০,০০০/- (পাঁচ লক্ষ) টাকা	০১/০১/২০২৫খ্রি. হতে ৩১/০৩/২০২৫খ্রি. পর্যন্ত (০৩ মাস)

বিঃদ্র.: দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করেন। উল্লেখ্য যে, কোন কারণে দরপত্র উন্মুক্তকরণের দিন অফিস বন্ধ থাকলে পরবর্তী অফিস খোলার দিন যথাসময়ে টেন্ডার উন্মুক্ত করা হবে।

(মোঃ তারেক আহমেদ)  
বিপি-৭২০৫১২৪২৯৮  
উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সরবরাহ)  
অতিরিক্ত ডিআইজি পদে পদোন্নতিপ্রাপ্ত  
পক্ষে পুলিশ কমিশনার  
চট্টগ্রাম মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, চট্টগ্রাম

GD-264

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh****Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD****Narayangonj Road Division****Narayangonj**

Phone: 7693468

E-mail : [eenary@rhd.gov.bd](mailto:eenary@rhd.gov.bd)**Invitation for Tenders**

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Road Transport and Bridge/ Road Transport and Highway Division			
2	Agency	Roads and Highways Department			
3	Procuring Entity Name	Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Narayanganj			
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not Applicable			
5	Procuring Entity District	Narayanganj			
6	Invitation for	Toll Collection Activity and Operation & Maintenance of Real-Time Web-Based Toll Collection System for 3rd Shitalakhya Bridge at 12th km of Madanpur-Madanganj-Sayedpur (R-113) Road for 3(Three) years under Narayanganj Road Division during the year 2024-2025			
7	Invitation Ref No	35.01.6700.451.07.000.25-258			
8	Date	23-01-2025			
KEY INFORMATION					
9	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method(OTM)			
FUNDING INFORMATION					
10	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB			
11	Development Partners (if applicable)	None			
PARTICULAR INFORMATION					
12	Project / Program Code (if applicable)	None			
13	Project Name (if applicable)	None			
14	Tender Package No.	01/Manual/PSN/NRD/2024-2025			
15	Tender Package Name	Toll Collection Activity and Operation & Maintenance of Real-Time Web-Based Toll Collection System for 3rd Shitalakhya Bridge at 12th km of Madanpur-Madanganj-Sayedpur (R-113) Road for 3(Three) years under Narayanganj Road Division during the year 2024-2025			
16	Tender Publication Date	24-01-2025			
17	Tender Last Selling Date	25-02-2025 and 04.00 pm			
18	Tender Closing Date and Time	25-02-2025 and 12.00 pm			
19	Tender Opening Date and Time	25-02-2025 and 03:30 pm			
20	Name & Address of the office(s)				
	- Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Narayanganj			
	- Selling Tender Document (Others)	(i) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Administration & Establishment, Sarak Bhaban, Tejgaon, Dhaka. (ii) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Dhaka (iii) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Munshiganj (iv) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Narshingdi			
NO CONDITIONS APPLY FOR SALE, PURCHASE OR DISTRIBUTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS					
	- Receiving Tender Document	(i) Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Dhaka Zone, Alenbari, Tejgaon, Dhaka. (ii) Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Narayanganj.			
	- Opening Tender Document	Office of the Additional Chief Engineer, RHD, Dhaka Zone, Alenbari, Tejgaon, Dhaka.			
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER					
22	Eligibility of Tenderer	As Per TDS			
23	Brief Description of Services	Toll Collection Activity and Operation & Maintenance of Real-Time Web-Based Toll Collection System for 3rd Shitalakhya Bridge at 12th km of Madanpur-Madanganj-Sayedpur (R-113) Road for 3(Three) years under Narayanganj Road Division during the year 2024-2025			
25	Price of Tender Document (Tk)	4000			
	Package No	Identification of Package	Location	Tender Security Amount (Tk)	Completion Time in Weeks / Months
	01/Manual/PSN/NRD/2024-2025	Toll Collection Activity and Operation & Maintenance	3rd Shitalakhya Bridge at 12th km of Madanpur-Madanganj-Sayedpur (R-113) Road	32.00 (Thirty Two) Lakh	36 Months
PROCURING DETAILS					
30	Name of Official Inviting Tender		Shahana Ferdous		
31	Designation of Official Inviting Tender		Executive Engineer, RHD		
32	Address of Official Inviting Tender		Narayanganj Road Division, Narayanganj		
33	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender		Phone: 7693468, E-mail : <a href="mailto:eenary@rhd.gov.bd">eenary@rhd.gov.bd</a>		
34	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the Tender at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever. This notice will be available on RHD website <a href="http://www.rhd.gov.bd">www.rhd.gov.bd</a> and on CPTU website <a href="http://www.cptu.gov.bd">www.cptu.gov.bd</a> .				

