



## ACC seeks info on public servants with dual citizenship

Says it found evidence of such employees laundering money

BAHARAM KHAN

The Anti-Corruption Commission is seeking information about government officials and staffers, judges and employees of courts, and elected public representatives who have dual citizenship in violation of service rules.

It sought the same information about commissioned officers in the armed forces.

The ACC in a letter on January 12 asked senior secretaries and secretaries of all ministries to provide details of officials and employees of government, autonomous, and semi-autonomous institutions, who have citizenship of another country.

The letter, signed by Md Mozammel Haque, director general (money laundering) of the ACC, also asked for information about any dependents, of officials and employees, with dual citizenship.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

The stage is being set for the much awaited Amar Ekushey Book Fair as the construction of stalls is going on in full swing at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan. The annual month-long fair, organised by the Bangla Academy, is held every February.



**"Taking strict action against government employees with dual citizenship is a good move... Corrupt officials will not admit to wrongdoings. The government should collect information and dismiss these corrupt individuals from service."**

BADIUR RAHMAN, former chairman of NBR

According to section 40 (l) of the Government Service Act, 2018, no government employee is allowed to be a citizen of another country. If a government employee violates this rule, the government may dismiss them after providing a reasonable opportunity to explain. In such cases, a departmental probe is not required.

The ACC's move comes in the wake of complaints that some government employees are involved in money laundering.

An ACC official said allegations of high-ranking officials laundering money and having dual citizenship started surfacing after the fall of the Hasina regime.

ACC probes also found evidence in this regard, said the official preferring anonymity as he was not authorised to speak to the media.

"In many cases, even lower-level employees such as drivers and office assistants have been accused of laundering money. To ensure that no

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Passengers boarding a Jamalpur Express train from the capital's Kamalapur Railway Station yesterday noon. Train services across the country resumed early yesterday after over 26 hours of suspension. Train drivers and staffers had gone on strike early Tuesday to demand special allowances after retirement.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## 1st phase of Biswa Ijtema set to begin tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first phase of the Biswa Ijtema, one of the largest congregations of Muslims, will begin on the bank of Turag tomorrow.

Followers of Maulana Zubair Ahmed will attend the first phase from January 31 to February 5 while those of Maulana Saad Kandhalvi will take part in the Ijtema from February 14 to 16 in the second phase.

Habibullah Rayhan, media coordinator of the Zubair faction of the Tabligh Jamaat, said the followers of Maulana Zubair from 42 districts will have their Akheri Munajat (concluding prayers) on February 2, and those of 22 other districts will have their Akheri Munajat on February 5.

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## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Polls may come sooner than later

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

As speculations swirl around the timing of the next general election, remarks from election commissioners and historical precedents suggest that the highly anticipated 13th national polls may take place this December or next January.

Sources within the Election Commission said they were considering December for the election because holding it between February and June might not be feasible on account of Ramadan, Higher Secondary Certificate exams and monsoon.

National polls are usually not held during the Ramadan – the month of fasting for Muslims. Election dates are also scheduled in a way so the preceding three weeks of campaigning do not coincide with the days of Ramadan.

Electioneering during this time is typically avoided, as it seriously limits campaigning, for which candidates get 21 days.

Polls during Ramadan, which is expected to begin on February 17 or 18 next year, may also lower voters' participation and challenge campaign logistics.

"If we follow the usual practice, we won't be able to hold the election until mid-April. But

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## Rail services resume after 26 hours

Train workers call off strike as govt meets almost all demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rail services across the country resumed after more than 26 hours as train staffers called off their strike early yesterday.

Railway officials said many trains were running late and that it would take one more day for everything to normalise.

Meanwhile, the government has issued a circular accepting the major demands of the protesting train workers.

Mojibur Rahman, general secretary of Bangladesh Railway Running Staff and Sramik Karmachari Union, made the announcement for calling off the strike around 2:45am yesterday, after a meeting at the residence of the railways adviser on Minto Road.

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## CPD paints a bleak picture of economy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The economic measures taken by the government are yet to deliver substantive changes to provide relief to people's lives and businesses, says the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

The private think tank came up with its assessment of the state of Bangladesh's economy for the fiscal year 2024-25 in a paper titled "Navigating Expectations in Turbulent Times".

Presenting the paper in a briefing at its office yesterday, CPD Executive Director Fahmida Khatun said the interim government formed on

August 8 last year had launched reform initiatives in many sectors, including those related to the economy.

"However, no significant changes to bring relief to the general public and businesses have been observed. Six months have passed in the current 2024-25 fiscal year, yet we have not seen any significant economic vibrancy," she added.

The economist emphasised a coordinated approach to provide relief to the people, protect vulnerable low- and limited-income households, and ensure macroeconomic stability.

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### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ Prevention of tax evasion, avoidance
- ➔ Strong monitoring to stop hoarding
- ➔ FTAs, comprehensive economic partnerships to increase export
- ➔ Low-interest credit for SMEs
- ➔ Proper estimation of rice demand
- ➔ Specific plan to end rising debt cycle
- ➔ Freezing of accounts, liquidating assets of wilful defaulters

## BNP to hit street in Feb for election by year end

Say party's Standing Committee members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP is set to take to the streets demanding general elections by the end of this year and protesting the rising prices of essentials, said several standing committee members of the party.

Before Ramadan, the party will hold a rally in the capital and in district towns across the country, said sources present at a BNP standing committee meeting held last night.

The BNP will launch public engagement programmes across the country from mid-February to garner support, said several standing committee members.

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman attended last night's meeting through a video link.

Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, a member of the committee, said the BNP would reach the public through its programmes.

Salahuddin Ahmed, another member, at a discussion at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday said, "We are planning to launch a movement to correct the interim government's mistakes and pave the way for a democratically elected government."

The party leaders think the government should be brought to the right path, he said, adding that if the

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### গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড কর্তৃক বাস্তবায়নাধীন প্রকল্পের আওতায় Bangladesh Single Window (BSW) System ইতোমধ্যে কার্যকর করা হয়েছে। BSW মূলত একটি অনলাইন প্ল্যাটফর্ম যা ব্যবহার করে একজন আমদানিকারক-রপ্তানিকারক পণ্য খালাসের জন্য প্রযোজ্য সব ধরনের সার্টিফিকেট, লাইসেন্স ও পারমিট (CLP) এর জন্য অনলাইনে আবেদন করে স্বয়ংক্রিয়ভাবে CLP সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন। CLP গ্রহণের পূর্বে Business Identification Number (BIN) ব্যবহার করে BSW সিস্টেমে (Website: bswnbr.gov.bd) নিবন্ধন করতে হবে। এ সিস্টেম ব্যবহারের ফলে আমদানি-রপ্তানি কার্যক্রমে যে সুবিধা সমূহ পাওয়া যাবে সেগুলো হলো:

- একটি কমন প্ল্যাটফর্মে আমদানি-রপ্তানি পণ্যের জন্য প্রযোজ্য সার্টিফিকেট, লাইসেন্স এবং পারমিট সংক্রান্ত সকল কার্যক্রম সংশ্লিষ্ট সকল সংস্থা কর্তৃক যুগপৎভাবে অনলাইনে সম্পন্ন করা হবে;
- সরকারী কাজে ব্যক্তিগত যোগাযোগ (হিউম্যান ইন্টারেকশন) না থাকায় স্বচ্ছতা ও জবাবদিহিতা নিশ্চিত হবে;
- পণ্য আমদানি-রপ্তানির ক্ষেত্রে সময় ও ব্যয় হ্রাস পাবে;
- দেশি-বিদেশী ব্যবসায়ীদের মধ্যে আস্থা সৃষ্টির মাধ্যমে বিনিয়োগ ও বাণিজ্যের প্রসার ঘটবে।

০২। প্রাথমিক পর্যায়ে সার্টিফিকেট, লাইসেন্স ও পারমিট ইস্যুকারী ১৯টি সংস্থার মধ্যে নিম্নবর্ণিত ৭টি সংস্থার ক্ষেত্রে গত ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫ খ্রি. তারিখে সরাসরি BSW সিস্টেমের মাধ্যমে CLP এর আবেদন দাখিল ও ইস্যু করার কার্যক্রম শুরু করা হয়েছেঃ

১. ঔষধ প্রশাসন অধিদপ্তর (DGDA) ;
২. বিস্ফোরক পরিদপ্তর (DoEX) ;
৩. রপ্তানি উন্নয়ন ব্যুরো (EPB) ;
৪. বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় কর্তৃপক্ষ, রাসায়নিক অস্ত্র কনভেনশন (BNACWC) ;
৫. বাংলাদেশ অর্থনৈতিক অঞ্চল কর্তৃপক্ষ (BEZA) ;
৬. বাংলাদেশ রপ্তানি প্রক্রিয়াকরণ অঞ্চল কর্তৃপক্ষ (BEPZA) : এবং
৭. পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর (DoE)।

০৩। জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ডের পরিপত্র নং: ১(৩৩) NSW প্রকল্প/মন্ত্রণালয়ের সাথে যোগাযোগ/২০১৮/২৪১৮, তারিখ: ১৪ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫ অনুযায়ী, ৩১ জানুয়ারী ২০২৫ খ্রি. তারিখের পর হতে আমদানি ও রপ্তানি পণ্যচালান শুদ্ধায়নের ক্ষেত্রে উক্ত ০৭টি সংস্থা কর্তৃক ইস্যুকৃত সার্টিফিকেট, লাইসেন্স ও পারমিট BSW সিস্টেমের মাধ্যমে দাখিল বাধ্যতামূলক করা হলো। উল্লিখিত তারিখের পর কোন ধরনের ম্যানুয়াল সার্টিফিকেট, লাইসেন্স ও পারমিট গ্রহণ করা হবে না। আমদানি-রপ্তানি বাণিজ্যে যুক্ত সকল অংশীজনকে Bangladesh Single Window বাস্তবায়নে সহযোগিতা করার জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো হলো।

[ জুয়েল আহমেদ ]  
প্রকল্প পরিচালক  
ন্যাশনাল সিঙ্গেল উইন্ডো প্রকল্প



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



## Nilkhet: where stories once lived

HASAN MEER

Nilkhet is not merely a name on Dhaka's map; it is an emotion. A place steeped in layers of memory, significance, and quiet reverence for the book lovers of this bustling city. Nilkhet book market was a treasure trove where the curious minds of Dhaka came to seek knowledge, stories, and dreams. Those narrow, serpentine alleys lined with shelves brimming with second-hand books offered a kind of solace that only the faint rustle of old pages can provide.

For generations, Nilkhet symbolised more than just commerce -- it was a rite of passage. "I used to come here with my father," recalls Ahmed Hasan, a banker who still cherishes those memories. "He would buy me books... I would get Bangla comics like Betal, Mandrake, or Nonte Fonte. Unfortunately, I cannot do that with my son anymore as they don't really have any such books for children."

Once upon a time, the market catered to diverse literary tastes. From Tin Goyenda to Masud Rana, from Archies to Tintin, Nilkhet was where fables and

adventures found eager readers. Classics stood alongside dusty Sheba Prokashoni paperbacks and English literature, while comics were stacked high, waiting to ignite young imaginations.

These days, however, the market wears a different face. Guidebooks for competitive exams -- BCS, MBBS, and university admissions -- have taken over. Vendors sell what the people demand, and sadly, that no longer includes novels, poetry, or whimsical comics.

"Nilkhet is not the same," says Shahana Azim, a retired professor of Bangla. "Books are not found here anymore; instead, there are notebooks and guidebooks. It feels like the heart of Nilkhet is missing."



For vendors like Sajib Bhuinyan, it's a matter of survival.

"We sell guidebooks because that's what customers want," he says with a resigned shrug. "Not many people look for novels or poetry anymore. We do have some English fiction, but they don't sell much."

"The transformation of Nilkhet reflects a broader shift in society's priorities. The relentless pursuit of grades, jobs, and material success has eclipsed the unhurried joy of losing oneself in a story. Those who still visit for fiction or poetry now scour the pavements, where a few lucky finds might linger, hidden on the bottom shelves or in shadowed corners," says Rosa Akter, a research coordinator at an NGO.

And yet, amidst the overwhelming

presence of guidebooks, there remains a whisper of what Nilkhet once was. The nostalgia lingers like the faint scent of ink on weathered pages. It is a place that still holds the echoes of laughter and discovery, of fathers passing down the gift of reading to their children, of afternoons spent hunting for that one elusive title.

In the words of Gabriel García Márquez, "What matters in life is not what happens to you, but what you remember and how you remember it." Nilkhet, in its current state, may no longer be the same dreamscape it once was, but in the memories of its visitors, it is still a sanctuary of stories. And as the sunlight filters through the gaps between the tin roofs and the book-lined paths, it's hard not to believe that somewhere within its labyrinth, the soul of Nilkhet still endures.

The days of finding dreams in its dusty alleys may be gone, but the longing for those simpler, story-filled times remains eternal. For those who knew it in its glory, Nilkhet will forever be more than a market -- it will be a chapter of Dhaka's heart.

## EU warns Russia of sanctions over any attack in space

AFP, Brussels

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said yesterday the bloc could hit back with sanctions against any attacks in space, pointing to hostile actions by Russia.

"We are already the targets of hybrid warfare. Including in space -- with systematic jamming of satellite navigation signals," Kallas told a conference in Brussels.

"There are risks to our satellites, the ground infrastructure, and our space industries from kinetic, electronic, and high-energy weapons.

## 1st phase

FROM PAGE 1

The followers of Maulana Saad will offer their Akheri Munajat on February 16, said Mohammad Sayem, media coordinator of the Saad faction of Tabligh Jamaat.

This is the first time the first phase is going to be held over six days with two concluding prayers.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam yesterday said he hoped that the 58th Biswa Jitema will be held peacefully.

Speaking to reporters after inspecting the Jitema ground, the IGP said that an unfortunate incident took place over this Jitema, but both sides have shown responsibility.

The IGP gave updates on the tightened security measures, saying, "The security system and technology are much better now ... Rab is still involved in the security work. We are ready to deal with any kind of sabotage or unpleasant incident."

Gazipur Metropolitan Police Commissioner Nazmul Karim Khan said, "We have held a coordination meeting with the city corporation, deputy commissioner, Roads and Highways Department, fire service, army, and Rab. After the meeting, we completed the overall security arrangements for the Jitema."

He added that police would monitor the venue with drones so that they could take quick action if any incident occurs.

"We have implemented a five-layer security system. Every inch of the ground will be monitored from 16 watchtowers and through 335 CCTV cameras. We will keep law enforcers on duty on 35 rooftops and 20 check points. We will have 20 mobile teams to ensure that no one can occupy the footpath. We have placed 6,000 uniformed police personnel inside the ground," he said.

On December 18 last year, at least four people were killed and 50 others injured in a clash between the two factions of Tabligh Jamaat over control of the Jitema ground.

## ACC seeks info on public servants

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sector remains exempted, letters have been sent requesting information on all government employees, public representatives, judges, and commissioned officers in the armed forces who obtained the citizenship of another country," said the official.

Asked, another official said judges of any division of the Supreme Court is covered by the letter.

In the letter, the ACC said a number of unscrupulous officials and employees are "concealing information and obtaining passports from foreign countries..."

To cover up their misdeeds and evade punishment, these officials are residing in foreign countries using the passports of those countries, it said.

The letter said, "With multiple passports, these officials are transferring abroad wealth acquired through corruption and are enjoying the wealth there. The ACC's investigation has found such evidence."

The commission said such activities not only promote corruption in the country but also harm the economy.

After acquiring foreign citizenship, the officials appear reluctant in discharging their duties, it added.

The ACC said it issued the letter empowered by section 2 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947, section 110 of the Bank Companies Act, 1991, and section 21 of the Penal Code.

It said all commissioned officers in the armed forces, court employees and judges, government employees receiving salaries from state revenue, officials and employees of autonomous, semi autonomous, and state-owned companies, and elected public representatives at various levels are public servants.

The commission urged the authorities to be mindful of the dual citizenship issue while appointing people to jobs.

Asked whether ministry employees would voluntarily disclose their dual citizenship status, a secretary,

speaking anonymously, told The Daily Star that such information is rarely provided willingly.

However, the ministry will seek information from all employees and forward the collected data to the ACC, he said.

Badiur Rahman, former chairman of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), told The Daily Star that taking strict action against government employees with dual citizenship is a good move.

"However, the approach of the government raises doubts. Corrupt officials will not admit to wrongdoings. The government should collect information and dismiss these corrupt individuals from service. Sending letters in this manner will only alert them instead," said Badiur, also a former secretary.

According to the Statistics of Government Servants-2023, the number of posts in the revenue sector is 19,16,519. At least 14,43,518 officials and employees are currently in service.

## CPD paints bleak a picture of economy

FROM PAGE 1

Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the CPD, said the think tank had been consistently calling for an increase in the tax-to-GDP ratio for years. The country's development activities have become increasingly dependent on debt due to the low tax-to-GDP ratio.

However, increasing tax revenue through higher value added tax (VAT) may worsen the situation for people already struggling to cope with high inflation, he said.

"It was a great opportunity to increase direct taxes and reduce tax evasion," he said, referring to the timing of the interim government's formation after the fall of the Awami League regime.

He said the government should take appropriate measures to curb tax evasion because the government receives only a portion of what people are supposed to pay.

Answering a question regarding low investment amid political uncertainty, Mustafizur said political instability is not the sole deterrent to investment.

"If uncertainty were the main reason, then why did investment not increase over the past 10 years when the Awami League government continued without political instability?" he asked.

If a conducive environment for investment is created -- such as a one-stop service and adequate infrastructure -- investment could flow in, the economist said.

"If we cannot provide a one-stop service, if we cannot ensure gas supply, and if we haven't set up an ETP [effluent treatment plant] in Savar over the last 10 years, then how can we expect investments to come in?"

Political and economic reforms must go ahead in parallel, which is a medium-term process, Mustafizur

said. Meanwhile, the country should transition to a democratic process within the announced timeframe, he said.

"In that case, what is necessary is political consensus to continue the reform process, which would be a significant achievement of the July uprising," he added.

While discussing the CPD's assessment, Fahmida said total revenue collection recorded an "extremely low" marginal growth of 3.7 percent during the July-October period of FY 2025.

Inflation was higher in rural areas than in urban areas for 16 out of the last 21 months (from April 2023 to December 2024), which is particularly concerning, as purchasing power in rural areas is already low, she said.

In a positive development, export performance during the first half of FY 2025 indicates not just high growth, but also an increase in domestic value retention. However, export earnings continue to be volume-driven.

Thanks to high export and remittance earnings, the balance of payments situation and overall external balance are now in a relatively better position. Diversification of export destinations and goods could provide further stability, Fahmida said.

Regarding remittance growth, she said the reduction of informal hundi transactions after the July uprising has led to more remittances coming through official channels. However, remittance earnings are still low compared to the overall export of manpower.

About the recent increase in VAT, she said it would place an additional burden on the people.

The digitisation of the tax system could help raise revenue, and efforts should focus on curbing tax evasion, Fahmida said.

"Spiralling debt has trapped the power and energy sector in a vicious cycle that will likely persist."

She also said the government must continue its efforts to cut unnecessary projects. Nearly completed should be prioritised to ensure their quick completion.

The CPD provided seven recommendations to address the economic challenges. These include prioritising the prevention of tax evasion, limiting tax avoidance, and strengthening compliance systems to create a more inclusive fiscal base and reduce revenue leakage.

It recommended limiting intermediaries by connecting farmers directly to buyers, and regulating the hoarding and stockpiling of rice.

Given the changed global and regional trade dynamics, renewed efforts should be made to tap into the export potential of neighbouring countries in South Asia, East Asia, and South East Asia by pursuing free trade agreements and comprehensive economic partnerships.

The CPD also recommended designing a subsidised credit facility with lower interest rates to support Small and Medium Enterprises.

A proper estimation of annual rice demand is crucial, the report said. Additionally, a specific two-year plan should be developed to end the rising debt cycle that has entangled the power and energy sector.

Furthermore, the think tank recommended freezing the bank accounts of wilful defaulters and their immediate family members, liquidating their assets and temporarily nationalising their businesses.

Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of the CPD, was also present at the event.

## Rail services resume

FROM PAGE 1

The announcement came following the assurance of Railways Ministry Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan meeting the workers' demands.