Shahana Ferdous  
26/01/2025  
(Shahana Ferdous)  
ID No- 602161

Executive Engineer, RHD  
Narayanganj Road Division

GD-264



## PSG rock City

PSG produced a stunning second-half fightback as they recovered from two goals down to beat Manchester City 4-2 in a Champions League thriller on Wednesday. All the goals came in the second half, with Jack Grealish and Erling Haaland scoring to put City firmly in control before goals from Ousmane Dembele, Bradley Barcola, Joao Neves, and Goncalo Ramos helped PSG to a crucial win.

- It is set to be an exciting final day in the inaugural league phase of the Champions League with 25 of the 36 teams still awaiting their fate.
- All 18 matches will be played at the same time -- on January 30 (Wednesday night at 2:00am in Bangladesh) -- with 16 matches having something on the line.
- Only two teams -- Liverpool and Barcelona -- have confirmed their top-eight spots, earning direct qualifications to the last 16.
- 11 teams -- from position eight to 18 in the standings -- only have a one-point difference, making it likely for Real Madrid, placed 16th, to leapfrog Leverkusen at eight and get into the spot to directly qualify for the last 16.
- Manchester City and PSG are in danger of elimination, with the former needing a win against Club Brugge to ensure a place in the play-offs.



PHOTO: AFP

## WC in sight for buoyant Tigresses

SPORTS REPORTER

History beckons the Bangladesh national women's team as they take on West Indies in the series-deciding third and final ODI in St Kitts tonight in an attempt to not only clinch their maiden series win over the hosts but also to book a direct berth in this year's ICC Women's World Cup.

After suffering a crushing nine-wicket defeat in the series opener, the Tigresses' chances for a direct qualification in the World Cup looked very bleak. However, they bounced back strongly in the second game, winning the contest by 60 runs.

With 21 points, Bangladesh are seventh in the ICC Women's Championship standings -- a spot behind New Zealand, who are only ahead of the Tigresses due to a better net run rate.

A win for the Tigresses in tonight's contest against the Windies, with whom they are playing their first-ever bilateral series, would see them leapfrog New Zealand and become the sixth team along with hosts India, Australia, England, South Africa, and Sri Lanka to directly qualify for the World Cup in India later this year.

However, a defeat means Bangladesh will join West Indies, Ireland, Pakistan, Scotland, and Thailand in the World Cup qualifiers from which two top teams will book their places in the main event.

## 'BPL has to develop players for Bangladesh'

Rangpur Riders coach **Mickey Arthur** was all smiles during training sessions, inspiring his charges during the recent Chattogram phase of the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League (BPL). That he is leaving a trail could be surmised in training but also from results, with Rangpur leading the table on the back of eight wins on the trot, but there is a hard exterior beneath the laughter and soft words of the 56-year-old South African-Australian. In an exclusive interview with *The Daily Star's Abdullah Al Mehdi*, Mickey revisited their winning campaign in the recent Global Super League (GSL), how it helped transform the mentality of the likes of Soumya Sarkar, and more. The excerpts of the interview are as follows:

**The Daily Star (DS):** How much of a difference do you see this BPL from your previous stint?

**Mickey Arthur (MA):** It's my second BPL stint and I did [work for] Dhaka [Dynamites] in 2015. I love the tournament; very fortunate to be part of a very good franchise. I do think the talent pool has gotten bigger, which is great for Bangladesh cricket. Ultimately the BPL has to be good and it has to develop players for Bangladesh.

**DS:** How was winning the Global Super League with Rangpur?

**MA:** It was great. It allowed me to work with the players before the BPL so that when I arrived here, we kind of hit the ground running. Winning there meant we had confidence in our ability to win here. We found ways to win from difficult situations. Lot of the world took notice that our competition is good.

**DS:** You are always in great spirits and smiling during training sessions. But does Mickey get angry too?

**MA:** I've got to be. The one thing I know with players, if you give them a soft option, the players generally take it in international cricket and top-level cricket



doesn't allow you to be soft.

I'm onto the players all the time. Everybody makes mistakes. But you learn from your mistake and don't let it happen two or three times. I have a level of tolerance and then no more. Sometimes that's [tolerance] disguised, because I just want the best for every team I coach.