From Dhaka, Dhumketu Express left Kamalapur Railway Station for Rajshahi at 6:30am, said Station Master Anwar Hossain. Other scheduled trains also left the station, but some were running late, he said.

Bangladesh Railway Director General Afzal Hossain said some trains were delayed as it took time for the workers on strike to get back to work.

"We hope the service will be normal within tomorrow [today]," he told The Daily Star yesterday evening.

The government has withdrawn the ceiling on the special remuneration the newly recruited assistant locomasters (assistant train drivers) get for their extra work.

The finance ministry issued a circular in this regard yesterday. It was one of the major demands of the train workers.

Railways Ministry Secretary Fahimul

Islam confirmed the development to The Daily Star.

Currently, the assistant locomasters get 100 percent "running allowance" (a special allowance for their additional work), but the allowance is capped at their monthly basic salary.

Secretary Fahimul said after yesterday's circular, that cap has been removed, allowing them to be paid as much as their additional work.

Meanwhile, the union yesterday received the minutes of the meeting held in the wee hours of yesterday. The minutes say that the locomasters, who joined the service before 2022, will get all the benefits, including those they will get after retirement.

"All of our colleagues have joined work as our demands were met," Saidur Rahman, acting president of the workers' union, told this newspaper.

Locomasters (train drivers), guards, and some others staffers observed the nationwide work abstention from early Tuesday for the special allowance after retirement and other demands.

## Polls may come sooner than later

FROM PAGE 1

that's not feasible as HSC and equivalent public examinations usually begin in April. These exams take around a month," said a top EC official.

Top officials of the commission explained it is customary to avoid dates that conflict with public board exams, religious festivals and weather conditions.

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin on Sunday noted that Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus said the next general election could be held at the end of this year or in the first half of next year, depending on the reforms political parties agree to.

If the election is to be held in December, all preparations, laws, and regulations must be finalised, and necessary arrangements must be made by October, he said, adding, "May-June is the rainy season. Polls have not been held during this time in the past."

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) Abul Fazal Md Sanaullah on Tuesday was more precise when he said preparations for the national election are underway targeting December.

Senior EC officials further mentioned it would be tight for the commission to hold the election before December, as there is a long "to do list".

The commission will have to update electoral rolls, complete delimitation of constituencies, register new political parties, set up voting stations, organise a panel of polling officials, and, if necessary, amend electoral laws, they said.

Adding to the complications, the EC must await the outcomes of the reforms proposed by the reform commissions to determine the extent of changes required to electoral laws and logistics, if any. Until these reforms are finalised, the EC cannot proceed with full-scale preparations for polls.

CEC Nasir Uddin on Sunday said tasks like demarcation of parliamentary constituencies and political party registrations take time. "The commission has received numerous applications for

delimitation, but it is unable to start working in this regard due to legal issues.

"Still, we're confident. We have to overcome these challenges. We're doing our preliminary work and homework so that as soon as the rules of the game are fixed, we can jump into action."

He added that the EC has also begun the new voter registration process.

**POLLS OF THE PAST**

Bangladesh has witnessed 12 national elections since independence.

Of them, only two -- in 1986 and 1996 -- were not held in the typically dry months between October and March. Since the restoration of democracy in 1991, six of the seven national polls were held in winter.

The first national election in independent Bangladesh was held on March 7, 1973. The next was held on February 28, 1979, and the third on May 7, 1986.

The fourth parliamentary election was held on March 3, 1988, and the fifth general election on February 27, 1991, under an interim government.

The sixth parliamentary election was held on February 15, 1996, and the seventh on June 12, 1996, under a caretaker government.

The election to the eighth parliament was held on October 1, 2001, the ninth on December 29, 2008, and the 10th on January 5, 2014.

The 11th parliamentary polls were held on December 30, 2018, and the 12th on January 7, 2024.

The seventh general election was held on June 12, 1996, barely four months after the sixth election, as the Awami League and other opposition parties forced the BNP-led government to step down and hand over power to a caretaker government to conduct the election. Opposition parties had boycotted the February 1996 election.

As Bangladesh inches closer to the election season with some political parties' calls for polls growing louder, the current situation points towards an election coming on soon.

## Israel delaying aid delivery to Gaza

Say Hamas officials, warn it could impact release of hostages

AGENCIES

Two Hamas officials yesterday accused Israel of delaying the delivery of vital humanitarian aid to Gaza, as agreed in the ceasefire deal, and warned that it could impact the release of hostages.

"We warn that continued delays and failure to address these points (delivery of key aid) will affect the natural progression of the agreement, including the prisoner exchange," a senior Hamas official told AFP.

Another Hamas official said the group had asked mediators to intervene in the issue. Both spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter. Israel, however, dismissed the accusations, and said it had received a list of hostages, held by Hamas, to be released today as part of a ceasefire agreement in Gaza.

Israel, backed by Washington, will cease contact with the UN's Palestinian humanitarian relief agency (UNRWA) and anybody acting on its behalf, its UN envoy said Tuesday, drawing condemnation from aid groups.

The UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini told the Security Council on Tuesday that implementation of a ban on the UNRWA in Israel -- due to start today -- will be disastrous, reports Reuters.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will meet with President Donald Trump at the White House on February 4, the two governments said on Tuesday.

The meeting is set to take place amid a fragile six-week ceasefire that has brought a temporary pause to 15 months of fighting between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Monday he wants Egypt to take in Palestinians from the enclave, where much of the population has been displaced by Israel's military onslaught.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told Egypt's foreign minister on Tuesday it was important to ensure Hamas can never govern Gaza again, the State Department said.

Since the ceasefire deal took effect last week, at least 376,000 Palestinians displaced by the offensive have returned to northern Gaza, the UN's humanitarian body OCHA said later on Tuesday.

In the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry said that Israeli forces killed two people in separate overnight raids, including one in Jenin, where the Israeli military is conducting a major offensive.

## ACC seeks info on 13 Purbachal plots from Rajuk

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ACC Commission has sent a letter to Rajuk seeking information on plots allocated to 13 individuals, including former lawmaker Sheikh Helal Uddin, and former Jubo League chairman Fazle Shams Parash, both cousins of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The list includes: former civil aviation and tourism minister Rashed Khan Menon; former lawmakers Sadek Khan (Dhaka-13), Abdur Rouf (Kushtia-4), MM Shahin (Moulvibazar-2), Aslam Hossain Soudagar (Kurigram-1), and actress Suborna Mustafa (reserved parliamentary seat for women); Supreme Court judges Naima Haider and Jafar Ahmed; former SC judge MA Shahidul Haque; and journalists Zillur Rahman (Channel i) and Shakil Ahmed (71 Television).

The letter, signed by ACC Deputy Director Md Salahuddin was sent on January 19. The letter has already been received, but senior officials have declined to comment on it, said Rajuk sources.

An ongoing investigation is examining allegations against Hasina of abusing power and engaging in irregularities and corruption, in collusion with senior Rajuk officials, to allocate six plots of 10 kathas each in the Purbachal New Town Project to herself and other family members. The ACC has filed six cases in this connection.



Golden marigolds adorn the fields of Char Khagria village, where commercial flower cultivation flourishes along the Shankha river in southern Chattogram. Covering an area of 100 hectares, the vibrant landscape bursts with marigolds, roses, gladiolus, and chrysanthemums, offering new employment opportunities. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

## WOMEN'S FOOTBALL MATCHES

## Rights orgs, BFF condemn attacks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights organisations strongly condemned the recent disruptions and violence targeting women's football matches in Joypurhat and Dinajpur.

Quoting news reports, they mentioned that in Joypurhat, a girls' football match at Tilakpur High School field was disrupted when vandals damaged the venue.

Similarly, in Dinajpur's Hakimpur upazila, a women's football match ended in clashes that injured at least 20 people.

Both incidents were reportedly fueled by groups opposing women's participation in sports, undermining their right to recreation and empowerment.

"We believe sports is a powerful tool for the empowerment of women and girls, fostering confidence, leadership, and social inclusion," said Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shaheen Anam in a statement.

**It is particularly concerning that, despite bringing glory to the country by winning international titles, women's sports face such regressive attacks in a sovereign and independent nation.**

She described the disruptions as unacceptable in a country committed to gender equality and women's empowerment as constitutional and policy imperatives.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad echoed similar concerns, emphasising the alarming nature of such misogynistic and fundamentalist attacks at a time when Bangladeshi women are excelling in sports both nationally and internationally.

"It is particularly concerning that, despite bringing glory to the country by winning international titles, women's sports face such regressive attacks in a sovereign and independent nation," the organisation said in a press release signed by President Fauzia Moslem and General Secretary Maleka Banu.

Both organisations urged local administrations and law enforcement agencies to ensure the safety of women in sports and take strict action against those responsible for inciting violence.

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## FIRE SERVICE AND CIVIL DEFENCE

## Proposal for 73 units stuck in red tape

SHARIFUL ISLAM

To address growing risks from urbanisation and industrial expansion, the Department of Fire Service and Civil Defence submitted a project proposal to the home ministry in 2023 to establish 73 specialised firefighting and rescue units.

However, the department officials said there has been no progress on the Tk 4,137 crore "Fire and Rescue Special Operation Wing (FARSOW)" project over the past year due to a bureaucratic tangle.

The proposed units aim to handle emergencies such as chemical hazards, road and rail accidents, and disasters requiring heavy equipment and K-9 (dog) search teams.

If implemented, the project would set up units in 13 key locations -- Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Gazipur, Mymensingh, Chattogram, Cumilla, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal, Sylhet, and Rangpur.

These locations were chosen for their strategic importance in disaster management, including potential earthquakes and risks posed by critical installations like the Rooppur power plant, officials said.

The specialised units would include -- 10 K-9 Search Units for rapid victim detection; 13 Hazardous Material (HazMat) Teams for chemical emergencies; 10 Heavy Equipment Units with advanced tools like turntable ladders, HazMat tenders, breathing apparatus tenders, and chemical tenders; 10 Road and Rail Rescue Teams with vehicles operable on both roads and railway tracks; five Communication Units to ensure uninterrupted

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



connectivity during crises; and five Special Multi-Action Response Teams (SMART) for VVIP security, according to documents.

Despite its importance, the project has been excluded from the Annual Development Plan for two consecutive fiscal years, an official involved with the project said.

"We submitted the DPP along with a feasibility study on October 31, 2023, as per the government's decision," the official said. "Since then, there has been

## 25pc of adults suffer from hypertension

Says govt data

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One in four adults in Bangladesh has hypertension, but only 14 percent manage to keep their blood pressure under control, according to the Bangladesh Hypertension Control Initiative under the government's Non-Communicable Disease Control Program.

This information was shared at an event titled "Inauguration Program of Expansion of Bangladesh Hypertension Control Initiative" at the CIRDP auditorium in the capital yesterday.

The event was organised by the NCDC, National Heart Foundation, and Resolve to Save Lives, an organisation focused on heart disease prevention.

The event emphasised strengthening hypertension detection, treatment, and follow-up at primary healthcare centres in the country.

NCDC launched the Bangladesh Hypertension Control Initiative in 2018 to enhance hypertension care at upazila health complexes and community clinics. The programme was piloted in four upazilas of Sylhet -- Beanibazar, Bishwanath, Golapganj, and Fenchuganj. Following the pilot, it expanded to 54 facilities in 2021 and 182 facilities in 2022.



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at a meeting with Open Society Foundations Chairman Alex Soros at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## 'Help us bring back stolen money'

### Yunus tells Open Society Foundations chief Alex Soros

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Open Society Foundations Chairman, Alex Soros, has said they will explore ways to support the interim government's reform initiatives.

He said the student-led mass uprising has given "great opportunities" to set a new course for the country. He made the remarks when the foundation headed by Alex Soros and president Binaifer Nowrojee called on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday.

The foundation is active around the world, using grant giving, research, advocacy, impact investment, and strategic litigation, said a press release. The foundation leadership discussed Bangladesh's efforts to rebuild the economy, trace siphoned-off assets, combat misinformation, and carry out vital economic reforms, according to a press release of the chief adviser's press wing.

They also discussed issues ranging from economic reforms, media, recovery of stolen assets, the new cybersecurity laws and how to improve them and the Rohingya crisis.

The chief adviser asked the foundation to help the country in "asset tracing" to bring back some 234 billion dollars siphoned off during Sheikh Hasina's 16-year-long rule.

## New accreditation policy for journos within a week

### Says CA's deputy press secy

BSS, Dhaka

A new policy on accreditation cards for journalists will be published within a week, said Chief Adviser's Deputy Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad Majumder yesterday.

Speaking at a media briefing at the Foreign Service Academy in the capital, Azad said a committee has been formed to formulate the policy.

The committee will recommend necessary measures to ensure free journalism.

Once the recommendations are made, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, along with journalist representatives, will finalise the policy.

Azad said several provisions in the 2022 accreditation policy are considered objectionable. The committee will recommend removing those, including the requirement to promote government development projects, which contradicts the principles of independent journalism.

He also criticised a provision requiring journalists to notify government agencies before

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

### RECOMMENDATIONS

No more mandatory promotion of govt projects

Remove travel notification requirement for journos

Introduce district-level accreditation system

Single card with 3 years validity



### COURT CORNER

## SC clears way for hiring 3,173 under technical edn board

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday cleared the way for 3,173 candidates to join as junior instructors (tech) or physical education instructors (10th grade) in various polytechnic institutes and technical schools and colleges.

The apex court stayed for four weeks a High Court order that on January 27 halted recruitment of the 3,173 candidates under the Technical Education Board.

The SC also asked the government to submit reports on police verifications about the candidates in three weeks.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed passed the order

## AHSANULLAH MURDER SC sets Feb 26 to hear appeals against HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday fixed February 26 to hear the appeals challenging the High Court verdict in the then Awami League lawmaker Ahsanullah Master murder case.

A bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed set the date following a prayer moved by defence lawyer Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal.

Assailants killed freedom fighter Ahsanullah Master and student Omar Faruq Ratan and wounded 17 others as they fired at a rally of Swachhasebak League, a pro-AL body, at Noagaon near Ahsanullah's house in Tongi on May 7, 2004.

The next day, Ahsanullah's brother Motiur Rahman filed the case against 19 people, including Nurul Islam Sarkar, a Jubo Dal leader.

On April 16, 2005, a Dhaka court sentenced 22 people to death and gave life terms to six others over the murder.

## ILLEGAL BRICK KILNS HC summons 8, including DCs and UNOs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday summoned eight high officials -- three divisional commissioners, three deputy commissioners and two upazila nirbahi officers -- for allegedly their failure to comply with its directives for shutting down illegal brick kilns.

The divisional commissioners of Dhaka, Chattogram and Khulna; the deputy commissioners of Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts; and the upazila nirbahi officers of Dhaka's Savar and Dhamrai upazilas were asked to appear in person and place their explanations before the HC on that day.

On November 13, 2022 and November 28 last year, the HC issued directives to close illegal brick kilns across the country.



A crowd gathers to purchase products at reduced prices from this OMS Truck in the Nilkhet area yesterday. The service allows them to purchase rice at Tk 30 per kg and flour at Tk 28 per kg, providing some financial relief to those struggling amid turbulent economic times.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## BAJITA SCHOOL IN PATUAKHALI Fund crunch stalls construction work

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The construction of a new building of Bajita Secondary School in Patuakhali's Mirzaganj upazila has remained stalled for four years.

The Education Engineering Department in Patuakhali initiated construction of a new building for the school in the 2020-21 fiscal year with an allocation of Tk 80.75 lakh, after the old building became dilapidated and risky for conducting academic activities. A contractor, Selim Mia, was entrusted with the construction work with a stipulated deadline of one year.

The contractor managed to complete only 60 percent of the work by the expiry of the deadline and sought an extension of the deadline repeatedly before halting the work eventually, said school head teacher Babul Hossain.

As such, students and teachers are

suffering immensely, being compelled to continue classes in the old, shabby, one-storey building with only three classrooms, amid much risk.

On September 23 last year, a ceiling fan got loose and fell on two 10th-grade students in a classroom. "Due to a shortage of classrooms, we often have to attend classes outside," said 10th grader Marufa.

Salman Talukdar, another student, urged the authorities concerned for prompt steps to complete the construction.

Selim Mia said, "I have been paid only Tk 27 lakh of the allocation so far, which is not enough to complete the work. I will complete it soon if the funding issues are resolved."

Moshfiqul Rahman, executive engineer of EED, said, "We are working to resolve funding issues as soon as possible and instructed the contractor to complete the project quickly."



## New accreditation policy

FROM PAGE 3  
traveling abroad. "There will be a recommendation to cancel it," he said.

The existing practice of issuing accreditation cards based on circulars will be discontinued. Under the new policy, a maximum of 15 journalists or 30 percent of a news outlet's staff will be eligible for accreditation.

Regarding freelance journalists, Azad said only those with at least 20 years of experience in journalism or individuals working for press freedom will qualify for freelancer cards.

Previously, the principal information officer had the authority to issue accreditation cards. Under the new policy, a committee comprising representatives from various organisations -- including journalists -- will make the final decision.

If a journalist is denied accreditation, they will have the right to appeal. The appeal board will include representatives from sectors, such as media and judiciary.

For district-level journalists, a system will be introduced to issue cards at the district level. Azad said

instead of permanent and temporary cards, a single card will be issued with validity of three years.

Under the new policy, an accreditation card will not be cancelled solely because of a criminal case unless a final verdict is issued against a journalist.

If a final charge sheet is filed, the committee may suspend the card.

Azad also said accreditation cards of 167 journalists have been cancelled, but only seven have applied for reconsideration.

## Proposal for 73 units

FROM PAGE 3

no movement on the project," he added.

Officials also claimed whenever they tried to move forward with the project, it got stuck in paperwork and multiple layers of approval.

The project also proposes recruiting 2,972 additional personnel and acquiring essential equipment to strengthen the FSCD. Scheduled for completion by June 2027, it will be implemented on FSCD-owned land, according to official documents.

Currently, fire service operates with 14,570 personnel and 537 fire stations nationwide. However, staff are frequently reassigned for major events and VVIP duties, weakening station capacities.

A separate proposal to acquire 34 new types of essential equipment, submitted last year, also remains pending.

The proposed equipment includes -- 214 remote control fire water monitors, 29 river ambulances, 133 water bowers, 14,950 personal detection devices, 611 combined firefighting and rescue vehicles with

railway drive systems, 19 radiation protective suits, 633 firefighting drones, 631 crash tenders, 38 rescue airboats, and 75 Hazmat and decontamination vehicles.

According to the proposal, the department currently has 217 types of equipment, but most are in insufficient numbers.

For instance, it has only 15 turntable ladders (TLs) against a requirement of 75, of which just five reach 68 metres -- the tallest in its fleet. FSCD has requested 106 TLs to meet demand.

A 2020 UNDP-sponsored study recommended expanding the fire service's capabilities, including the creation of aviation and marine units, but no steps have been taken.

FSCD Director General Brig Gen Muhammad Jahed Kamal said as the FARSOW project was not included in the 2024-25 ADP, they have sent a DPP with modifications for inclusion in the revised ADP.

Regarding equipment procurement, he said, "Since purchasing all the required equipment would cost over Tk 12,000 crore, the ministry has asked us to submit proposals for phased procurement."

## Rights orgs, BFF

FROM PAGE 3

BLAST in another statement mentioned that this type of anarchy surrounding women's football matches is truly deplorable and entirely contradictory to Articles 19 (equality of opportunity), 27 (equality before the law), and 28 (prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, etc.) of the Constitution.

"Additionally, it is a punishable offence under the country's existing criminal laws and goes completely against the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)," it added. The organisations called on community leaders, civil society organisations, and policymakers to stand against regressive forces threatening women's

rights and progress.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), in a press statement, said it disapproves of the vandalism that took place centring women's football matches.

"Football is for everyone and women footballers have all the right to play sports. To create barriers in women's sports is against the development of sports. The Bangladesh Football Federation believes that everyone must come forward to continue the participation of women in sports," it said.

"We urge the authorities concerned to carry out a proper investigation and take necessary steps and ensure that no obstacles are created for women to play football.

## Execute sentences

FROM PAGE 5

family's experience of being held captive for 36 hours during the mutiny.

"Innocent women and children were unjustly dragged, tortured, and imprisoned in the quarter guard. We never imagined that people who were responsible for ensuring our security would betray us in this way," she said.

"There is no scope to say

the convicted mutineers were innocent," she said, urging the government to implement the verdicts swiftly. "Justice must be served to remove this stain on the armed forces," she added.

The families denounced any attempts to question the fairness of the BDR court's verdict and stressed that those convicted were directly involved.

## 36 classrooms

FROM PAGE 5

said Joyanal Abedin, a student of the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism.

Rabbi Khan, a student of the Department of Public Administration, echoed him.

Bishon Krishna Saha, an associate professor in the Department of Mathematics, said even faculty members are forced to share office spaces with three to six colleagues.

The Registrar's Office at BU said a proposal for infrastructural development was sent to the University Grants Commission (UGC) three years ago. However, it was returned with instructions to submit a revised

proposal aligned with the university's masterplan. Although the proposal was resubmitted, no progress has been made.

"We met with the education adviser last week to discuss the classroom crisis. He instructed us to submit a short-term, low-budget proposal, assuring us of prompt action," said Professor Mamun Ur Rashid, treasurer of BU.

Pro-VC Professor Dr Golam Rabbani said the university administration is preparing a proposal for the second phase of BU's infrastructural development. "Although it is a time-consuming process, we are committed to resolving the issue as soon as possible," he added.

## Water crisis hampers

FROM PAGE 5

be severely affected."

Contacted, Shamsuddin Ahmed, deputy director of the Department of Agricultural Extension in Moulvibazar, said, "We are confident of meeting the district's rice production target of 192,510 tonnes across 62,100 hectares of land. However, resolving the water issue would enable farmers in haor areas to cultivate rice more effectively."

"We have written to the Water Development Board requesting canal

excavation to support Boro cultivation in the region," he added.

Javed Iqbal, executive engineer of the WDB in Moulvibazar, said silt has accumulated in several sections of the irrigation canals, while the banks have eroded and become elevated over time.

"From our annual operating budget, we will address the most critical areas. Meanwhile, a proposal for excavation of irrigation canals has been submitted and is currently under process," he said.

## AKM Farooq

passes away

STAR REPORT

A K M

Farooq,

a former

diplomat

and

secretary,

passed away

at the age of 80 on January

27 at his daughter's

residence in California,

USA, said a press release.

He is survived by his

wife, three children, seven

grandchildren, and many

well-wishers who mourn

his death.

Farooq was born

on February 1, 1943,

in Jhalakathi. After

completing his honours

and master's in history at

Dhaka University, he began

his career as a lecturer at

Faujdarhat Cadet College in

1963.

In 1966, he joined

the Pakistan Foreign

Service and later served as

Bangladesh's ambassador

to Indonesia and China.

He retired as a secretary in

2001.

## PRAYER

TIMING

JANUARY 30

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5:35 12:45 4:15 5:46 7:15

JAMAAT 6:10 1:15 4:30 5:50 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



### নৃত্যকলা বিভাগ, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

#### নিয়মিত মাস্টার্স (১ বছর, ২ সেমিস্টার) প্রোগ্রামে শূন্য আসনে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

২০২৩-২০২৪ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নৃত্যকলা বিভাগের শূন্য আসনে মাস্টার্স প্রোগ্রামে ভর্তিচ্ছু শিক্ষার্থীদের থেকে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। যেকোন পাবলিক বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন (ইউজিসি) কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত জাতীয় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়সহ যেকোন বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় থেকে যেকোন বিষয়ে চার বছর মেয়াদি স্নাতক (সম্মান) ডিগ্রিপ্রাপ্ত শিক্ষার্থীরা নিয়মিত মাস্টার্স প্রোগ্রামে শূন্য আসনে ভর্তির জন্য আবেদন করতে পারবেন। প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই দু'তে পারদর্শী হতে হবে। প্রার্থীদের স্নাতক (সম্মান) পরীক্ষায় ৪.০০ কেলে ন্যূনতম সিজিপিএ ৩.২৫/দ্বিতীয় বিভাগে ৫৫% নম্বর থাকতে হবে এবং মাধ্যমিক/সম্মান ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সম্মান পরীক্ষায় মোট ৬.৫ থাকতে হবে। তবে কোন পরীক্ষায় ন্যূনতম সিজিপিএ ৩.০০ এর কম থাকতে পারবে না। স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রি অর্জনকারী শিক্ষার্থীরাও আবেদন করতে পারবেন। ভর্তির ক্ষেত্রে প্রার্থীর বয়স ও শিক্ষাবর্ষের কোন বাধ্যবাধকতা থাকবে না। প্রার্থীদের ন্যূনতম ৫ বছরের নৃত্য গুরু/নৃত্য প্রতিষ্ঠান কর্তৃক অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র থাকতে হবে। অগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের আগামী ২৭/০২/২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে নির্ধারিত ভর্তি ফরমে আবেদন করতে হবে।

ভর্তির তথ্য ও আবেদনপত্র বিভাগীয় ওয়েবসাইটের নোটিশ বোর্ডে  
<https://ssl.du.ac.bd/post/notice> পাওয়া যাবে অথবা নিয়মাবলী ও আবেদনপত্র নৃত্যকলা বিভাগের অফিস থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। ভর্তি ফর্মের মূল্য ২৫০০/- টাকা।

যোগাযোগ: নৃত্যকলা বিভাগ, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, কলা ভবন (দীচ তলা), কক্ষ নং-১০৯৮  
মোবাইল: ০১৯২২২৪ ৭৫৬৯

GD-311

### NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
High Court Division  
(Statutory Original Jurisdiction)  
COMPANY MATTER No. 74 OF 2025

An application under section 81(2) read with section 85(2), 183 and section 396 of the company at Companies Act 1994

Adam Tamizi Haque

versus

The Registrar of Joint Stock Companies & Firms and another

----- Respondent

Notice is hereby given that an application under section 81(2) read with section 85(2) and section 396 of the company at Companies Act 1994 was moved in the Honorable High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the petitioner for condoning delay in holding Annual General Meeting of the company namely is **Haque Food Industries Limited Changed from Haque Brothers (industries) Ltd.** for the year 2022 and 2023 and thereby allowing holding the AGM for the said years that the company bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division upon hearing the learned Advocate for the petitioner has admitted the said application vide order dated 20.01.2025.

Any person interested in the said application may appear before the Hon'ble High Court. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges

(Md. Golam Hasnaen)  
Advocate  
Supreme court of Bangladesh  
Suite No 503, Bangladesh Shishu Kallayan Parishad Bhabon  
22/1, Topkhan Road, Dhaka-1000  
Mob-01912370869

### NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
High Court Division  
(Statutory Original Jurisdiction)  
COMPANY MATTER No. 78 OF 2025

An application under section 81(2) read with section 85(2), 183 and section 396 of the company at Companies Act 1994

Adam Tamizi Haque

versus

The Registrar of Joint Stock companies & Firms and another

----- Respondent

Notice is hereby given that an application under section 81(2) read with section 85(2) and section 396 of the company at Companies Act 1994 was moved in the Honorable High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the petitioner for condoning delay in holding Annual General Meeting of the company namely is **Haque and Company Limited changed from Haque Limited changed from Haque and Company Limited** for the year 2022 and 2023 and thereby allowing holding the AGM for the said years that the company bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division upon hearing the learned Advocate for the petitioner has admitted the said application vide order dated 20.01.2025.

Any person interested in the said application may appear before the Hon'ble Court. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges

(Md. Golam Hasnaen)  
Advocate  
Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
Suite No. 503, Bangladesh Shishu Kallayan Parishad Bhabon  
22/1, Topkhan Road, Dhaka-1000  
Mob-01912370869

### NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)  
Company Matter No. 1642 of 2024

In the Matter of: An application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3), 396(2) and 87(2) of the Companies Act 1994

And

In the matter of: Brig Gen M.Mofizur Rahman and others .....Petitioners  
Versus  
Cityscape International Ltd. & another .....Respondents

Notice is hereby given that the Petitioners filed and moved an application in the High Court Division under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3), 396(2) and 87(2) of the Companies Act 1994, for a direction upon the Respondent no.1 company to hold Annual General Meetings for calendar years 2004-2024, and for a declaration that resolutions adopted in the purported EGM-1 and adjourned EGM-1 held on 30.09.2023 and 04.11.2023 respectively were illegal, void and not binding, whereupon the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division was pleased to admit the same on 11.12.2024. If anybody is interested to oppose the said application he may do so by an Advocate or in person. Copy of the application may be obtained from the Office of the undersigned upon payment of prescribed fees.

**M. Shafiqur Rahman, Advocate, Bangladesh Supreme Court Room No. 102, Supreme Court Bar Association Building, Dhaka-1000.**

### NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)  
COMPANY MATTER No. 46/2025

**Md. Kawser-Uz-Zaman (Rubel).....Petitioner**


Vs.

**Printing Industries Association of Bangladesh and another.....Respondent**

Notice is hereby given that an application under section 81(2), read with section 85(3) of the Companies Act, 1994, has been filed by the Petitioner to condone the delay of Respondent No. 1-Company in holding its annual general meetings for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024, respectively, and to call or direct the calling of the general meetings of Respondent No. 1-Company. The petition was presented to the Hon'ble High Court Division on the day of 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2025 and was admitted by the Court. Any concerned party desirous of opposing the application should appear at the time of hearing in person or through an Advocate for that purpose; and a copy of the petition will be furnished by the undersigned to anyone requiring the same, on payment of a prescribed charge for the same.

Dated: 29.01.2025

Sd/-**Saqeb Mahbub**, Barrister-at-Law, Advocate for the Petitioner, Room 2020 (Annex), Supreme Court, Shahbag, Dhaka – 1000.



### নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় : বিধি মোতাবেক প্রদেয় ডাটাদিসহ ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের শহিদ বুদ্ধিজীবী ডা. মোহাম্মদ মোর্তজা মেডিকেল সেন্টারের নিম্নলিখিত শূন্য পদতলি পূরণের জন্য ৫০/- (পঞ্চাশ) টাকার বিনিময়ে রেজিস্ট্রারের দপ্তরে প্রাপ্যতা নির্ধারিত ফরমে বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে :-

ক্র নং	পদের নাম ও বেতন স্কেল	পদের সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা
০১.	মেডিকেল অফিসার টা: ৩৫,৫০০-৬৭,০১০/-বেতন স্কেলে (জাতীয় বেতন স্কেল-২০১৫)	২ (দুই) টি	প্রার্থীকে এম.বি.বি.এস পাশসহ বিএমডিসি কর্তৃক স্বীকৃতিপ্রাপ্ত হতে হবে। প্রার্থীর কোনো চিকিৎসা কেন্দ্রে বা অনুরূপ প্রতিষ্ঠানে ০৩ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।
০২.	বঙ্গবন্ধু মেডিকেল অফিসার (সেনাপ্রতিষ্ঠান) মাসিক সর্বসাপেক্ষ ১৫,০০০/- (পনেরো হাজার) টাকা	১ (এক) টি	প্রার্থীকে এম.বি.বি.এস পাশসহ স্নাট্রি বিষয়ে কাজ করার অভিজ্ঞতা এবং অস্ট্রাসেনোমায়ো পোট গ্রাফটে ডিম্ব/ত্রিসোম থাকতে হবে এবং বিএমডিসি কর্তৃক স্বীকৃতিপ্রাপ্ত হতে হবে।

রেজিস্ট্রারের অনুকূলে প্রদেয় ৭৫০/- (সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) টাকা মূল্যের পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট এবং সকল সার্টিফিকেট ও প্রশংসাপত্রের সত্যায়িত প্রতিলিপিসহ ৮ (আট) প্রস্ত দরখাস্ত আগামী ২০-০২-২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে রেজিস্ট্রারের (২০৩ নং কক্ষ) নিকট পৌঁছাতে হবে। শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা, অভিজ্ঞতা ও অন্যান্য যোগ্যতার সনদপত্রসমূহ আবেদনের (যদি থাকে) সঙ্গে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি/স্বায়ত্বশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মরত প্রার্থীদেরকে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে দরখাস্ত করতে হবে।

GD- 320

### NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
High Court Division  
(Statutory Original Jurisdiction)  
COMPANY MATTER No. 75 OF 2025

An application under section 81(2) read with section 85(2), 183 and section 396 of the company at Companies Act 1994

Adam Tamizi Haque

versus

The Registrar of Joint Stock Companies & Firms and another

----- Respondent

Notice is hereby given that an application under section 81(2) read with section 85(2) and section 396 of the company at Companies Act 1994 was moved in the Honorable High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the petitioner for condoning delay in holding Annual General Meeting of the company namely is **Haque and Company (Dry Cell) Ltd. changed from Haque Dry Cell Ltd.** for the year 2022 and 2023 and thereby allowing holding the AGM for the said years that the company bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division upon hearing the learned Advocate for the petitioner has admitted the said application vide order dated 20.01.2025.

Any person interested in the said application may appear before the Hon'ble Court. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges.

(Md. Golam Hasnaen)  
Advocate  
Supreme court of Bangladesh  
Suite No. 503, Bangladesh Shishu Kallayan Parishad Bhabon  
22/1, Topkhan Road, Dhaka-1000  
Mob-01912370869



# Sabina Yasmin to make her grand comeback tomorrow

Legendary singer Sabina Yasmin is set to make her grand comeback in the exclusive HSBC event titled **Ami Achi Thakbo**, on January 31 and February 1 in the capital.

These performances will mark her much-awaited return after a year of personal trials. Sabina Yasmin, a cornerstone of Bengali playback music for over six decades, will sing 12 to 15 of her classic hits, accompanied by a 16-member orchestra led by Foad Nasser Babu and Jahangir Sayeed.

Musicians like Ujjal Sinha, Nur E Alam Shojib, and Monir uz Zaman will perform live with a focus on original instrumentation.

Md Mahbub ur Rahman, CEO of HSBC Bangladesh, called the event a tribute to Yasmin's remarkable career.

Known for songs like **Shob Sokhire Par Korite** and **O Amar Bangla Ma**, Yasmin has received numerous awards, including the two highest civilian awards, the Swadhinata Padak and Ekushey Padak.



## Mithila-Nayeem arriving this Valentine's Day

FS Nayeem and Rafiath Rashid Mithila, a popular duo from the TV drama scene, are now set to hit the big screen with their upcoming film **Jole Jwole Tara**. Directed by Arun Chowdhury, the movie has been in the works since the two actors signed on three years ago.

The project, which received a government grant for the 2020-21 fiscal year, began filming in October 2021 in Manikganj during the pandemic. Despite wrapping up in just three weeks, the film's release has faced several delays. Last year, it was even scheduled for release, but the plan was shelved due to the mass student-led protests in July. Now, the director intends to release the film on Valentine's Day.

The film additionally features performances by Fazlur Rahman Babu, Monira Mithu, Azad Abul Kalam, and Noor Imran Mithu.



# Jonas Brothers to star in new Disney holiday film

The Jonas Brothers are making their return to Disney with a holiday film, tentatively titled **Jonas Brothers Christmas Movie**.

The comedy will follow Kevin, Joe, and Nick Jonas as they encounter a series of escalating challenges while racing from London to New York to celebrate Christmas with their families. The film is set to premiere later this year on Disney+.

The band joined Disney's Hollywood Records in 2007 after parting ways with Columbia Records following their debut album, **It's About Time**. That same year, they made their Disney Channel debut on **Hannah Montana** with Miley Cyrus.

The Jonas Brothers made their film debut in 2008 with Disney Channel's **Camp Rock**, starring alongside Demi Lovato.



# Shajal confirms role in 'Jinn 3'

At the heels of the success of **Jinn**, Jaz Multimedia's horror franchise is set to continue with **Jinn 3**, once again featuring Shajal Noor in the lead role.

Kamruzzaman Roman will direct this third instalment in the film franchise, expected to release during Eid.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Shajal confirmed the news, stating, "This is wonderful news for me, and **Jinn 3** will be full of surprises for the audiences. We will start shooting very soon. Nusraat Faria and several other artistes will also be part of the film."

The first instalment brought Shajal immense love from the audience. "A film only gets a sequel when it attains widespread appreciation from audiences. I am happy to see the **Jinn** franchise progressing creatively," the actor added.



## WHAT'S THE HAPS?



### 'Dhaka Makers 3'

The third edition of **Dhaka Makers**, backed by City Bank, is just around the corner, bringing five days of vibrant festivities celebrating art, design, and craftsmanship.

With over 80 makers, 19 workshops, over 300 art pieces, and over 10 heritage crafts, this edition promises an immersive experience for art enthusiasts, designers, and craft lovers alike. From fashion and lifestyle to art and sustainable goods, **Dhaka Makers 3** is set to be a hub of inspiration and community engagement.

**DATE:** JANUARY 30 – FEBRUARY 3  
**TIME:** 10AM – 10PM  
**VENUE:** ALOKI, TEJGAON

# Sundance Film Festival announces Short Film Award winners

The 41st Sundance Film Festival, a leading independent film event, which ran from January 23 to 28, screened over 100 films across venues in Park City and Salt Lake City, Utah.

From 12,098 short film submissions, **The Masterpiece** by Alex Lora Cercos won the Short Film Grand Jury Prize.

Other winners include **Say Hi After You Die** (Short Film Jury Award, Kate Jean Hollowell), **The Stag** (International Fiction, An Chu), **Bob's Funeral** (Nonfiction, Jack Dunphy), and **Bug Diner** (Animation, Phoebe Jane Hart).

Special Jury Prizes for Directing were awarded to Masha Ko (**The Looming**) and Makoto Nagahisa (**Pisko the Crab Child is in Love**).



# NEWS

## Arakan Army disrupts trade

FROM PAGE 12

to an associate of a high-ranking Myanmar military officer. "The seizure seems intended to put pressure on the junta. The Arakan Army is also trying to secure a share of the cross-border trade."

Jasim Uddin, general manager of Teknaf Land Port, the only private land port in the country, highlighted the sharp decline in trade since November 2023.

"Before then, around 50 cargo ships docked every day. But after the fighting intensified along the Bangladesh-Myanmar border, the number dropped. Since July 2024, when the fighting reached Maungdaw township, only three to five ships have been arriving each month," he said.

Port officials said three ships had to wait for several days to return to Myanmar from Teknaf due to threats from the Arakan Army.

Lt Col Ashiqur Rahman, commanding officer of Bangladesh

Border Guard 2 Battalion in Teknaf, said they were not formally informed of the issue. No business representative reported it. "The incident occurred in the Myanmar waters with Myanmar vessels, so there is nothing we can do about it."

The BGB official assured that they are ensuring the security of Bangladeshi people along the border.

**DECLINE IN TRADE**

Trade through Teknaf Land Port has significantly dropped over the last two fiscal years, according to data from Teknaf Customs.

In the 2022-23 fiscal year, 1,88,999 tonnes of goods worth Tk 1,545 crore were imported from Myanmar, while Bangladesh exported 2,941 tonnes of goods worth Tk 6.72 crore.

However, in 2023-24 fiscal year, imports dropped to 71,741 tonnes, valued at approximately Tk 808 crore. Exports also saw a significant decline, with only 704 tonnes of goods worth Tk 2.45 crore.

In the first six months of the current fiscal year, Bangladesh imported 11,129 tonnes of goods worth around Tk 113 crore through Teknaf Port. During the same period, 636 tonnes of goods valued at approximately Tk 64 lakh were exported to Myanmar.

The imported items include dry fish, frozen fish, betel nuts, onions, ginger, coconuts, wood, and other goods. Bangladesh's main exports to Myanmar are cement and potatoes.

Contacted, a foreign ministry official told The Daily Star that the ministry was not in a position to contact the Arakan Army. Bangladesh maintains formal communication with the Myanmar Army governing the country. "We hope that the Arakan Army will release the ship for their own interest."

Asked about the slump in the trade, the official, who preferred anonymity, said the trade between the two countries is not that significant for Bangladesh.

## AL won't be allowed

FROM PAGE 12

repented or apologised for this?" Shafiqul Alam told a press conference at the Foreign Service Academy.

"Have Awami League men said, 'We do not support the killings carried out by Hasina'? We want leadership with a clean image. I don't see it. Rather, many are lying and spreading rumors and propaganda," he said.