**DS:** How are you seeing the development of younger stars such as Mahedi Hasan?

**MA:** It makes me really proud. Mahedi is a wonderful cricketer. What I like about the players in GSL like Mahedi or Soumya, I was constantly on at them and telling them 'When you go and join your national team, create impact. Take that form and confidence into the next assignment.'

Cricket's a funny thing and when you get confidence you overcome a lot of things. It made me very happy.

I think the game's getting better because it's getting more dynamic. Skills are interchangeable [from franchise to internationals] but what changes consistently is the belief in your ability. I don't believe a player's ever out of form. I believe a player's out of luck, or out of runs, or just out of wickets. What changes is your confidence barometer.

**DS:** How is Soumya's process now after having lacked that confidence factor?

**MA:** I'd followed him, I'd coached against him. I understand his game because I've analysed him. Soumya has all the attributes of a very fine international player... but I think what was missing was his confidence because he'd been in and out of the Bangladesh team.

**DS:** How do you see Bangladesh cricket ahead of Champions Trophy?

**MA:** I think it's an exciting time for Bangladesh cricket. Some very exciting players are coming through. Bangladesh cricket doesn't need to stand back for anybody, as long as they're confident and have belief in their own ability.

## Quantum gymnasts chasing the Olympic dream

ANISUR RAHMAN

Chasing the seemingly impossible dream of winning gold in the Olympics, the young gymnasts of the Quantum Cosmo School and College in Lama, Bandarban have made a huge splash in the inaugural Youth Gymnastics Championship that concluded at the National Sports Council gymnasium yesterday.

Quantum Cosmo, an institute for underprivileged students which runs on donation, emerged champion in both men's and women's sections of the Youth Gymnastics Championship, where the top Under-18 level gymnasts from across the country competed.

This triumph came fresh on the back of their incredible medal haul in the 5th National Age-Group Gymnastics Championship last month, where they bagged 96 out of the 120 medals, which included 41 gold medals.

But gymnasts from the remote school are not satisfied by just establishing their superiority at the national level as they have set their sights at the grandest stage of them all.

"We were all set a target to win gold in the Olympic Games and we are chasing that dream by preparing ourselves in practice and by participating in the national championships," national gymnast and Quantum Cosmo's very own Menton Toni Mro, who bagged two gold medals in floor and pommel horse events and



two silver medals in parallel bar and ring, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Though Quantum Cosmo started its journey in 2001, gymnastics was introduced in the institute in 2012. Now it has around 100 gymnasts, however, it is running without a permanent coach.

"We don't have a permanent coach since Masud sir, who was appointed by the Bangladesh Gymnastic Federation, left the job in 2022. He had joined us in 2019," said Mong Ching Pro Tripura, another national gymnast from Quantum Cosmo, who grabbed four gold medals in parallel bar, high bar, ring and vault events as well as a won silver in pommel horse.

Rashedul Islam is now training the gymnasts after participating in a couple of workshops on gymnastic coaching while former students Remond Tripura and Kishor Kumar Khisa are also working to groom the young gymnasts in an indoor facility built by the institute using some old equipment provided by the gymnastics federation.

"The major reason behind our success is meditation, which helps the students realise their target. Our students are doing two meditation sessions per day along with training and studies. Besides, the students have been assigned the target of winning a gold medal in the Olympics," said Rashedul.

Asked how they could realise this dream without proper facilities and high profile coaches, Rashedul said, "We all carry the key inside us, which is visualisation. If one can truly visualise it, one day he would reach the destination and we believe Bangladesh will win its first gold medal from the Olympics through gymnastics."

## Payments, boundary size, suspicions headline BPL's Ctg phase

SHABAB CHOWDHURY

"No more cricketing questions? Surely boys, there's like 17 of you in here," Durbar Rajshahi all-rounder Ryan Burl quipped at a post-match press conference in Chattogram yesterday after navigating through a barrage of questions about player payments.

Burl played a match-winning hand with the ball, with figures of 4-22, as Rajshahi managed to put a stop to Rangpur Riders' juggernaut-like run with a 24-run win at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium. However, the 30-year-old Zimbabwean was mostly asked about whether he alongside the rest of the Rajshahi squad had received their payments -- a major discrepancy that had headlined the Chattogram phase of the tournament, eclipsing almost every on-field display.

Non-payment of players -- a very common problem throughout the history of the tournament -- doubled up on the intense rumours of spot-fixing, prevalent throughout the ongoing edition, and combined with the widespread scrutiny behind the disregard for having standard-sized boundaries.