Shafiqul also wrote on Facebook, "Unless AL apologises for these massacres, killings and blatant corruption and until its tainted leaders and activists submit to justice system and they are purged and tried over their crimes -- and until AL separates itself from its current leadership and its Fascist ideology, there is no way it will be allowed to hold protests."

The interim government will not allow any attempt to push the country towards violence, he wrote.

"Since it took over in early August, the Interim Government has not stopped or banned any lawful protests. We believe in freedom of assembly and freedom of association. One report this morning said at least 136 protests took place alone in Dhaka in the past five and a half months. Some of these protests triggered massive

traffic congestion. Yet, the IG [inspector general of police] has never imposed any restrictions on the protests.

"But should we allow the Fascist Awami League party to hold protests? The video footage of July and August clearly show that AL party activists took part in the killings of peaceful protesters who included young students and minor children. The party leadership headed by Sheikh Hasina is responsible for the massacres, murders and mayhem during the July mass uprising."

He further said, Hasina established a kleptocracy and murderous regime. Under her watch, 234 billion dollars were siphoned off by her cronies, according to an independent panel. Her family is now being investigated for making billions of dollars from corrupt deals, he wrote.

He added that no country allowed a bunch of killers and corrupt gangs to make a comeback. "No country allows a reset without accountability. The interim government represents the will of the Bangladeshi people who will react to the protest by the killers. We will not allow any attempts to push the country into violence. Anyone [who] dares to hold illegal protests under the AL banner will face the full power of the law."

## Implementing

FROM PAGE 12

increase food production, expand industrialisation, and ensure economic freedom.

"So, I think the revenge of the leaders and activists of the BNP will be successful on the day we are able to implement the 31-point outline. Only on that day will we succeed in taking revenge on the undemocratic and evil forces who want to subdue Bangladesh," he observed.

The BNP leader said they would begin implementing the 31-point proposal if they come to power, and it would be an ongoing process. "We will make it even better gradually."

He said many people believe the BNP has the brightest prospect of running the country by winning the next election.

Tarique, however, said BNP leaders and activists at all levels must prepare themselves and change their mentality to bring about a positive change in the country.

The BNP leader warned that various quarters are preparing to malign the BNP and are spreading propaganda against the party both locally and internationally. "We'll face them politically."

"But it's the responsibility of all BNP leaders and activists to ensure that the people keep their trust in the BNP. We must change our mindset and be confident that we'll be able to bring about change," Tarique said.

Tarique also responded to various questions from the participants at the workshops.

In response to a question, he said that if the party returns to power, it will take steps to ensure the rights of the physically challenged individuals and provide them with a comfortable life.

The BNP leader said the party plans to arrange health camps soon at the divisional level to provide necessary treatment to people with disabilities.

Tarique said it also plans to establish a mechanism to ensure fair prices for farmers' produce and maintain a balance between demand and supply by dismantling the syndicates.

"Action will be taken against market syndicates if they indulge in any foul play."

He stressed the importance of increasing soybean production in Bangladesh to reduce dependency on foreign countries for edible oil.

Tarique also underscored the need for addressing the problems in the banking sector and restoring public confidence in it, as state reforms will be difficult without strengthening the financial sector.

## Bangladesh's tone

FROM PAGE 12

demand stricter measures to curb drug trafficking."

The meeting also discussed India's construction of barbed wire fences within 150 yards of the zero line -- a move that requires mutual consent from both countries.

"Any development within this zone must be approved by both countries. We'll ensure this principle is upheld," the adviser said.

Bangladesh will push for discussions on river water-sharing, seeking fair implementations of existing treaties.

Jahangir said industrial waste from India enters Bangladesh through Agartala, violating the environmental agreement between the two countries.

"Our agreement mentions Effluent Treatment Plants and Sewage Treatment Plants, but it needs to be explicitly stated in the treaty. We'll raise this issue during the discussions."

The meeting at the Secretariat, chaired by the home adviser, was attended by Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser for Home Affairs Khuda Bakhsh Chowdhury, BGB Director General Maj Gen Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui, and senior officials from the home ministry.

Among other issues at the BGB-BSF conference will be illegal infiltration and human trafficking.

Jahangir pointed out disputes in Feni's Muhuri Char, where issues with border demarcation remain unresolved.

Another key agenda point will be misinformation spread by the Indian media regarding Bangladesh.

"We'll discuss how to prevent false narratives that create unnecessary tensions between the two nations."

Bangladesh will also push for the effective implementation of the Coordinated Border Management Plan to enhance border security and dispute resolution.

Since 1974, Bangladesh and India have signed four key border agreements, including the Land Boundary Agreement (1974); Land Boundary Agreement Protocol (exchange of enclaves/disposal of disputed land) (2011); the Joint India-Bangladesh Guideline for Border Authorities (1975); and the Coordinated Border Management Plan (2011).

Jahangir stated that Bangladesh will seek fairer implementation of agreements, particularly with the 2011 Land Boundary Agreement Protocol, which he said was "imbalanced."

"There are major issues within the 2011 agreement. It should've been structured differently. We've already communicated our concerns to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

Reaffirming Bangladesh's commitment to border security and national interests, he added, "We're determined to protect our borders and secure the rights of our people. All discussions will prioritise Bangladesh's sovereignty and well-being."

## Evaly's Rassel

FROM PAGE 12

Earlier, the prosecution sought the highest punishment mentioned in the existing law for the couple.

During the trial, the court recorded statements of two prosecution witnesses, including the complainant of the case.

On February 4 last year, Taufiq Mahmud, a customer, filed a case against the couple for misappropriating Tk 14.10 lakh from him.

According to the case statement, Evaly sold various products on different media using "eye-catching advertisements".

Responding to one of the ads, Taufiq ordered a motorbike on March 20, 2021 and paid Tk 2,45,000 for it. On April 3, he ordered two more motorbikes and paid Tk 5,90,000 for those. However, the authorities failed to deliver the three bikes within the stipulated time of 45 days.

Taufiq then contacted Evaly's Dhanmondi office and the authorities concerned issued two cheques as reimbursement. However, the bank requested not to deposit the cheques on the specified date as there was "not enough money".

As none of his money was returned, he sent a legal notice to Evaly on January 28 asking it to return his money within 15 days. That too was not complied with.

## Binimoy linked

FROM PAGE 12

"We are now working to replace it [Binimoy] with a new platform under the control of Bangladesh Bank. We are in discussions with the Gates Foundation, which has an internationally applied application already launched in 15 countries. We plan to test and implement it quickly," the BB governor said.

Speaking about problems in tax policy, he said officials of the National Board of Revenue function like a government within a government, with the authority to register taxpayers, assign taxes, impose penalties, and even oversee appeals through their own colleagues.

This leaves no way to circumvent their control, often resulting in the victimisation of taxpayers, he said.

Mansur also said he hoped the reforms in the political and other sectors would bring about the necessary checks and balances, and accountability. "This is the only way to ensure good governance in the country."

NBR Chairman Abdur Rahman Khan said tax rates would be made reasonable in the upcoming budget, which he said would not be an ambitious one.

Import duties will also be adjusted accordingly, and the tax net will be expanded wherever there is potential for revenue collection, according to the

NBR boss.

"Businesses will not be pressured, and the VAT rates will be reduced if necessary," he said, adding, "Taxes can be a pain for the payers, but they should not be killed by it."

Syed Nasim Manzur, managing director of Apex Footwear, said the government must lower the revenue collection target by reducing its expenditure.

"We cannot continue spending more than our income throughout our lives while constantly overburdening the same people for revenue. This is not sustainable," he said.

Syed Mohammad Kamal, country manager of Mastercard in Bangladesh, said the government should introduce incentives for digital payments.

Ahsan Khan Chowdhury, chairman and chief executive director of PRAN-RFL Group, discussed the effects of high duties and taxes on products like juices and biscuits.

Mashrur Arefin, CEO of City Bank, said a group embezzled money from the bank, and the Corporate Social Responsibility funds of the bank were misused by the Shuchona Foundation and the Centre for Research and Information (CRI). Hasina's daughter, Saima Wazed Putul, is the founder of Shuchona while CRI was the Awami League's research wing.

## SOUTHERN LEBANON

## Israeli drone strike injures five people

REUTERS, Beirut

Five people were injured in an Israeli drone strike targeting the southern Lebanese town of Majdal Selm yesterday, the Lebanese health ministry said.

On Tuesday, Israeli airstrikes injured 36 people in Nabatieh, a major town in south Lebanon, according to the health ministry. The Israeli military said it had struck Hezbollah vehicles that were transporting weapons on the edge of Nabatieh.

The Israeli army also detained three people yesterday in southern border town of Maroun al-Ras, Lebanese state news agency NNA reported.

Israel has carried out strikes in southern Lebanon although Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah and Israel agreed on a ceasefire in late November, ending a conflict that killed thousands of people since it was ignited by the Gaza offensive in 2023.

Israel has not yet fully withdrawn its forces from southern Lebanon and said it will keep operating against any threat posed to the state of Israel and its citizens.



Men believed to be Romanian military contractors lined up to undergo a security inspection before crossing the border into Rwanda at the La Corniche Border Post in Gisenyi, Rwanda, yesterday. Rwanda-backed fighters controlled most of the besieged DR Congo city of Goma as residents slowly emerged from their homes after days of deadly fighting in the key mineral trading hub.

PHOTO: AFP

## Japan sees record number of teen suicides

AFP, Tokyo

Japan saw a record number of suicides among school pupils in 2024, health ministry data showed yesterday.

The latest data among those in elementary through high school edged up to 527 from 513 cases in 2023, the ministry said.

The total number of people of all ages dying by suicide fell 7.2 percent to 20,268, sharply lower from the record high of 34,427 cases in 2003.

The number among people aged younger than 20, including those at school, also fell to 800 in 2024 from 810 in 2023, the latest data showed.

"We regard this very seriously," Keiichiro Tachibana, deputy chief cabinet secretary, told a regular press briefing.

"We will continue do our utmost to take measures to protect children's lives and to realise a society where no one is pressed into taking their own life."

The health ministry was expected to issue its analysis of the data in March after more figures become available.

Japan annually sees the number of teen suicides rise at the end of every summer break in late August through early September.

This prompts the government and media to heighten public calls for struggling teens to seek help.

## Trump immigration crackdown intensifies

ICE arrests surge to 1,000-1,200 daily; White House offers federal employees financial incentives to quit

REUTERS, Washington

US President Donald Trump's top homeland security official joined officers in an immigration enforcement operation that arrested several people in New York City on Tuesday, in the Trump administration's latest effort to promote its nationwide crackdown.

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem, who was confirmed as secretary over the weekend, posted a video and photos of the NYC operation on X early Tuesday morning, highlighting the arrest of an alleged suspect and saying the Trump administration was "making our streets safe."

The Trump administration stepped up immigration arrests in recent days with about 1,000-1,200 arrests per day, according to ICE, far above the daily average of 311 in fiscal year 2024. The nationwide operations included arrests in Chicago on Sunday where a TV personality documented with a film crew.

The increase came after the agency sent an email to staff that said the Trump administration was "demanding" 1,200 arrests on Sunday, according to a person familiar with the matter. The arrest goals had been discussed on internal ICE calls, a second person familiar with the matter said.

White House spokesperson Steven Cheung criticized a Washington Post report on Sunday about arrest quotas for ICE officers as "fake news."

The Trump administration said on Tuesday it is offering financial incentives to 2 million civilian full-time federal workers to quit as part of plans to drastically shrink the size of the US government.

The move followed an attempted freeze on federal funding also ordered by Trump that opponents blasted as unconstitutional. The emailed severance offer put the lives of US civil servants into disarray hours after the healthcare system for millions of low-income Americans was disrupted in the confusion of the decision to cut off federal aid.



## Plane crash in South Sudan kills 20

AFP, Juba

A plane has crashed in the north of South Sudan killing at least 20 people, Unity state minister for information said yesterday.

The aircraft came down near the oil fields in Unity State at around 10:30 am local time (0830 GMT) shortly after taking off for the capital Juba.

"The plane crashed 500 metres away from the airport. 21 people were on board. As for now, there's only one survivor," Gatwech Bipal Both told AFP by phone.

He said the aircraft, chartered by the Greater Pioneer Operating Company and operated by Light Air Services Aviation Company, was on a routine mission to the area. "The state government is in a deep sorrow by this accident," he said, saying there would be an investigation.

"Although most people predicted that this might be a mechanical collision."

## US AID FREEZE

## UNHCR taking 'precautionary measures'

AFP, Geneva

The UN refugee agency said yesterday that it was taking a string of temporary measures as it faces "funding uncertainty" following a US decision to freeze virtually all foreign aid.

"We have taken note of the decision by the new US administration to pause allocation of funds to foreign assistance programmes," a UNHCR spokesperson told AFP in an email.

"While we are still assessing the impact of the new US administration's decision, including possible exceptions, we are implementing a series of temporary precautionary measures to mitigate the impact of this funding uncertainty."

President Donald Trump on returning TO office last week ordered a 90-day pause to review assistance by the United States, the world's largest foreign aid donor in dollar terms.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio followed up by freezing virtually all funding, though he specified exemptions for emergency food, as well as military assistance to Israel and Egypt.

In a follow-up memo on Tuesday, Rubio clarified that other "humanitarian assistance" besides food would also be exempt during the review period.

## BNP to hit street in Feb

FROM PAGE 1

national election was to be delayed, there should be logical explanations.

Insiders say the movement will be organised in two phases, the first of which will involve rallies against the soaring prices, and the second will focus on restoration of democracy through free and fair elections.

The BNP is drafting a declaration on the July mass uprising, which will uphold the principles of the 1972 Constitution," a BNP leader said.

The party leaders believe the imposition of VAT and customs duties on certain goods drove the prices of essentials even higher, insiders say.

"Reform commissions submitted their reports to the government about two weeks ago. Since then, no significant discussions with political parties, social organisations, or experts have taken place," said a leader.

The government should identify the proposals on which a consensus can be reached by the political parties, social organisations and experts, said the leader, adding, "There are also proposals that do not align with Bangladesh's political and social culture."

About constitutional reforms proposals, Salahuddin yesterday said

he wondered if it was right to mention the July uprising in the same paragraph as the 1971 Liberation War.

He said the Awami League committed crimes against humanity and people would decide if the party can participate in the election.

Trial must be held for Sheikh Hasina and other AL leaders whose decisions have led to the massacre of people. "Therefore, both the individuals and the organisation must face trial."

The interim government has not prioritised the trial of the AL as an organisation.

"There were talks of amending the International Crimes Tribunal Act to hold trial of the organisation, but the government backtracked on it. Some advisers say they want the Awami League to face trial, but they have done nothing to ensure that trial."

"Some say that they [the AL] will not be allowed to take part in the election. But what does the law say about it? The Election Commission will announce the schedule. Those who are registered will be able to participate in the election."

He said a new party was using the government apparatus to win elections.

"I welcome the emotions, aspirations, and party formation efforts of student leaders, but these factors must be taken into consideration."



## ইউনিভার্সিটি ল্যাবরেটরি স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ

শিক্ষা ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা-১০০০

ফোন: ৯৬৬১৯২০-৭৩/৪৬৬০, ৪৬৬১, ৪৬৬২

## Wanted

Applications in plain paper from Bangladeshi nationals are invited for three (03) permanent vacant posts of **Lecturer in Accounting, Lecturer in Fine Arts and Lecturer in Music** at University Laboratory School and College, I.E.R, Dhaka University, Dhaka in the pay scale of 22,000/-23,100/-----50,530/-53,060/- (National Pay Scale-2015) along with other admissible allowances.

The applicants must have Masters with Honours and B.Ed/M.Ed degree from any govt. approved University. The applicant must have 1st division or CGPA 4.00 out of 5.00 scale at SSC and HSC level. The applicants must have one first class or CGPA 3.25 out of 4.00 scale at BA (Hon's) or Master's level. The approved condition either at SSC or at HSC will be flexible for the candidates securing the first class or the highest CGPA in both BA (Hon's) and Master's examination. No third class/division/CGPA below 3.00 at any level of academic career is acceptable.

Eight (08) sets of application along with a full Bio-data, duly attested copies of all academic certificates, recent 8 copies of passport size photographs and a Bank Draft/Pay Order of Tk 750/- (seven thousand fifty) in favour of the Principal must reach the undersigned by 20/02/2025.

Applicants already in service must apply through proper channel.

GD-310

Principal (In-charge)



## ইউনিভার্সিটি ল্যাবরেটরি স্কুল এন্ড কলেজ

শিক্ষা ও গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা-১০০০

ফোন: ৯৬৬১৯২০-৭৩/৪৬৬০, ৪৬৬১, ৪৬৬২

## Part Time Teacher Wanted

Applications in plain paper from Bangladeshi nationals are invited for a **part time Teacher in English** (English & Bengali Version) at University Laboratory School and College according to the rules of Dhaka University.

The applicants must have Masters with Honours and B.Ed/M.Ed degree from any govt. approved University. The applicant must have 1st division or CGPA 4.00 out of 5.00 scale at SSC and HSC level. The applicants must have one first class or CGPA 3.25 out of 4.00 scale at BA (Hon's) or Master's level. The approved condition either at SSC or at HSC will be flexible for the candidates securing the first class or the highest CGPA in both BA (Hon's) and Master's examination. No third class/division/CGPA below 3.00 at any level of academic career is acceptable.

Three sets of applications with full Bio-data, duly attested copies of all certificates and marks sheets, recent passport size photographs must reach the undersigned by 20/02/2025.

Applicants already in service must apply through proper channel.

GD-309

Principal (In-charge)

## OFFICE OF THE CHUADANGA POURASHAVA

Disrtict: CHUADANGA

Memo No. : CHUA/Poura/2025/182

Date: 29/01/2025

## Corrigendum e-Tender Notice No: 01/2024-25


Corrigendum e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of Works as mentioned in the following table:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Nature of Works	On-line(e-GP System) tender publication date & time	On-line(e-GP System) tender closing date & time
1055844	LGCRRP/Chuadanga /2024-2025/W-09.	Rehabilitation of Dense Carpeting Road and RCC Drain Work	08.01.2025 10:00 AM	06.02.2025 14:00 PM
1055845	LGCRRP/Chuadanga /2024-2025/W-10.	Construction of RCC Drain Work	08.01.2025 10:00 AM	06.02.2025 14:00 PM
1055846	LGCRRP/Chuadanga /2024-2025/W-11.	Rehabilitation of Dense Carpeting, RCC Road and RCC Drain Work	08.01.2025 10:00 AM	06.02.2025 14:00 PM
1055847	LGCRRP/Chuadanga /2024-2025/W-12	Rehabilitation of RCC Drain Work	08.01.2025 10:00 AM	06.02.2025 14:00 PM

These are an online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-tendering documents from the national e-GP Portal have to be deposited on line through any registered banks branches up to 06.02.2025 at 13:00PM

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)).

  
(M Saifullah)

Chief Executive Officer

Chuadanga Pourashava

Phone: 02477787881

e-mail: mayor16cp@gmail.com

GD-313

## Whom do the bureaucrats serve?

Existing bureaucratic culture is holding the government back

When the Awami League government fell on August 5, 2024, following weeks of mass movement, there was a widespread sense of hope that better days lay ahead. The interim government took office on August 8, promising an efficient, pro-people governance system in line with the spirit of the July uprising. Unfortunately, over five and a half months on, it is struggling to even get on the track of that promise, thanks largely to a non-cooperative, past-bound bureaucracy.

According to a recent report by Samakal, several advisers of the interim government have expressed frustration at being unable to carry out their duties properly due to a lack of support from the bureaucrats. Adviser Nahid Islam even spoke about this publicly. As a result, the government has failed to complete 70 percent of the tasks it had set for itself, which is staggering. These unfinished tasks include crucial issues such as the posting of deputy commissioners, withdrawal of politically motivated cases, distribution of free school textbooks, procurement of necessary equipment at various government offices, etc—all matters that needed prompt response.

Apparently, bureaucrats are still being sluggish, resistant, and mostly “strategic” in their work knowing the transient nature of this non-political administration; they are cautious to avoid potential trouble when a political party comes to power through election. Strong resistance is also coming from those who benefited from various perks under the Awami League regime; there are allegations that these officials are intentionally creating bottlenecks for the current administration.

As frustrating as this situation is, it is not entirely unexpected. Bureaucracy in Bangladesh has historically been politicised, used by the ruling party of the day to varying extents. This abuse peaked under the Awami League's rule, which politicised almost every level of government and provided perks and benefits to officials in exchange for loyalty. In return, these officials helped it maintain its authoritarian grip, stifling democratic practices and good governance. This led to a bureaucratic system so entrenched in corruption that any indication of change or reform triggers adverse, almost visceral reactions from bureaucrats fearing they might lose their positions of power and comfort.

Today, some of the old players may have changed, but the old system remains firmly in place. A properly functioning government requires a supportive and efficient bureaucracy. To achieve this, our outdated bureaucratic system must be dismantled to make way for a healthy, accountable system. Bureaucrats must realise that their job is not to pander to the rulers, but the people—the taxpayers. They must check their self-serving attitudes and heed the public demand: to uphold the integrity of their duties.

## Persistent mugging in Dhaka quite worrying

Police must step up to prevent such incidents

The persistence of muggings and lootings in Dhaka has left residents in a constant state of fear while outdoors. Reportedly, criminals are no longer waiting for the cover of darkness, with daylight muggings becoming increasingly common. The situation is particularly severe in Mohammadpur, where organised gangs armed with sharp weapons are often attacking people in broad daylight. While such crimes were widely reported in the aftermath of the fall of the Awami League government, police efforts to curb them have remained inadequate even after nearly six months.

According to an intelligence report, there are at least 432 high-risk spots for mugging across the city, with Mohammadpur alone accounting for 108. Residents report frequent incidents in areas such as Bosila, Tin Rastar Mor, Dhaka Udyan, Nobodoy Housing, Chand Udyan, Bosila Garden City, 40 Feet Road, Chandrima Housing, Ekota Housing, and Nabinagar. Many of the crimes are allegedly committed by teen and youth gangs. While Mohammadpur has been a hotspot for quite some time, muggings are also rampant in Dhanmondi, Asad Gate, and other neighbourhoods. Reportedly, the authorities have identified 205 active muggers in Mohammadpur alone. The question is, what are they doing to prevent them?

Recently, a video that went viral on social media showed a teenage boy hacking another with a machete in broad daylight in Dhaka Udyan. On January 25, three young men stopped a college student's rickshaw near Dhaka State College on Nurjahan Road and snatched his phone at knifepoint. The incident was caught on a security camera, while multiple bystanders witnessed it. Unfortunately, despite the availability of CCTV footage in many such incidents—some of which have gone viral—many criminals remain at large. More alarmingly, the victims are often stabbed or hacked. Clearly, the city's law and order situation has worsened in recent months, despite expectations to the contrary.

But why are the police still failing to protect all citizens? Ensuring public safety is their fundamental responsibility. Since the August 5 political changeover, law enforcement agencies have repeatedly assured us that they are increasing patrols and surveillance, yet mugging incidents abound. Recently, the IGP stated that police must adopt a zero-tolerance policy against extortion and mugging. It is time for such pledges to translate into action. Dhaka's residents need safety and security, not empty promises.

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY



#### Mahatma Gandhi assassinated

Mahatma Gandhi, internationally esteemed for his doctrine of nonviolent protest (*satyagraha*) to achieve political and social progress, was assassinated on this day in 1948.

# ‘The BRT project was flawed from the start’

Dr Md Shamsul Hoque, professor of civil engineering at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), talks to Monorom Polok of The Daily Star about the maiden BRT line in Dhaka that opened last month.

**The Gazipur-Airport BRT project has incurred massive expenditure. How would you assess its potential to alleviate traffic congestion?**

To address this issue properly, it is essential to first consider the broader ecosystem of public transport. Public transport encompasses various modes, with buses forming the base of the productivity pyramid. A standard bus system can manage up to 4,000 passengers per hour per direction (PHPD) at most. To enhance capacity in densely developed urban areas, systems with greater productivity are necessary. This is where the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems come into play. By providing buses with dedicated lanes, they can operate with increased efficiency and immunity from congestion caused by smaller vehicles.

For instance, BRT systems in Jakarta and Istanbul allow buses to reach speeds of up to 70 kilometres per hour, competing with the efficiency of metro systems. Metros, operating on fully segregated tracks, provide faster and more reliable services, making them particularly attractive to urban commuters. However, when implemented properly in dedicated corridors, BRT systems can achieve comparable levels of efficiency.

The concept of BRT stems from the notion that buses can be rapid and efficient within a dedicated and controlled environment. Globally, cities like Curitiba in Brazil and Bogotá in Colombia are considered the gold standards for BRT implementation. These systems exemplify flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and high productivity. However, a well-executed BRT system requires substantial infrastructure, such as dedicated lanes, controlled access points, and barriers to separate BRT lanes from other traffic. The design of these barriers depends on the level of enforcement needed. Unlike metro systems, BRT systems do not demand extensive land acquisition but rather a reallocation of road space. Prioritising buses and isolating road sections for public transport are central to their success.

When implemented with dedicated stations resembling those of metro systems, BRT services offer faster, more reliable alternatives that encourage commuters to transition from private cars to buses. This modal shift gradually reduces congestion and fosters a sustainable commuting culture. Moreover, older, unorganised bus systems can be phased out and replaced by more structured and efficient BRT services. The success of BRT systems globally—adopted in over 180 cities—demonstrates their viability as cost-effective solutions for urban congestion, particularly during peak hours.

**How do these global standards align with the specific context of the Gazipur-Airport BRT corridor,**

**particularly given the prevalence of large trucks, inter-district buses, and pedestrian traffic in the area?**

The effectiveness of BRT systems relies on specific prerequisites. Road width is a critical factor; a minimum of 12 lanes is typically necessary to implement a BRT system effectively. This ensures that even after allocating two lanes for the BRT, there remains adequate space for non-BRT traffic. In certain cases, 14 lanes may be required. Unfortunately, many corridors in Bangladesh, including the Gazipur-Airport corridor, do not meet these criteria. While the corridor was intended to be widened near stations, this plan was poorly executed, leaving insufficient space for the system's proper functioning.

Another challenge lies in the modal composition of traffic. BRT systems are most effective in areas with high concentrations of small private vehicles, facilitating a modal shift from cars to buses. However, the Gazipur corridor runs along

industrial zones dominated by large trucks and inter-district buses, with very few private cars. Additionally, approximately 90 percent of workers in these industrial zones walk to their destinations due to the short distances involved. This undermines the two main prerequisites for a successful BRT system: adequate right of way, and high volume of smaller vehicles.

Pedestrian traffic poses another challenge. Industrial workers frequently cross roads to reach factories, creating a constant flow of pedestrians. Physical barriers introduced by the BRT system can lead to a social divide, restricting workers' movement. Even if footbridges or escalators are installed, they are impractical given the high pedestrian volume and workers' time constraints. Delays of even a few minutes can result in wage deductions, prompting many to bypass these barriers and cross the BRT lanes directly.

**Could you elaborate on the flaws of the project, particularly regarding the suitability of the chosen corridor and its alignment with the original Strategic Transport Plan (STP)?**

The Gazipur-Airport BRT project has been plagued by significant planning and design flaws from its inception. The corridor, with its narrow roads and industrial character, was inherently unsuitable for a BRT system. These factors should have been identified during the feasibility study but were overlooked, allowing the project to proceed without addressing these critical issues.

The placement of infrastructure further compounded the problems. Footpaths were narrowed to accommodate footbridges, reducing pedestrian space in an area where walking is the primary mode of transport. The original plan for BRT-3, as outlined in the STP, proposed the route through a densely populated urban area. However, the current

corridor, inter-district buses continue to operate alongside the BRT system, undermining its purpose. These buses provide flexible, personalised services, stopping wherever passengers need, unlike the fixed stations of a BRT system. Consequently, commuters are less likely to switch to the BRT, resulting in minimal modal shift and rendering the system ineffective.

Successful BRT systems thrive in urban settings with high volumes of small vehicles and commuters. The Gazipur-Airport corridor, however, is characterised by industrial traffic, large vehicles, and limited private car use.

**Experts say the BRT's permanent infrastructure, including flyovers, may restrict future modifications. Can you elaborate?**

Yes, unlike flexible BRT systems in cities like Jakarta and Chinese metropolises—which utilise lightweight and adaptable infrastructure—the Gazipur-Airport BRT has been implemented with permanent structures, including flyovers. This rigidity precludes future modifications, such as upgrading the corridor to accommodate a metro system—a critical limitation in a rapidly urbanising country like Bangladesh.

Furthermore, the corridor's repurposing from a national highway to a BRT system has disrupted its original functionality without meeting the needs of its users. Narrow footpaths and poorly placed infrastructure have further marginalised pedestrians, compounding the system's inefficiency.

**What lessons can be learnt from this project for urban transport planning in Bangladesh? What are your recommendations for the future?**

The Gazipur-Airport BRT project highlights the consequences of inadequate planning and coordination in urban transport. So, going ahead, Bangladesh must prioritise comprehensive and integrated transport strategies, addressing key issues such as narrow roads, unorganised bus services, and insufficient pedestrian infrastructure. To make urban transport smoother and more reliable, a franchising system for buses must be introduced to ensure better service. Different transport options, like BRT and metro rail, need to work together so that people can travel easily. This integration must be properly planned and executed, and a dedicated team should be formed under the public transport authority to keep things running efficiently. Safe, accessible walkways must also be prioritised instead of inconvenient footbridges. Finally, learning from successful BRT systems worldwide can help us find practical and affordable solutions that work for us.

## How the 7-college issue can be solved



Dr Samina Luthfa teaches at the Department of Sociology, Dhaka University.

SAMINA LUTHFA

The possibility of these seven colleges each becoming an independent university has been a long-debated topic. This presents significant challenges, however, given the scarcity of resources in terms of land, infrastructure, and supporting workforce. However, establishing one university for all seven colleges is viable.

The current model, in which the seven colleges are administered by Dhaka University (DU), has proven ineffective. The execution of this model has demonstrably strained the university's resources. Besides, DU teachers have received no real support to incorporate this added work pressure, leading to a slow, inefficient cycle where the students suffer the most losing years of their lives. This arrangement has not served the colleges either, because of persistent academic and administrative challenges as well as a lack of communication between the university administration and college authorities and students. With

no signs of improvement, the students have been rightfully demanding a change for years.

While this “unhappy marriage” has placed undue stress on all involved, the complexities of creating new universities necessitate careful consideration of various factors.

Two steps can help in solving this problem efficiently. The first is to establish an independent commission that can co-opt the four-member committee headed by the chairman of the University Grants Commission, which was created by the education ministry last month. This commission would be tasked with evaluating and addressing the students' demands. The second step is inclusive decision-making. All stakeholders, including diverse representatives from all seven colleges, must be involved in the decision-making process. This includes teachers, administrative high-ups, and some students from each of the seven colleges as well as some education

experts and government officials.

Internal resistance, particularly from within the colleges and even within the ministry, is anticipated. However, resolving the seven-college problem is paramount. The current uncertainty jeopardises the lives and futures of both students and teachers of Dhaka University and the seven colleges. I welcome the decisive move from the DU administration to sever ties with the seven colleges. This is good news for all involved.

Now, we need to prioritise addressing the issues of these colleges. First, we need to recognise that the teachers and students of these colleges are citizens as well as members of the academic community, and we have a responsibility to protect them from harm. Also, students are urged to remain peaceful and avoid provocation. Any escalation of the situation must be prevented. Patience and collaborative effort are essential for a resolution.

Reports from various sources indicate that provocation has been incited through some social media platforms, especially Facebook. It is crucial to identify and bring those involved in such instigation to book. The frequent formation of mobs, including cyber mobs targeting individuals, is deeply concerning. It is hoped that the authorities will hold perpetrators accountable.

For the sake of the colleges' future,

my humble proposal is to turn them into a federative collegiate university, where the colleges will be in charge of the education, syllabi and to some extent residence of the students. Unlike the Ox-Bridge model, I propose a University College, London model. However, it will be an interim option where the colleges/new umbrella university will gradually decide the nature of this union. The university can be an administrative body, looking after the admission and examination processes. Meanwhile, the umbrella university should admit only bachelor-level students and stop admitting higher secondary-level students. The colleges, meanwhile, can be transformed into Higher Secondary institutions, keeping the current teachers, admin staff, and higher secondary students. Existing teachers should be encouraged to join these seven government higher secondary colleges. The university authorities should initiate recruiting university faculty members for the institutions under the umbrella university. Existing faculty and staff need to be given enough time and benefits to get rehabilitated so that their transition can be smooth. However, this is just a proposal that can be tried out with the stakeholders in the seven colleges. They should be the ones deciding their future and their career, not anyone else.

# For stability, holding the national election should be prioritised



THE STREET VIEW

Mohammad Al-Masum Molla  
is a political commentator.  
He can be reached at masumjrn@gmail.com.

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The debate surrounding the timing of local government elections in Bangladesh has intensified in recent weeks, with some advocating for holding them before the national election. Doing so, however, may not lead to more harm than good, as organising and completing local elections could delay the national election, which may further deteriorate the country's already fragile law and order situation and its political instability.

One of the most pressing concerns is the time and logistical complexity of conducting local elections. With over 4,500 union parishads, municipalities and city corporations across the country, the process would take approximately one and a half years to complete. That would inevitably push back the national elections, leaving citizens

government remains in power.

Furthermore, local elections in Bangladesh have historically been plagued by violence and unrest. The competitive nature of local politics, often driven by major political parties, frequently turns these elections into battlegrounds, where violence is more of an expectation than an exception. Party-backed candidates, eager to assert control over local resources and power, often resort to muscle power, intimidation, and financial influence to secure victory. Given the current volatile political environment, it seems unlikely that this trend will change.

Therefore, holding local elections now, before the national election, would place additional strain on the already overburdened law enforcement agencies who are struggling

the opposition amid accusations of voter suppression and unfair practices. If local elections are allowed to take precedence, it would be a dereliction of duty to the people who have waited far too long for a fair and transparent national election.

Moreover, the interim government is not mandated to oversee local elections. Its primary responsibility is to conduct parliamentary elections, which are the

allow for robust local governance. In reality, however, these institutions have been reduced to ceremonial bodies with little real power. Local governments should ideally be self-governing, capable of managing resources, delivering services, and addressing the needs of their communities. Instead, they are often rendered powerless due to the centralisation of authority in Dhaka.

This centralisation, where bureaucrats

governments would erode their control over the population. Over time, local governments have become tools for political patronage, used to secure votes and political support for national elections. This manipulation of local government, coupled with entrenched corruption and weak institutions, has made the prospect of free and fair local elections an anathema to the political establishment.

There is no doubt that local governments must be empowered and freed from political interference. However, just holding local elections is not enough. It must be ensured that local governance bodies have the autonomy, resources, and authority to serve their communities effectively. Empowering local governments is not only necessary for improving governance but also for upholding the moral obligation enshrined in Bangladesh's constitution, which mandates elected representatives with local governance. The continuation of centralised power is a violation of this principle and undermines the democratic foundations of the nation.

Given that the major political parties in Bangladesh have promised to focus on national governance and reconciliation, it may be more judicious to hold local government elections after the parliamentary election is concluded. This would allow the formation of a stable national government, thereby reducing tensions related to local elections. The priority should be to stabilise the national political environment. Besides, the people of Bangladesh have waited long enough to vote, and the longer they are deprived of this right, the greater the risk of deepening social and political discontent.

While local governance is critical for ensuring effective and accountable government, holding local elections before national elections would only delay the democratic process and worsen political instability. Bangladesh cannot afford to sacrifice the national election process for the sake of local elections. The national election must be held first, followed by the empowerment of local governments in a manner that ensures peace and stability.



The competitive nature of local politics, often driven by major political parties, frequently turns local elections into battlegrounds.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

**Local elections in Bangladesh have historically been plagued by violence and unrest. The competitive nature of local politics, often driven by major political parties, frequently turns these elections into battlegrounds, where violence is more of an expectation than an exception. Party-backed candidates, eager to assert control over local resources and power, often resort to muscle power, intimidation, and financial influence to secure victory.**

waiting even longer to elect a new government. Considering Bangladesh's current situation, such a delay could be dangerous: it risks disillusioning voters, prolonging an already tense political situation, and extending the period during which the unelected interim

to improve the law and order situation across the country. Bangladesh is already in the midst of a prolonged political crisis. Citizens have been deprived of their right to vote for over a decade, with elections in 2014, 2018 and 2024 either boycotted or contested by

only legitimate way for the people to restore democratic legitimacy. Prioritising local elections before national elections risks undermining the role of the interim government and further delaying the democratic process.

The deep structural issues facing Bangladesh's local government system must also be addressed. The country's local governance framework is dysfunctional at best and entirely ineffectual at worst. Bangladesh has a multi-tier system of local government—comprising district, upazila, and union councils, along with municipalities and city corporations—which theoretically should

frequently control local councils, has stunted the development of local governments and their capacity to serve citizens effectively. Essential services that should be delivered at the community level, such as healthcare, education and infrastructure, are often delayed, disrupted or simply remain unavailable. Although elections are held every five years, the imposition of unelected officials and the central government's pervasive control over local councils frequently lead to a breakdown in local governance.

The root cause of this dysfunction lies in the vested interests of major political parties, who fear that empowering local

## Two cats in the yard



LETTERS FROM THE UK

Dr Geof Wood  
is a development anthropologist and author of several books and numerous journal articles, with a regional focus on South Asia. He is also emeritus professor of international development at the University of Bath, UK.

GEOF WOOD

Over the years, I have been in debt to Neil Young, the American songwriter and performer with a social heart. (With David Lewis and Rick Gregory, I once published *Trading the Silver Seed* [1996] about aquaculture in Bangladesh.) It is time to use him again with "two cats in the yard." Angela, my wife, and I have had two cats in our house in Bath, with an interval between them. Fudge died of old age (19 years) in December 2023; I was in Bangladesh and grieved quietly. We acquired Clover in May 2024; I was in Bangladesh and rejoiced quietly.

But Fudge and Clover tell a story between them. In common, they were both rescue cats, formally adopted by us. Fudge reflected a strong story of security and happiness, including in the garden surrounded by other cats and wildlife (badgers, foxes, squirrels). She managed the cat flap well, so she could choose her outside and inside timings. And she delivered many presents of beheaded rats to thank us for being in her service. Clover, by contrast, was found as a stray, in a sad condition, at just over a year old. She was brought back to physical health by the rescue home before being adopted by us. But was she restored to mental health, after her feral period, abandoned in the streets of Bath? She is intensely wary, highly alert to danger, suspicious of the cat flap to the garden, nervous and on her guard outside, and she needs safe spaces inside for lengthy periods of introversion and sleep—her version of "under the duvet."

It occurs to me that this feline contrast is an allegory for our times, as we move into 2025 with many heightened uncertainties immediately ahead of us. Security undermined for the erstwhile comfortable, a need to be constantly alert, sniffing the winds, searching for the cues, strategising in the context of political lunacy globally, while watching our more national and local leaders needing to tread a narrowing path of options for our well-being and welfare. Bangladesh is on the frontline of these dilemmas, while the UK is also on a tightrope albeit at a higher general standard of living but with high inequalities and

uncertain prospects with dangerous men (mainly men) lurking in the dark shadows of the dark web as well as neighbourhoods and corridors of power. There seems to be an overwhelming desire among near anarchic populations, an outcome of decades of alienating neoliberalism, to do harm to others. This desire in itself reflects inequalities—rich plutocrats controlling media platforms and tabloid newspapers to fire up street-level goondas with oversimple populist messages, to back up their divisive language



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

with envious thuggery, frequently othering racial and ethnic minorities. Sometimes, this process appears as culture wars classifying thought and action between woke and anti-woke, the latter deploying the dystopia of free speech in an uber libertarian sense to attack inclusive common sense. In the UK at present, we are experiencing an exaggerated version of this process through a Californian plutocrat attacking the very people who have done the most to address child abuse over the last two decades, while displaying a weird combination of ignorance and some compulsive desire to disrupt and upend responsible discourse.

rest of us. Disaffected and alienated global brownshirts, vicariously living out the plutocratic dream through beating up people and their institutions. January 6, 2021, in Washington DC, was a case in point with no prospect of redress. The US Constitution, designed in a different era of genteel elites (albeit content with slavery or its Jim Crow version) who could never imagine a degenerate in the White House, cannot prosecute a sitting president. Has Donald Trump in effect brown-shirted the US? And does this liberate other puppets and proteges around the world to do likewise? It seems to have already given out that licence.