At the end of the day, it was a significant win for the Taskin Ahmed-led side, who had boycotted a practice



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

session in Chattogram over payment issues; adding insult to injury following a string of losses. It put an end to Rangpur's eight-match winning streak and steered Rajshahi towards a top-four finish.

Burl expressed his delight at seeing his side emerge superior in a "do-or-die

scenario".

"It's a really happy feeling to be winning. It probably means much more to win against the number one team in the tournament so far.

"Especially for us as we are in a bit of a do-or-die scenario where we need to win games to try and get to the qualifiers."

Having posted 170 for nine, Rajshahi managed to bundle out Rangpur for 146. Yasir Ali's 31-ball 60, laced with two fours and six sixes, laid the groundwork for the win for Rajshahi who, at one stage, were eyeing the 200-run mark.

Sabbir Hossain's 19-ball 39 at the top of the order gave Rajshahi impetus before Yasir took command of the innings. But a flurry of wickets in the middle saw them lose steam.

Taskin and SM Meherob provided early breakthroughs for Rajshahi as Rangpur slumped to three for 15 in the fourth over. Saif Hassan and Khushdil Shah patched together a 40-run stand but after the former got dismissed for a 29-ball 43, Rangpur lost the plot.

A 26-ball 41 from skipper Nurul Hasan Sohan raised hopes but Burl, on his return from an injury, spun the Rangpur batters to a dizzy. Meanwhile, Taskin -- this edition's highest wicket-taker so far -- finished with two four 20, extending his tally to 22 scalps.



Aryna Sabalenka is overjoyed after the double defending champion overwhelmed Paula Badosa 6-4, 6-2 with sheer raw power in the first women's singles semifinals of the Australian Open yesterday. The world No. 1 -- bidding to become the first woman to win three Australian Open titles in succession since Martina Hingis (1997-99) -- is set to face stiff resistance from [inset] Madison Keys, who stunned second-seed Iga Swiatek 5-7, 6-1, 7-6 (10-8) in a cagey affair at the Rod Laver Arena.

PHOTO: AFP







## DEFAULTED LOANS

# Not possible to reopen Beximco's 16 RMG factories

### Says labour adviser following laid-off workers' demand for resuming operation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Considering the sheer volume of Beximco's debt, the government does not think it's feasible to reopen the textile and garment factories that were taken out of production by the group, Labour Adviser Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain said yesterday.

"Although the employees of the group are demanding the reopening of the closed production units, it cannot happen now because these factories have so much debt that it's no longer viable to have them in operation," he said at a press conference at the Secretariat in the capital.

The adviser said Beximco Group's total bank debt stands at over Tk 40,000 crore, including Tk 29,925 crore taken against 32 factories in Beximco Industrial Park.

"Of those 32 factories, 16 exist only on paper. But these factories were used [as collateral] to take loans."

And of the total debt, Janata Bank alone is owed Tk 23,285.42 crore.

In December last year, Beximco laid off thousands of workers across its 16 textile and garment units, citing a decline in work orders from international clothing retailers and brands.

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**Risking life and limb, people cross the Tongi flyover. Buses frequently stop on the flyover to pick up and drop off passengers, blatantly ignoring a sign (not seen in the photo) that reads "No stopping here". This dangerous practice poses a serious risk to people. The photo was taken yesterday.**

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## 80 shrines, Sufi centres attacked in last 6 months

### Says Global Sufi Organisation, demands judicial probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 80 mazars (shrines) and darbar sharifs (Sufi centres) were attacked by extremist groups across the country over the last six months, according to "Global Sufi Organisation".

The Bangladeshi organisation said the attacks involve vandalism, arson, looting, and murder.

During a press briefing at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, the organisation placed a four-point demand – an immediate judicial probe into all attacks, enhanced security for those religious structures, prohibition of anti-Sufi sermons at mosques and religious gatherings, and compensation for the damaged structures and the families of those affected in the attacks.

The organisation also sought executive orders directing law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety of the religious establishments and their followers.

Hasan Shah Dipu Noore, a member of the organisation's central executive committee, said followers of Sufism are peace-loving and are not involved in any criminal activities. Every person in this country has the freedom to practice their own religion, he said.

"It is a matter of grave concern that followers of the Sufi saints are being attacked."

The Global Sufi Organisation said it represents 5,000 shrines, darbar sharifs, and their followers across Bangladesh. It warns that any attacks on Sufi followers and

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## 84 students suspended from CU

### Univ says they attacked students, journos during uprising

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

The authorities at Chittagong University have suspended 84 students on charges of attacking students and a journalist during the July mass uprising.

While the CU authorities did not disclose the duration of the suspension or the specific departments and academic years of those suspended, they confirmed that the students were affiliated with the recently banned Chhatra League.

The decision was made during a meeting of the university's Board of Residence, Health, and Discipline Committee on Monday.

The matter was disclosed to the media yesterday.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Administration) Prof Md Kamal Uddin said 73

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

# Produce in US or pay tariffs

### Trump tells Davos elites

AFP, Davos

US President Donald Trump issued a blunt warning to global elites in a video message to the World Economic Forum yesterday: Make your product in the United States or pay tariffs.

Beamed on a giant screen in the Swiss Alpine village of Davos, Trump received a loud round of applause from political and business A-listers who had eagerly awaited his appearance all week.

Speaking from the White House, Trump touted his plans to cut taxes, deregulate industries and crack down on illegal immigration.

But he also had a tough message.

"Come make your product in America and we will give you among the lowest taxes of any nation on earth," Trump said.

"But if you don't make your product in America, which is your prerogative, then very simply you will have to pay a tariff."

In his wide-ranging speech, Trump made a link between the war in Ukraine and oil prices.

Trump said he would ask Saudi Arabia and the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to bring down crude prices.

"If the price came down, the Russia-Ukraine war would end immediately," he said.

The US leader then fielded question from the top executives of Bank of America, Blackstone investment firm, Spanish group Banco Santander and French oil and gas giant TotalEnergies.



**Federal judge blocks Trump's bid to restrict birthright citizenship**

**S Arabia promises Trump \$600b trade, investment boost**

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## Israel continues West Bank raids after Gaza carnage

### Hundreds flee Jenin; 10 Palestinians killed, 40 more injured

AFP, Jenin

A Palestinian official said hundreds of residents of the occupied West Bank's Jenin refugee camp were leaving their homes yesterday, days into a large-scale Israeli raid in the area.

"Hundreds of camp residents have begun leaving after the Israeli army, using loudspeakers on drones and military vehicles, ordered them to evacuate the camp," where Israel's military launched an intense military operation this week, Jenin governor Kamal Abu al-Rub told AFP.

The army told AFP that it was "unaware of any evacuation orders for residents in Jenin as of now".

Saudi Arabia has condemned Israeli forces' attack in the occupied West Bank's Jenin area, the Saudi Press Agency said early yesterday.

The Israeli military said yesterday it killed two Palestinians overnight during the raid in Jenin.

The Ramallah-based Palestinian health ministry said Israeli authorities had informed it of the deaths of Nazzal, 25, and Shalabi, 30. "The bodies are being withheld" by the army, it added in a statement.

Salim Saadi, a Jenin resident who lives on the edge of the refugee camp, told AFP that the army had asked camp residents to leave between 9:00 am (0700 GMT) and 5:00 pm.

"There are dozens of camp residents who have begun to leave", he said. "The army is in front of my house. They

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



**Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl spotted in the wilderness of Hazarikihil in Fatikchhari of Chattogram. The majestic bird with a formidable appearance is also known as forest eagle-owl. The owl is nocturnal and often spends its day hidden in the dense foliage of large forest trees.**

PHOTO: TIMU HOSSAIN

## Ziaul Ahsan got Antiguan citizenship for \$2 lakh

### ACC finds he also invested \$1.35m there

DIPAN NANDY

Ex-Major General Ziaul Ahsan and his family members got the citizenship of Antigua and Barbuda by spending \$200,000 and investing another \$135 million in the twin-island state in the eastern Caribbean Sea, investigators said yesterday.

There were transactions of at least Tk 170 crore in his accounts with banks in the US, UAE, and Malaysia, the Anti-Corruption Commission has found in an investigation.

Ziaul, who was the director general of the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre, was relieved of his duties by the army after the fall of the Awami League regime in early August.

The anti-graft body



SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



**HASAN AHMED**  
5 March 1964 - 24 January 2022  
Former Managing Director & Director

Today 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025 is the 3<sup>rd</sup> death anniversary of Mr. Hasan Ahmed. His bereaved mother, brothers, sisters, officers and employees of the company seek forgiveness from Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala for his departed soul.

**POPULAR JUTE EXCHANGE LIMITED**  
& Associated Companies  
1, Tolaram Road, Narayanganj.