The Southport killings of children in the UK last summer prompted riots all over the UK, mindlessly unconnected to those murders, but hitching a ride on racial othering before the identity of the perpetrator even emerged. Self-appointed vigilantes following plutocratic cues to terrorise grieving communities.

A reinforcing cause for concern is a recent poll among Gen Z and Millennials in Britain, which found that 21 percent agreed with the proposition that the best system was a strong leader without elections, contrasted to only eight percent above the age of 55. And this sentiment is strongest among men than women.

Where might we find the pushback to these tendencies? Where might a renewal of decency be found and nurtured? I have been reading Will Hutton's *This Time Make No Mistakes: How to Remake Britain*. The reference to "this time" is the incoming Labour and Starmer

government with a big landslide—albeit more artificial this time than for Blair in 1997. Hutton writes for *The Observer* in the UK—a left-of-centre, influential newspaper among socially progressive thinkers and activists (rather like *The Daily Star*), and has long advocated pragmatic social democratic politics, steering a course between individualist neoliberalism and over-dogmatic collectivism. He is a pragmatist with a social conscience. He lays out the room for manoeuvre in the present world to offer security and decent work with hope via state leadership to invest in productivity while protecting those disrupted by the innovation and changing labour markets, which is embedded in even socially acceptable capitalism. His agenda is the pursuit of the Polanyian critique that while capitalism might provide the bulk of livelihoods, the humane principle of welfare supports for disrupted humans cannot be left solely to the commoditised labour

market. There needs to be an element of decommodification through regulation and social insurance.

But as Bangladesh moves further into an industrialised and services economy, described by some like Debapriya Bhattacharya as the Fourth Industrial Revolution and away from the Faustian bargains of pre-capitalist agrarian relations, so the arguments encapsulated by Hutton will have more relevance and force for a country like Bangladesh. I would have his book on the reading list of any social science degree course around the world.

So, despite the gloom of advancing autocracy, I support the complex optimism of Hutton. He writes about the "We" society rather than the "I" society. Let us push these narcissistic disruptive forces to the margins and allow Clover, the new four-legged member of our household, the confidence to venture out with trust in the world around her to give her the secure space to be herself.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD)  
Jalampur Road Division, Jamalpur.  
Phone No.0981-63691  
email:eejam@rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.3936.430.00.003.25-

Date: 28-01-2025

e-Tender Notice

These are online Tenders, where only e-Tender 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>).

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by the Executive Engineer, RHD, Jamalpur Road Division, Jamalpur for the procurement of below mentioned work :

Tender ID	Pacakge No.	Name of works	Tender Security Submission Date and Time	Last Selling Time	Tender Closing Time
1069151	25 e-GP/Sup/JRD/2024-2025	Supplying of 196.00 Nos Skilled & 550.00 Nos Unskilled Labour for Routine Maintenance Work of Different Roads of Jamalpur Road Sub-Division-1, Under Road Division Jamalpur during the year 2024-2025.	20-02-2025 11.30	19-02-2025 17.00	20-02-2025 12.00
1069169	36-e-GP/JRD/2024-2025	Installation of Traffic Sign/Signal at Different Chainages of Jamalpur-Chachua -Muktachacha Road (R-462) and Jamalpur (Nandibazar)-Dhanua Kamalpur -Raumari -Datbhanga Road (R-464) of Jamalpur Road Division During the year 2024-2025.	20-02-2025 11.30	19-02-2025 17.00	20-02-2025 12.00
1069170	37-e-GP/JRD/2024-2025	Manufacture & Installation of Traffic Sign-Signal at different location of Joydebpur-Tangail-Jamalpur National Highway (N4) under Jamalpur Road Division during the year 2024-2025.	20-02-2025 11.30	19-02-2025 17.00	20-02-2025 12.00

GD-307

28.01.25

(Md. Nawajish Rahman Biswas)  
ID No-602246  
Executive Engineer (CC) RHD  
Road Division, Jamalpur

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

Ministry of Public Administration  
Government Employee Management System (GEMS)  
Bangladesh Secretariat  
Dhaka-1000

### Expression of Interest (Eoi) for Hiring IT Consultant

Ministry/Division	: Ministry of Public Administration
Agency	: Ministry of Public Administration
Procuring entity name	: Program Director, Government Employee Management System (GEMS)
Procuring entity code	: Not used at present
Procuring entity district	: Dhaka
Expression of interest for selection of	: Individual Consultant (National) (Time-Based)
EoI Ref No. and date	: 05.00.0000.248.07.002.25-035 Date 29/01/2025

## KEY INFORMATION

Procurement sub-method	:	Selection of Individual Consultants (SIC)
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## FUNDING INFORMATION

Budget and source of funds	:	GoB
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### PARTICULAR INFORMATION

Program name	:	Government Employee Management System (GEMS)
Scheme name	:	-

EOI closing date and time	:	EOI shall be submitted to the program office on or before <b>01:00pm, 20/02/2025</b> in sealed envelope delivered to the undersigned and be clearly marked "Request for Expressions of Interest for Selection of [Name of the position]". Contact address with email and mobile number of the applicant should be written on the left side of the envelope. Necessary documents in support of educational qualifications, experience and skills have to be submitted.
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## INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT

Title of Service	No. of service	Man month	Minimum qualification	Minimum general experience	Brief description of assignment
Senior Consultant (Database Designing) Package # MOPA/GE MS-SR-011	1	12	Master's in Computer Science and Engineering / Software Engineering, preferably in post-graduation or higher degree in the related subjects;	Minimum 10 years' experience in IT field; Minimum 2 years' experience in Government System Management; Must have DBA Certification from Oracle Must have knowledge in apache Cassandra and Elastic Search designing micro service application architecture using spring boot; Experience in developing and implementing IT systems for government organization; <b>and as per ToR.</b>	Work closely with the PD /Team Leader; Writing programming code and database designing for GEMS database.
Consultant (ICT Networking Specialist) Package # MOPA/GE MS-SR-014	1	12	Graduation in Computer Science / Computer Science and Engineering / Electronics & Telecommunication Engineering / Information and Communication Technology.	Minimum 5 year's experience in IT Infrastructure manages; Minimum 2 year's experience government projects infrastructure; Preferred Server and Infrastructure Professional Training and Certification; Preferred Vendor Certification of renowned network equipment manufacturer; Must have knowledge DevOps tools Docker, Jenkins, Kubernetes, Grafana, nginx, Kong ingress, Git, Nagios, SonarQube, Harbor, ArgoCD, Elasticsearch <b>and as per ToR.</b>	Work closely with the PD /Team Leader; Design, establishment and implementation of GEMS Network
Junior Consultant (Software /Apps Developer) Package # MOPA/GE MS-SR-017	2	12	Graduation in Computer Science and Engineering/ Software Engineering	Minimum 3 years' experience in software development; Minimum 2 years' experience in Working with JAVA, Spring Boot, Micro services, Apache, Kafka, Web socket, Git and Docker, Flutter Technologies; 1 Year working experience in government software Development Systems; <b>and as per ToR.</b>	Work closely with the Senior Consultant/ Team Leader Coding and implementing of GEMS
Junior Consultant (Front-end) Package # MOPA/GE MS-SR-018	2	12	Graduation in Computer Science and Engineering/Software Engineering;	Minimum 3 years' experience in Software Development with 2 years of solid experience in React framework. Minimum 1 year experience in working with Government Software Systems. 2 years of solid experience in Micro Frontend technology. Experience in socket programming is must. Strong proficiency on react core principles and workflows (Flux or Redux, Context API). Experience building custom Java script library for react application <b>and as per ToR.</b>	Work closely with the Senior Consultant (Front-end)/ Team Leader Coding and implementing of GEMS
Junior IT Consultant (Support Engineer) Package # MOPA/GE MS-SR-019	1	12	Graduation in Computer Science and Engineering / Software Engineering.	Minimum 2 years' experience in providing user software support; Minimum 1 years' experience in software development; Minimum 1 year Experience in figma design for UI/UX is preferable. <b>and as per ToR.</b>	Work closely with the Team Leader Provide day to day support and perform the tasks given by the senior consultants

Other details (if applicable)	:	A copy of the terms of reference (ToR), Request for Application (RFA) and necessary forms may be obtained from the office of the undersigned during 9.00 to 15.00 hours till <b>19/02/2025</b> and in website of Ministry of Public Administration.
Association with foreign firms is	:	Not applicable

### EOI DETAIL INFORMATION

Phasing of Services	Location	Start date	Completion date
Single: Time Based	Dhaka	March 2025	February 2026 (Renewable)

## PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

Name of official inviting EOI	:	Md. Parvez Hasan
Designation of official inviting EOI	:	Joint Secretary (PACC) & Program Director, Government Employee Management System (GEMS)
Address of official inviting EOI	:	Ministry of Public Administration, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka (Public Administration Computer Centre (PACC), Room No. 105/kha, Building-3)
Contact details of official inviting EOI	:	Mobile: 01723113306 Phone: 02-55100512, Email: <a href="mailto:gems@mopa.gov.bd">gems@mopa.gov.bd</a>
Detail information available in the website	:	<a href="http://www.mopa.gov.bd">www.mopa.gov.bd</a>

**The procuring entity reserves all the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs**

29/01/2025

**Md. Parvez Hasan**  
Joint Secretary (PACC)  
&  
Program Director  
Government Employee Management System  
Ministry of Public Administration  
E-mail: [gems@mopa.gov.bd](mailto:gems@mopa.gov.bd)

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষ  
প্রশাসন শাখা

সেতু ভবন, বনানী, ঢাকা-১২১২।

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

આચાર્ય નં-૬૦,૦૧,૦૦૦૦,૧૦૭,૧૧,૦૦૨,૨૦-૬૪

তারিখ: ১৫ মাঘ ১৪৩১  
২৯ জানুয়ারি ২০২৫

## নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষের রাজস্বখাতভুক্ত নিম্নলিখিত পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের জন্য নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে অনলাইনে (<https://eservice.bba.gov.bd/recruitment/> ওয়েবসাইটে) দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম, বেতনস্কেল ও গ্রেড (জাতীয় বেতনস্কেল, ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী)	পদ সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাপত্র যোগ্যতা/অভিজ্ঞতা
১.	এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাইরেক্টর বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/- (গ্রেড-২)	০২ (দুই)টি	শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে অনূর্ন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণির স্নাতকোত্তর বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি।
২.	এসিস্ট্যান্ট ইঞ্জিনিয়ার (সিভিল) বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/- (গ্রেড-২)	০২ (দুই)টি	শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে সিভিল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং এ স্নাতক ডিগ্রি।
৩.	সহকারী প্রোগ্রামার বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/- (গ্রেড-২)	০১ (এক)টি	শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স/কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/ইলেক্ট্রিক্যাল এন্ড ইলেকট্রনিক্স ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/ইনফরমেশন এন্ড কমিউনিকেশন টেকনোলজি সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে অনূর্ন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণির স্নাতক (সম্মান) বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি।
৪.	এসিস্ট্যান্ট মেইনটেন্যান্স ইঞ্জিনিয়ার বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/- (গ্রেড-২)	০১ (এক)টি	শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স/কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/ইলেক্ট্রিক্যাল এন্ড ইলেকট্রনিক্স ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/ইনফরমেশন এন্ড কমিউনিকেশন টেকনোলজি সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে অনূর্ন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণির স্নাতক (সম্মান) বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি।
৫.	এসিস্টেন্ট/সাব-এসিস্ট্যান্ট ইঞ্জিনিয়ার (সিভিল) বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ১৬০০০ - ৩৮৬৪০/- (গ্রেড-১০)	০২ (দুই)টি	শ্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে সিভিল এ অনূর্ন ০৪ (চার) বৎসর মেয়াদি ডিপ্লোমা।
৬.	কম্পিউটার অপারেটর বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ১১০০০ - ২৬৫২০/- (গ্রেড-১৩)	০৭ (সাত)টি	(ক) শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে স্নাতক (সম্মান) বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; এবং (খ) কম্পিউটার মুরাকরে সর্বনিম্ন গতি প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ২৫ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজি ৩০ শব্দসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে Standard Aptitude Test এ উত্তীর্ণ।
৭.	সীটলিপিকার-কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ১১০০০ - ২৬৫২০/- (গ্রেড-১৩)	০৩ (তিন)টি	(ক) শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে অনূর্ন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিভিলিএতে স্নাতক বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; (খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা; (গ) সীটলিপি সর্বনিম্ন গতি প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ৫০ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ৮০ শব্দ; এবং (ঘ) কম্পিউটার মুরাকরে সর্বনিম্ন গতি প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ২৫ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ৩০ শব্দ।
৮.	কানুনগো বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ১১০০০ - ২৬৫২০/- (গ্রেড-১৩)	০১ (এক)টি	শ্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে অনূর্ন ০৪ (চার) বৎসর মেয়াদি সার্ভে (জরিপ) ডিপ্লোমা।
৯.	সীটমুরাকরিক-কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ১০২০০ - ২৪৬৮০/- (গ্রেড-১৪)	১১ (এগারো)টি	(ক) শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে অনূর্ন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিভিলিএতে স্নাতক বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; (খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা; (গ) সীটলিপি সর্বনিম্ন গতি প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ৪৫ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ৭০ শব্দ; এবং (ঘ) কম্পিউটার মুরাকরে সর্বনিম্ন গতি প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ২৫ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ৩০ শব্দ।
১০.	ক্যাশিয়ার বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ১০২০০ - ২৪৬৮০/- (গ্রেড-১৪)	০১ (এক)টি	(ক) শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে ব্যবসায় শিক্ষা বিভাগে অনূর্ন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিভিলিএতে স্নাতক বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; এবং (খ) হিসাব ও অডিট অথবা অনুরূপ ক্ষেত্রে অনূর্ন ০২ (দুই) বৎসরের চাকরি অভিজ্ঞতা।
১১.	একাউন্ট এসিস্ট্যান্ট বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ১০২০০ - ২৪৬৮০/- (গ্রেড-১৪)	০১ (এক)টি	(ক) শ্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে ব্যবসায় শিক্ষা বিভাগে অনূর্ন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিভিলিএতে স্নাতক বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; এবং (খ) সংশ্লিষ্ট ক্ষেত্রে অনূর্ন ০২ (দুই) বৎসরের বাস্তব অভিজ্ঞতা।
১২.	ডাটা এন্ট্রি অপারেটর বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ৯৩০০ - ২২৪২০/- (গ্রেড-১৬)	০১ (এক)টি	(ক) শ্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ; এবং (খ) কম্পিউটার মুরাকরে সর্বনিম্ন গতি প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ২০ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজি ২০ শব্দসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে Standard Aptitude Test এ উত্তীর্ণ।
১৩.	অফিস সহকারী-কাম-কম্পিউটার মুরাকরিক বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ৯৩০০ - ২২৪২০/- (গ্রেড-১৬)	১৪ (চৌদ্দ)টি	(ক) শ্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে অনূর্ন দ্বিতীয় বিভাগ বা সমমানের জিপিএতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ; (খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা; এবং (গ) কম্পিউটার মুরাকরে সর্বনিম্ন গতি প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ২০ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ২০ শব্দ।
১৪.	সার্ভেয়ার বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ৯৩০০ - ২২৪২০/- (গ্রেড-১৬)	০১ (এক)টি	শ্বীকৃত ইনস্টিটিউট হতে সার্ভে (জরিপ) ডিপ্লোমা।
১৫.	ডেইনম্যান বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ৮২৫০ - ২০০১০/- (গ্রেড-২০)	০২ (দুই)টি	শ্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট (এসএসসি) বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ।
১৬.	অফিস সহায়ক বেতনস্কেল: টাকা ৮২৫০ - ২০০১০/- (গ্রেড-২০)	১৬ (ষোল)টি	শ্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট (এসএসসি) বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ।

০২। আবেদনের শর্ত ও পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের নিয়মাবলী :

০১. সকল পক্ষে ০১.০২.২০২১ খ্রি. তারিখে প্রার্থীর বয়স ১৮ থেকে ৩২ বছরের মধ্যে হতে হবে। বয়স প্রমাণের ক্ষেত্রে এক্ষেত্রে প্রণয়োগ্য নয়;
০২. মহামান্য সুপ্রীম কোর্টের অঙ্গীল বিকাশের দায়েরকৃত সিভিল আপীল নং ৪৬০/২০১৭ (সিভিল রিভিউ পিটিশন-১৬১/২০১৬) এর রায়ে অনুযায়ী বাংলাদেশে সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষের অঙ্গীল চলমানসমগ্র প্রকল্পে কর্মরত প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স শিথিলযোগ্য। তবে মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় বাংলাদেশে সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষের অঙ্গীল চলমানসমগ্র প্রকল্পের নিয়োগপত্রের মূলকপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে;
০৩. সরকারি, আধা-সরকারি, স্বায়ত্বশাসিত, অস্বাধীন বেসরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মরত প্রার্থীগণকে যথাস্থ কর্তৃপক্ষের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে হবে। অনাধার্য ঐ আবেদন প্রণয়নের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারের বিধানমালা বিধিবিধান এবং পরবর্তীতে এ সংক্রান্ত কোনো সংশোধন হলে তা অনুসরণ করা হবে;
০৪. নির্বাচিত প্রার্থীদের বেতন-ভাতা ও অন্যান্য সুযোগ-সুবিধা বাংলাদেশে সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্মরত চাকরি প্রবিধানমালা, ২০২০ দ্বারা নিয়ন্ত্রিত হবে;
০৫. বেতনমাত্র নির্ধারিত সিদ্ধি, মৌখিক ও ব্যবহারিক (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে) পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীগণের মধ্যে হতে প্রচলিত বিধি-বিধান অনুসরণপূর্বক যোগ্য প্রার্থীদের চূড়ান্ত নিয়োগের জন্য সুপারিশ করা হবে;
০৬. প্রার্থীকে সিদ্ধি, মৌখিক এবং প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে। পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোনো টিএ/ডিও প্রদান করা হবে না;
০৭. অনিবার্য কারণে নিয়োগ প্রক্রিয়া স্থগিত/বাতিল/প্রত্যাহার/সংশোধন করার সম্পূর্ণ ক্ষমতা নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করে;
০৮. বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত পদের সংখ্যা হ্রাস/বৃদ্ধি করার ক্ষমতা নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করে;
০৯. নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত বিষয়ে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

০৩। অনলাইনে আবেদন প্রক্রিয়া :

০১. আবেদনপত্র দাখিলের সময়সীমা: আগামী ১১.০৩.২০২৩ তারিখ সকাল ১০.০০ টা থেকে ১১.০৩.২০২৩ তারিখ বিকাল ৪.০০ টা পর্যন্ত; কি জমাধানের ক্ষেত্রে সময়: আবেদনের পরবর্তী ৩৫ (বাহ্যতঃ) ঘণ্টা।

০২. আবেদনকারী বাংলাদেশে নেতৃত্ব কর্তৃপক্ষের ওয়েবসাইট [www.bba.gov.bd](http://www.bba.gov.bd) তে প্রবেশ করে e-Recruitment Menu অথবা <https://eservice.bba.gov.bd/recruitment/> এর মাধ্যমে আবেদন করতে পারবেন;

০৩. আবেদনপত্রে প্রার্থীকে তার রশ্মিন ছবি (যেখান ৩০০ x প্রস্থ ৩০০ পিক্সেল) এবং স্বাক্ষর (যেখান ৩০০ x প্রস্থ ৮০ পিক্সেল) স্থান করে নির্ধারিত স্থানে আপলোড করতে হবে। ছবি ও স্বাক্ষরের সাইজ সর্বোচ্চ ৫০০-এর মধ্যে হতে হবে;

০৪. নির্ভুলভাবে আবেদনপত্র Submit করার পর প্রার্থী ছবি ও স্বাক্ষরসহ একটি Auto Generated Registration Card পাবেন। সফলভাবে আবেদন করার পর আবেদনকারীর মোবাইল এসএমএস-এ একটি User ID ও Password প্রেরণ করা হবে। উক্ত রেজিস্ট্রেশন কার্ডে কি পরিশোধের নির্দেশনা দেয়া যাবে। রেজিস্ট্রেশন কার্ডটি প্রিন্ট করে সংরক্ষণ করতে হবে;

০৫. প্রার্থীকে সফলভাবে আবেদনপত্র Submit করার ১৫ (বাহ্যতঃ) ঘণ্টার মধ্যে SSLCOMMERZ ব্যবহার করে CARD/MOBILE BANKING/NET BANKING-এ পদীকার কি বাবদ (অফেচডায়েন্স) ত্রিমিক নং ০১ থেকে ০৬ পর্যন্ত প্রতিটি পদের জন্য ২০০ টাকা, ত্রিমিক নং ০৬ থেকে ১৪ পর্যন্ত প্রতিটি পদের জন্য ৩০০ টাকা এবং ত্রিমিক নং ১৫ থেকে ১৬ পর্যন্ত প্রতিটি পদের জন্য ৫০ টাকা পরিশোধ করতে হবে। অন্যদূর নির্ধারণের জন্য প্রতিটি পদের জন্য ৫০ টাকা পরিশোধ করতে হবে। উল্লেখ্য, প্রতিটি পদের জন্য পদীকার ফির সাথে অনশাইন কি বাবদ ১০ টাকা অতিরিক্ত পরিশোধ করতে হবে। আবেদন করার ৭২ (বাহ্যতঃ) ঘণ্টার মধ্যে কি পরিশোধে ব্যর্থ হলে আবেদনপত্র বাতিল হয়ে পধ্য হবে।

০৬. User ID ও Password দিয়ে প্রার্থী নিজস্ব তথ্য উক্ত ওয়েবসাইটে লিঙ্গত হবে পুনরুদ্ধার করতে পারবেন;

০৭. **১ম ধাপ:** আবেদনের পর ৩৫ঘণ্টার মধ্যে e-Recruitment Menu-এ ক্লিক করে লগইন অপশন 'Applicant Login' বাটনে ক্লিক করুন;

২য় ধাপ: User ID ও Password প্রদান করে Applicant Dashboard-এ প্রবেশ করুন;

৩য় ধাপ: 'Payment Information/Download Admit Card' সেলুতে ক্লিক করুন;

৪র্থ ধাপ: 'Pay Online' লিংক-এ ক্লিক করলে পর একটি পপআপ উইন্ডো আসবে। পপআপ উইন্ডো এর 'CARD/MOBILE BANKING/NET BANKING' নির্বাচন করার পর ফ্রিনে প্রদত্ত নির্দেশনা মোতাবেক তথ্য প্রদান করে কি পরিশোধ করতে হবে;

৫ম ধাপ: সফলভাবে কি পরিশোধ হয়ে গেলে 'Transaction Successful Your Payment has been successfully completed...' মেসেজ দেখাবে এবং

৬ষ্ঠ ধাপ: আবেদনকারী প্রবেশপত্র ডাউনলোড ও প্রিন্ট করে সংরক্ষণ করবেন।

০৮. বাংলাদেশ সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষের Website ([www.bba.gov.bd](http://www.bba.gov.bd)) এবং প্রার্থীর মোবাইল ফোনে SMS এর মাধ্যমে (কেবল যোগ্য প্রার্থীদেরকে) পরীক্ষার তারিখ, স্থান ও সময় জানিয়ে দেয়া হবে।

০৪। প্রার্থীর যোগ্যতা যাচাই :

০১. প্রার্থী কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত কোনো তথ্য বা দাখিলকৃত কাগজপত্র জাল, মিথ্যা বা ভুল প্রমাণিত হলে কিংবা পরীক্ষায় নকল বা অসদুপায় অবলম্বন করলে, সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রার্থীর প্রার্থিতা বাতিল করা হবে এবং তীর বিরুদ্ধে যথাযথ আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে। ভুল তথ্য, জাল কাগজপত্র প্রদর্শিত হলে পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ যে কোনো প্রার্থীর আবেদন বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করে;

০২. মৌকিক পরীক্ষার সময় প্রাণীকে নিয়ন্ত্রণিত কাজজপত্রের মূলকপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে এবং ০১ (এক) সেট সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি জমা দিতে হবে;

১) সনক শিক্ষাপণ্ডা যোগাধার সনপদ; ২) অডিভিতা সনপদ (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে); ৩) জাতীয় পরিচয় পত্র/জন্ম সনদ (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে); ৪) বাংলাদেশের নাগরিকত্ব প্রমাণের সনদ হিসাবে সংশ্লিষ্ট ইনিয়ন পরিষদ/পৌরসভা/সিটি করপোরেশন প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্ব সনদ; ৫) প্রথম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক প্রস্তুত চারিত্রিক সনদপত্র; ৬) কোটা দ্বারী সনদসমূহে প্রাণীকে বর্ষে বর্ষে নীতিহীন অনুযায়ী স্বাথ্যত্ব কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদ/প্রমাণপত্রের কপি; ৭) সংশ্লিষ্ট তোলা ০৪ (চার) কপি পদসপাত সাইজের রঙিন ছবি; ৮) প্রদত্ত ইনসেট অনুযায়ী নতুন পুরনো তথ্যের তালিকা তৈরির প্রস্টেড কপি।

০৩. যদি কোনো প্রাণী বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক না হন কিংবা বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক নন এমন কোনো ব্যক্তিকে বিয়ে করেন বা করার জন্য প্রচেষ্টা করতেন হন কিংবা কোনো মৌজদারি আদালত কর্তৃক নৈতিক স্বলনজনিত অভিযোগে দণ্ডিত হন কিংবা কোনো সরকারি বা স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠান বা স্থানীয় কর্তৃপক্ষের চাকরি হতে বরখাস্ত হয়ে থাকেন এবং উক্তস্বপ্ন বরখাস্তের পর দুই বছর অতিক্রান্ত না হয়ে থাকে, তবে তিনি আবেদন করার জন্য যোগ্য বিবেচিত হবেন না।

০৫। বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাংলাদেশ সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষের Website: [www.bba.gov.bd](http://www.bba.gov.bd)-তে পাওয়া যাবে। এই নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি সম্পর্কিত কোনো সংশোধন, সংযোজন (যদি থাকে) বাংলাদেশ সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষের নিজস্ব ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে; এবং

০৬। ই-রিজিট্রেশন সংক্রান্ত যে কোন সমস্যা হলে সহায়তা : ফোন- ০১৭০০৭১৬৩৩২ অথবা ০১৭০০৭১৬৪৯৯ (সকাল ০৯ হতে বিকাল ০৫ টা), ইমেইল : [ap@bba.gov.bd](mailto:ap@bba.gov.bd)

২২/০৩/২০২৫  
(এ এফ এম তাজুল ইসলাম)  
উপপরিচালক (প্রশাসন)  
বাংলাদেশ সেতু কর্তৃপক্ষ

## Milestone man SMITH stands tall

Steve Smith stood unbeaten on 104 after crossing 10,000 Test runs as he and fellow centurion Usman Khawaja, also unbeaten on 147, helped Australia pile up 330-2 in 81.1 overs before rain stopped play on Day 1 after the tourists elected to bat first against Sri Lanka in Galle at the start of the two-match series yesterday.

- Smith took the crease in the first session with 9,999 runs and calmly nudged his very first delivery to mid-on for a single off Prabath Jayasuriya.
- He became the 15th batter to 10,000 Test runs and only the fourth Australian to achieve the feat after Allan Border, Steve Waugh and Ricky Ponting.
- This was Smith's 35th Test hundred and the right-hander is now just next to Alastair Cook in the list of most Test hundreds in Asia by a visiting captain. Cook leads the chart with six tons in



PHOTO:AFP

26 innings in Asia while this was Smith's fifth century in 22 innings in the continent.

Smith and left-handed opener Khawaja put on an

unbeaten stand of 195 for the third wicket -- just five runs short of the highest third-wicket stand by an Australian duo in Sri Lanka. Adam Gilchrist and Damien Martyn's 200-run stand in Kandy in 2004 is the highest in this regard.

## 'They paid me nothing'

SPORTS REPORTER

In the latest episode of the country's most popular cricketing soap opera, also known as the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), Sri Lankan all-rounder Lahiru Samarakoon has left the Durbar Rajshahi camp, claiming to have received "nothing" in the form of payments.

The 27-year-old left for Sri Lanka on Wednesday after warming the bench for Rajshahi since playing in their opening fixture against Fortune Barishal on December 30 in which he conceded 64 runs from his four overs in Mirpur.

"They [Durbar Rajshahi] have given me nothing, zero," he told The Daily Star on Wednesday.

Durbar Rajshahi have been at the centre of the payment-related drama, failing to make player payments on several occasions. The players had boycotted a practice session in Chattogram over payment issues and upon returning to Dhaka, they played a match without any foreign players -- an unprecedented event in the history of the tournament -- after they refused to take the field for not being paid.

Samarakoon had already filed a complaint to the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on January 21, saying that he had not received "a single penny".



## Rangpur's rough run reshapes playoffs race

SPORTS REPORTER

Rangpur Riders' late-tournament slump, while not jeopardising their top two finish in the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), has created opportunities for Durbar Rajshahi and Chittagong Kings.

Rajshahi have completed their 12 league matches, securing back-to-back wins over high-flying Rangpur to reach fourth place. Chittagong -- another team at the heart of this BPL's players' payment issues -- following yesterday's five-wicket win against Rangpur are now in contention for a top-four spot with two matches remaining.

Khulna Tigers, meanwhile, are the only other side vying for a playoff place alongside Rajshahi and Chittagong.

Despite having started the league phase with eight wins on the trot, Rangpur lost a bit of firepower as Englishman Alex Hales left for ILT20, Pakistan's Khushdil Shah departed for the Champions Trophy camp, while Soumya Sarkar only returned following an injury.

At Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, the game hung in the balance when Chittagong needed 20 runs from three overs. However, Haider Ali's four consecutive sixes off Akif Javed sealed the game.

Asked if the departure of foreign stars hampered their momentum, Rangpur batter Saif Hassan said, "We won three matches even after Alex Hales went back. I think we've lost our momentum a bit.

We have to bring back the momentum. We've got a match left, that's very important. If we can win that, I hope we will get through to the final straight."

However, it will be difficult to find an immediate replacement for Khushdil, who played important knocks in Rangpur's early forays this season. The franchise will now look to finish on a high with their last match against Khulna Tigers today, a do-or-die affair



for the latter.

While Khulna face an uphill task against Rangpur, Chittagong can ensure third spot in the table with a win against Sylhet Strikers, a franchise already out of contention for the playoffs.

Damage control on agenda

Rajshahi and Chittagong have been through extraordinary circumstances that have highlighted the mismanagement of the ongoing BPL. Yesterday, the BPL governing

council once again sat with the franchise owners over payment issues. However, Chittagong's representatives were unable to attend.

It was learned that incentives would be given to all four teams that make the playoffs. "The tournament's prize money was increased," a BCB source said. Asked if it would help with payments for the franchises, the source obliged by saying, "Something like that."

It is also likely that ticket sales money will be shared with the franchises, but it could not be determined whether all seven franchises would get a share.

The board's leniency and struggle to get the BPL on to the field have led to intense criticism. The board may have reminded the owners about their commitments and responsibilities, but damage control appears to be of importance as the BPL nears its conclusion.

## United, Spurs eye Europa League last 16

AFP, Manchester

Manchester United and Tottenham are among the sides aiming to ensure direct passage to the Europa League last 16 in Thursday's league phase finale with nine places in the knockout stages up for grabs.

The struggling English giants are labouring in the bottom half of the Premier League table but do sit in the top eight of the Europa League.

United boss Ruben Amorim is desperate to have two free midweeks for extra time on the training field to try and imbed his ideas after a turbulent first two months in charge.

United have found Europe's second-tier competition much easier to negotiate than domestic duties with four consecutive wins meaning they just need a point away to FCSB.

The Romanian champions, though, can also secure a top-eight finish should they pull off a famous victory.

"We have to surpass ourselves, but we have done this before many times, so we will do it again," said FCSB striker Florin Tanase.

Spurs manager Ange Postecoglou is clinging to his job by a thread after a disastrous run of six Premier League defeats in seven games plunged Tottenham into a relegation battle.

A mounting injury list has been a major factor in their troubles and victory over Elfsborg in north London could buy Postecoglou time to get some of his star names back for the last 16.

## Women's training rocked by boycott

SPORTS REPORTER

The endless loop of hope and despair of Bangladesh women's football team took a turn for the worse on Wednesday after some senior players boycotted the planned first training session with head coach Peter Butler, who returned to Dhaka following a contract extension recently.

According to sources inside the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), a section of senior players of the team skipped the training session, which was supposed to be held at the BUET ground, after having declined to sit for a meeting with the English coach.

Butler had guided the women's team to successful defence of SAFF Women's Championship in October last year, despite having been at odds with the senior players throughout the campaign in Kathmandu.

Despite the public rift between the coach and the senior players, BFF's women's wing chairman and executive committee member Mahfuza Akter Kiron had repeatedly insisted that Butler was the right person for the job. Eventually, Butler, a former English Premier League footballer, was handed a contract extension for two more years, which will see him guide the team AFC Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers in June this year, the SAFF Championship and the Asian Games next year apart from FIFA friendlies.



The team comprising 30 players had started their preparation under assistant coach Mahbubur Rahman Litu from January 15 as part of preparation for two FIFA friendlies against hosts UEA on Feb 26 and March 2.

None of the players could be reached for a comment on the issue, but it was learnt that the players had also demanded a renewal of contracts, which had expired in October last year.

"I am working on this matter [dispute between players and the coach] and I can't tell you anything more until tomorrow," women's wing chairman Kiron told The Daily Star.

Asked whether they sat with the senior players before reappointing Butler following the dispute, Kiron said, "It is better to ask the BFF president about this because the BFF president reappointed Butler."

While it is true that Tabith, also a businessman and a politician, did make the final call on the coach's reappointment, women's football is Kiron's portfolio and it was her job to ensure the thaw between the coach and the senior players is broken before he takes charge of the team again.

Whether Butler is the sole reason for the training boycott or the fact that the unresolved issue of the contract extension of women footballers is involved here, the situation is a sad one for the players because they are the ones who are suffering. They are suffering because they are not treated with enough respect, whether in terms of meeting their financial demands or in terms of taking their opinion into consideration.



PHOTO: FORTUNE BARISHAL

Left-arm spinner Tanvir Islam was the wrecker-in-chief yesterday as he finished with figures of three for just two runs in his two overs, including a wicket-maiden, to help Fortune Barishal bundle out Dhaka Capitals for 73 in 15.3 overs -- the lowest total in this edition of the Bangladesh Premier League. Barishal chased the total down in just 6.3 overs -- a BPL record fastest chase -- to win the contest by nine wickets in Mirpur, confirming a top-two finish.



Nigeria players celebrate after closing out their Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup campaign with a hard-fought six-run win over Ireland on the final day of the Super Six stage in Bangi, Malaysia yesterday. Having qualified as the first West African nation to feature in the competition, Nigeria finished third in Group 2 with just a point less than second-placed England -- who made it through to the semifinals along with unbeaten group champions South Africa. Nigeria also recorded their first-ever win in the tournament with a dramatic two-run victory over New Zealand earlier in the group stage.

PHOTO: ICC

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# Binimoy 'linked to Joy's shell company'

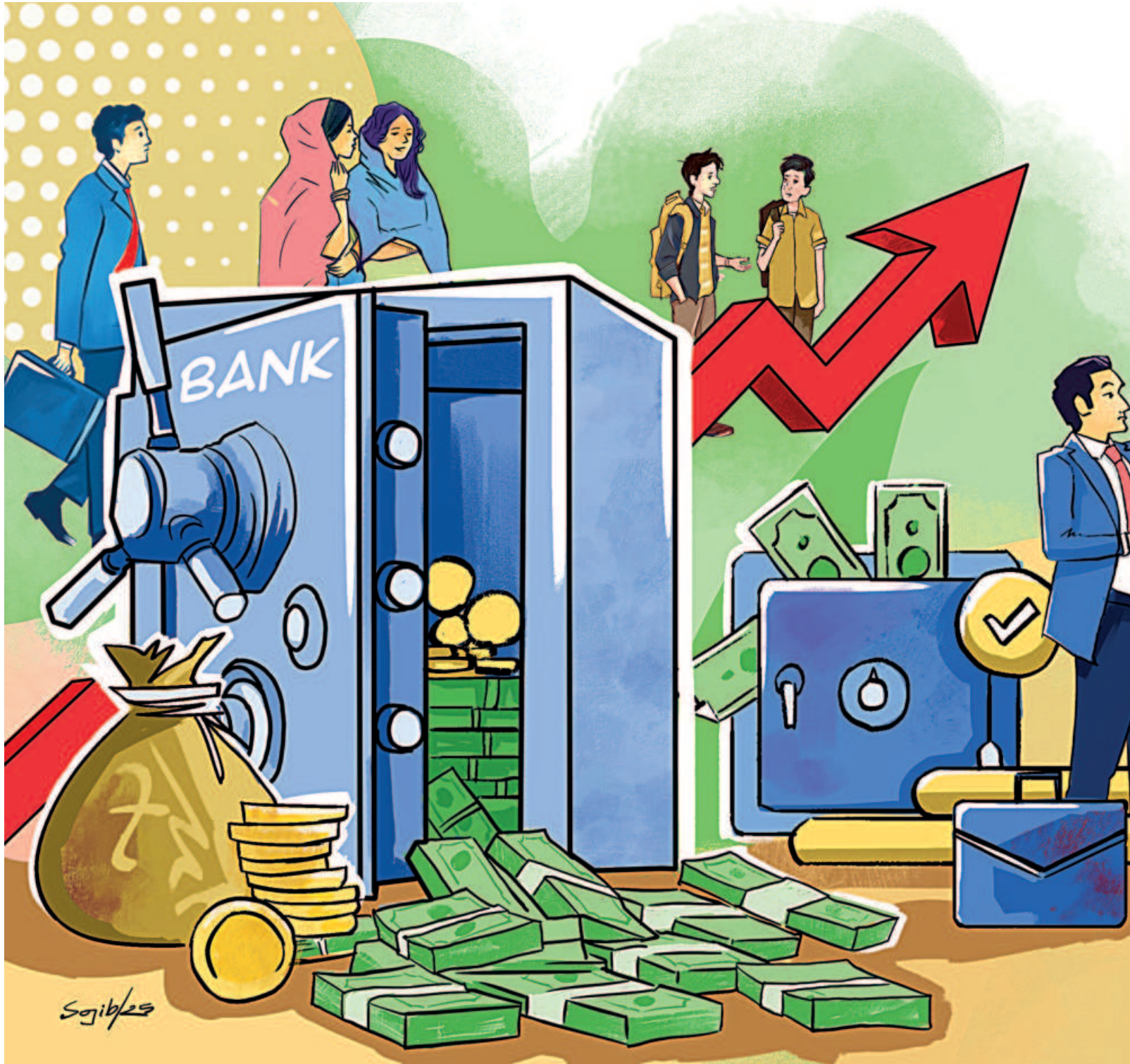
## Ahsan Mansur tells Prothom Alo roundtable

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Binimoy, a platform to transfer money from one bank or mobile financial service to another, was linked to a shell company opened by Sajeeb Wazed Joy, Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur said yesterday.

Sheikh Hasina's son Joy created the shell company to introduce Binimoy, which is no longer functioning, after the previous government handed the work over to the ICT ministry, Mansur said.

He was speaking at a roundtable titled "Challenges and Prospects of Digital Transactions: VAT Hike Perspective", organised by the Prothom Alo at its office in Dhaka yesterday.



## FANTASTIC 5

### Banks Surpassing Tk 2,000 Crore in Operating Profit

PRIYAM PAUL

In a year marked by financial uncertainty, five banks in Bangladesh have emerged as beacons of resilience and trust. Islami Bank, already a leader in the sector, has been joined by BRAC Bank, City Bank, Pubali Bank, and Dutch-Bangla Bank in reaching the coveted Tk 2,000 crore milestone in operating profit.

This milestone is not just about numbers; it is a testament to their strategic foresight, customer confidence, and ability to navigate a volatile financial landscape.

SEE PAGE J3

ILLUSTRATION: SOJIB ROY



Year	Operating Profit (Taka in Million)
2013	5,052
2014	5,812
2015	6,756
2016	6,120
2017	7,546
2018	9,050
2019	12,024
2020	10,921
2021	12,284
2022	13,250
2023	15,029
2024	22,853

Taka in Million

## It Wasn't Possible Without YOU

At Dutch-Bangla Bank, our success is built on your trust and partnership. Achieving Tk 2,285 crore in operating profit for 2024 celebrates not just our financial strength but the trust on us of 63 million clients.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Together, we're building a stronger, resilient Bangladesh.



### Dutch-Bangla Bank

YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER

# CUSTOMERCONFIDENCE Drives Our Growth



to reaching this milestone despite the current challenges in the banking sector?  
**AKMS:** We are now a happy family of over 6.30 crore customers, who have contributed to a substantial amount of low-cost deposits for the bank.  
The bank maintains a strong liquidity base and has sufficient capital to finance large corporates. We have kept NPLs at 3.71%,

areas for reform in the banking sector, and how should they be addressed to ensure long-term stability and development?  
**AKMS:** The world is moving towards cashless transactions. Cash transactions should be made costly, while electronic transactions should be kept free, to discourage cash use and encourage digital payments. To popularize QR payments,

**ABUL KASHEM MD SHIRIN**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR & CEO, DUTCH-BANGLA BANK

**The Daily Star (TDS):** Your bank has recently achieved an annual operating profit surpassing Tk 2,000 crore. What does this milestone signify for your organization?  
**Abul Kashem Md Shirin (AKMS):** Customer confidence is the key to our success. Keeping customer needs in mind, we have consistently launched segmented products such as Mobile Banking (Rocket), Agent Banking, VIP Banking, and Offshore Banking. These products have been widely accepted by the masses.  
Our Core Banking, Retail, SME, Corporate, Treasury, and Digital products are developed based on customer needs. Through Branch Banking, Agent Banking, Mobile Banking (Rocket), CRM, and ATMs, we have established the largest banking network in the country.  
The bank's card, IT systems, and data center are PCI DSS, ISO/IEC 27001:2013, and Tier-4 certified. Moreover, the bank has two Active-Active data centers.  
All these initiatives make Dutch-Bangla Bank a trusted and reliable brand in the banking sector of Bangladesh.  
**TDS:** What key factors contributed

which is in the lower bracket of the industry.  
Dutch-Bangla Bank is a tech-savvy bank, with 8,250 units of ATMs/CRMs, which make up more than half of the country's total ATMs/CRMs. These ATMs/CRMs are set up across Bangladesh, including in remote areas.  
We also have a widely used app, NexusPay, which can be used both locally and internationally. NexusPay is the first fully cardless solution in Bangladesh.  
**TDS:** Looking ahead, what strategies do you have in place to ensure continued growth and adaptability?  
**AKMS:** In line with the current generation's needs, Dutch-Bangla Bank is preparing to launch several new digital banking services, with some already ready for launch. Furthermore, arrangements have been made for further financial inclusion through more innovative services.  
The bank has established sub-branches in each Upazila of the country and agent outlets in each union/hat bazar so that rural people can access banking services at their doorstep.  
**TDS:** What are the most critical

banks need to install QR codes in rural retail shops, allowing customers to make cashless transactions easily and freely.  
Banking will be significantly impacted by technology, and new digital products will alter the landscape. Therefore, more investment needs to be made in technology, with a focus on cybersecurity.  
Initiatives must be taken to bring banking services to the doorsteps of expatriates, allowing them to easily send foreign currency back home from abroad.

**Dutch-Bangla Bank is a tech-savvy bank, with 8,250 units of ATMs/CRMs, which make up more than half of the country's total ATMs/CRMs. These ATMs/CRMs are set up across Bangladesh, including in remote areas.**

# PEOPLE TRUST Our Brand



trouble, how long can I remain unaffected since I carry systemic risk on my shoulders?  
So, there is joy, and there is trepidation.  
**TDS:** What key factors contributed to this achievement despite challenges in the banking sector?  
**MA:** It's a combination of courageous decision-making,

core banking business to exceed 81%.  
A major investment will take place in the digital space in 2025. We have already started to launch across the organisation our new core institutional philosophy, which is: happy employees generate happy customers, which generate happy shareholders. This philosophy works well if

**MASHRUR AREFIN**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR & CEO, CITY BANK

**The Daily Star (TDS):** Your bank has recently achieved an annual operating profit surpassing Tk 2,000 crore. What does this milestone signify for your organization?  
**Mashrur Arefin (MA):** This milestone is much more than a financial number for City Bank. It's a deeply personal and collective achievement—a testament to the dedication and resilience of our team, who dreamed of reaching Tk 2,000 crore in operating profit within a year from Tk 1,350 crore. And, in the end, we reached nearly Tk 2,400 crore.  
It feels especially significant because the banking landscape here is generally in tatters; it's highly earthquake-prone and uncertain. Customers are struggling to get their deposits back from many banks; many banks face basic capital shortfalls if proper audits on their loan books are conducted. In a country like this, City Bank's deposits grew by Tk 13,000 crore in just one year.  
But this has two sides. First, it means that people trust our brand. Second, when a larger section of the industry is in

employee happiness, our overall customer-centric innovation, resilience in risk management, our ability to use technology as a game-changer, and our shared vision—between the bank's Chairman, board, and management.  
**TDS:** Looking ahead, what strategies do you have in place to ensure continued growth and adaptability?  
**MA:** Looking ahead, we will continue to focus on acquiring deposits at a cheaper cost. We will keep expanding throughout the country, with a special focus on rural areas. We will concentrate lending more on the Small & Micro segments, as well as Retail and Cards, rather than corporate, commercial, and medium segments. We will also reduce our dependency on earnings from treasury bills or bonds (last year, 19% of our total income, roughly Tk 4,000 crore, came from investment in government securities), and aim to generate more income from core banking business, such as interest income, fee and commission income, etc. Our goal is for our earnings from

there is a suitable business and operational model for it. We are currently implementing that model at City Bank.  
**TDS:** What are the most critical areas for reform in the banking sector, and how should they be addressed to ensure long-term stability and development?  
**MA:** The banking sector is at a crossroads. To secure a stable and inclusive future, reforms are essential. For me, the most critical areas are: 1) restoring public confidence; 2) inclusive growth, meaning financial inclusion isn't just a buzzword—it's a responsibility; 3) adapting to technology, which includes ensuring data privacy and cybersecurity; 4) sustainability in action, meaning that banking must look beyond profits; and 5) governance, which requires a cultural shift in the sector right now.  
Lastly, I would say that reforms must be collaborative. Together—regulators, banks, and customers—we can create a banking sector that not only grows but uplifts society as a whole.

# COUNTRY'S MOST SUSTAINABLE BANK



We aim to nurture a values-based banking ecosystem that achieves financial success, elevates society, and safeguards the environment. Our mission is to create a brighter and more sustainable future for everyone.



**Sir Fazle Hasan Abed**  
Founder Chairperson

VALUES

Integrity • Innovation • Inclusiveness  
Customer-centricity • Effectiveness

GOVERNANCE

• Independent Directors constitute 67% of the Board, the highest in the banking sector  
• The highest market capitalization and international investor shareholding in banking sector  
• Top bank in Bangladesh Bank's Sustainability Rating for 4 years

RESPONSIBLE FINANCING

• Financing of **BDT 10,888 crore** among **6.31 lac** women customers  
• Green and Climate Financing of **BDT 8,369 crore**  
• Disbursement of **BDT 1 lac 70 thousand crore** CMSME loans to **14 lac** grassroots customers for 2 decades

PORTFOLIO DIVERSIFICATION

	Customer Deposits	Customer Loans
Retail	48%	16%
Corporate	32%	43%
SME	20%	41%

CONSISTENT FINANCIAL SUCCESS

• Consistent growth in deposits, loans, and profits  
• Bank with the lowest non-performing loans  
• Adequate liquidity in local and foreign currencies

CREDIT RATING

Country's best in domestic and international credit rating

Standard & Poor's Ratings

B+

Moodys' INVESTOR SERVICE

B2

CRISIL

AAA



দ্রুত ও নিরাপদে  
**রেমিট্যান্স**  
পাঠান প্রিয়জনের প্রয়োজনে...

পূবালী ব্যাংকের যেকোনো শাখা থেকে  
রেমিট্যান্স গ্রহণ করলেই পাবেন সরকার  
নির্ধারিত ২.৫% প্রসোদনা

সাথে আরও আছে নিশ্চিত  
আকর্ষণীয় পুরস্কার



OUR GROWTH  
is Built on Trust



ISO 27001 certification. At a time when the overall banking industry's reputation is facing challenges, we have positioned ourselves differently, reinforcing customer confidence.

As a result, our deposits have been growing steadily, increasing by 22-23% year-on-year, propelling us into the Tk 2,000 crore club.

**TDS:** What key factors contributed

technology-focused, with advancements in AI, robotics, and data mining reshaping the banking sector. We aim to integrate these technologies into our operations, enhancing all product offerings, including corporate banking, international trade, retail banking, and leasing, so customers can access services from their premises. Decision-making will be AI-driven for

MOHAMMAD ALI,  
MANAGING DIRECTOR & CEO, PUBALI BANK

**The Daily Star (TDS):** Your bank has recently achieved an annual operating profit surpassing Tk 2,000 crore. What does this milestone signify for your organization?

**Mohammad Ali (MA):** Our significant contribution lies in expanding our marketing efforts across various sectors and building a dedicated marketing team, particularly for our export-oriented customers. As a result, we have successfully onboarded numerous exporters over the past two to three years. This has led to a remarkable 61% year-on-year growth in exports, while imports have also increased by 50%, allowing us to maintain a balanced trade portfolio. Another key development has been the lifting of the 6% and 9% interest rate restrictions, which has allowed us to leverage our goodwill effectively.

However, the most profound impact has been on customer perception. We have consistently worked to enhance our brand image by highlighting our achievements, such as earning the prestigious Triple-A Rating, being recognized as the Best Financial Institution, and obtaining

to reaching this milestone despite the current challenges in the banking sector?

**MA:** Our non-performing loan (NPL) ratio stands at 2.66%, the lowest in the country. One of our key strengths has been our cautious approach to lending. Rather than immediately approving business proposals, we conduct thorough due diligence.

To uphold strong corporate governance, we have implemented a tiered evaluation system that scrutinizes loan proposals at multiple levels, from branch offices to the head office. This structured approach helps us maintain loan quality and mitigate risks effectively.

In my view, the banking industry's primary focus should be on asset quality. While creating assets is relatively easy, maintaining their quality is the real challenge. On the other hand, the liability side of banking is built on trust—the more confidence customers have in us, the greater our deposit inflow.

**TDS:** Looking ahead, what strategies do you have in place to ensure continued growth and adaptability?

**MA:** Our future planning is

instant responses. We've already developed two AI-enabled products for flat purchases and credit card applications, marking the start of our broader digital transformation roadmap, which will progressively automate and optimize banking services, providing real-time responses to financial proposals.

**TDS:** What are the most critical areas for reform in the banking sector, and how should they be addressed to ensure long-term stability and development?

**MA:** The banking sector is in dire need of reform, and it starts with the corporate governance framework. While corporate governance measures may be in place, they are ineffective if the individuals in management roles lack quality and expertise. To truly drive reform, we must prioritize the recruitment and retention of top-tier talent.

To attract and retain high-quality professionals, the banking industry needs to offer competitive compensation packages. This includes not only higher salaries but also enhanced benefits, enabling us to bring in the best talent from both within the country and abroad.

BRAC Bank leads with  
TRUST, INNOVATION AND IMPACT



the challenges in the banking sector?

**SRFH:** At BRAC Bank, we view challenges as opportunities. Our well-governed, transparent, and accountable practices have led us to consistent financial success.

BRAC Bank's superior performance indicators in the Bangladesh banking sector are reflected in the highest market capitalization and the highest

challenges and thrive in the face of them.

**TDS:** What strategies do you have in place to ensure continued growth in 2025 and beyond?

**SRFH:** As we look toward 2025 and beyond, our vision is clear: to be Bangladesh's largest, most impactful, and most financially inclusive bank. By "impactful," we mean meaningful to all stakeholders - customers, co-

SELIM R. F. HUSSAIN,  
MANAGING DIRECTOR & CEO, BRAC BANK

**The Daily Star (TDS):** Your bank has recently achieved an annual operating profit surpassing Tk 2,000 crore. What does this milestone signify for your organization?

**Selim R. F. Hussain (SRFH):** First of all, I thank our 10,000-strong BRAC Bank team, whose dedication and hard work made this accomplishment possible; the credit for this success also goes to the Board of Directors for their strategic guidance.

Achieving an operating profit of Tk 2,000 crore symbolizes financial success and the incredible trust our customers and stakeholders place in us. In the current banking sector scenario, where challenges often outpace opportunities, this achievement reaffirms our commitment to staying customer-focused, transparent, and resilient.

This milestone boosts our confidence in becoming an even better bank that remains committed to financial inclusivity and sustainable growth. It reminds us of our responsibility to contribute meaningfully to Bangladesh's banking sector and the broader economy.

**TDS:** What key drivers helped accomplish this milestone despite

international investor shareholding in the local banking sector and the highest bank credit rating of all banks in Bangladesh from both international rating agencies, S&P and Moody's. The bank leads the local banking industry in nearly all financial metrics and is also a benchmark for corporate governance and values-based banking. These indicators have firmly established BRAC Bank as a leading bank in Bangladesh.

The continuous expansion of the branch distribution network, relentless focus on customer-centricity and enhanced digital banking solutions have significantly contributed to the accomplishments. In line with our focus on customer-centricity, we tailor our services to meet individual customer needs, making banking more personal and accessible.

Our hybrid approach—combining cutting-edge technology with the warmth of human interaction has been another crucial driver. This innovative model has enabled us to enhance efficiency while maintaining a personal touch, ultimately delivering a superior customer experience. Staying agile and adaptive has helped us meet

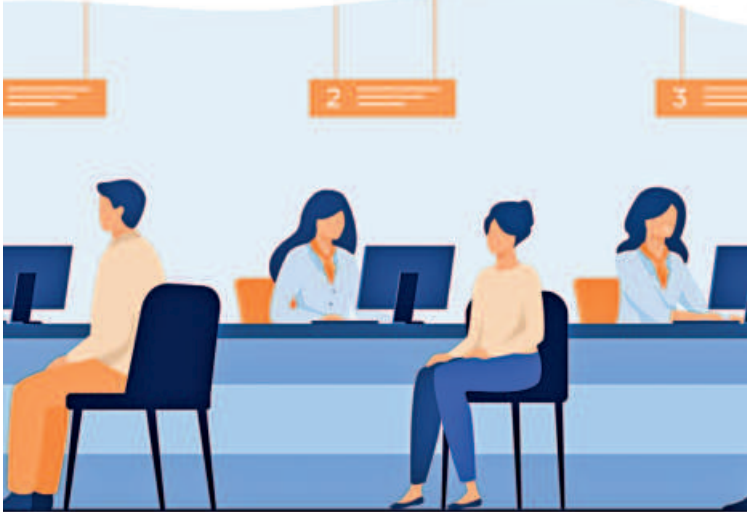
workers, shareholders, and the community.

We aim to make our services even more personalized, ensuring that every customer feels valued and understood. Financial inclusivity remains at the core of our mission, as we strive to reach underserved segments of society and bring them into the formal financial ecosystem. Ultimately, our goal is prosperity for all - a vision rooted in sustainable growth and shared success.

**TDS:** What strategies should banks adopt to improve financial performance and achieve sustainable growth?

**SRFH:** The key to sustainable growth in banking is simple but powerful: governance, good governance, and better governance. Banks must adhere to the fundamentals of sound financial management while fostering a culture of transparency and accountability. Emphasizing customer-centricity and innovation can also unlock new opportunities. BRAC Bank will continue to embed sustainability principles at its core for long-term positive impact on the people and society. The bank can deliver meaningful experiences and ensure long-term success by balancing technology and human connection.

Fantastic 5



Operating profit is a key indicator of a bank's overall performance, offering insights into its financial health and the quality of services provided to customers. Ultimately, this contributes to the bank's net profit.

FROM PAGE J1

At a time when many banks are struggling with liquidity crises and rising default loans, these five have defied the odds, leveraging strong governance, innovative banking solutions, and a loyal depositor base to set new benchmarks in the sector.

But what really drove this success? How did they outperform their peers in a challenging economy? As the final audits unfold, expectations are high that these banks will also report net profits exceeding Tk 1,000 crore.

Operating profit is a key indicator of a bank's overall performance, offering insights into its financial health and the quality of services provided to customers. Ultimately, this contributes to the bank's net profit.

"Operating profit encompasses the total installments collected, payments made, and administrative expenses. After deducting a 37.5 percent tax and making provisions for bad assets and loans, the remaining amount constitutes the distributable profit," says Md. Arup Haider, Deputy Managing Director and Head of Retail Banking at City Bank.

Bank insiders attribute the recent surge in operating profits primarily to the rise in loan interest rates, along with substantial earnings from commission income, bonds, treasury operations, and foreign exchange transactions.

Mohammad Ali, Managing Director & CEO of Pubali Bank, notes that the sharp increase in operating profits for certain banks is closely tied to instability in the sector. "Had all banks remained stable, neither our deposits nor profits would have grown at this pace. When depositors lost confidence in other banks, they shifted their funds to institutions they perceived as more secure, prioritizing financial safety over higher interest rates," he explains.

Islami Bank

Islami Bank, the first Islamic bank in the country, achieved the highest operating profit in 2024, totaling Tk 3,400 crore, a significant increase from Tk 2,261 crore in 2023. However, despite these impressive operating figures, the actual profit in 2023 was just Tk 610 crore, compared to a net profit of Tk 592 crore in 2022, when the operating profit was Tk 2,215 crore. This discrepancy highlights the impact of substantial deductions for bad loans and other expenses.

This year, while Islami Bank has set a new record for operating profit, its actual profit may see a considerable decline due to a large portion of loans issued to the S Alam Group remaining unrecovered. Nevertheless, the bank is optimistic about achieving better net profits in the near future, following an overhaul supervised by Bangladesh Bank aimed at restoring its financial position.

"Within five months, the board was able to add fresh Tk 8,500 crore in deposits. With good fund mobilization, the bank also made an operating profit exceeding Tk 2,000 crore. This achievement speaks volumes about the strategies taken by the board of directors, who are committed to safeguarding depositors' funds," mentions Obayed Ullah Al Masud, Chairman of Islami Bank Bangladesh.

**BRAC Bank**


BRAC Bank, the most SME-focused bank in the country, has emerged as the second-highest performer in terms of operating profit in 2024, reporting Tk 2,400 crore, a substantial increase from Tk 1,393 crore in 2023. The bank's net profit last year was Tk 730 crore, and in 2024, the actual profit is expected to exceed Tk 1,000 crore after adjustments. Managing Director and CEO of BRAC Bank, Selim R. F. Hussain states, "Achieving an operating profit of Tk 2,000 crore symbolizes financial success and the incredible trust our customers and stakeholders place in us."

**Pubali Bank**

Pubali Bank, the oldest bank founded by local entrepreneurs, recorded an operating profit of Tk 2,375 crore in 2024—a remarkable 55% increase from Tk 1,535 crore in 2023. That year, the bank's net profit amounted to Tk 679 crore.

Commenting on the bank's performance, Managing Director Mohammad Ali says, "We attracted significant deposits as several banks faced difficulties. Additionally, our focus on delivering better services and constant innovation played a key role in our strong year-end performance. However, the final net profit is subject to the central bank's inspection. I am optimistic that it will exceed Tk 1,000 crore."

SEE PAGE J4



**Islami Bank**  
Bangladesh PLC. | Based on Islamic Shari'ah

# A BANK OF EXCELLENCE

- Serving **25** million clients
- **400** branches & **265** sub-branches
- **2800** agent banking outlets
- **3000+** ATMs & CRMs
- Deposits of BDT **1.61** trillion
- **Largest dealer** in export & import
- **Highest remittance collector**
- Supporting **2** million entrepreneurs
- Generating **10** million employment by investing in **6000** industries
- **Highest SME investment**
- Provided micro-investments to over **1.8** million families
- Top **taxpayer** among banks



## FIVE TOP BANKS BY OPERATING PROFIT

ISLAMI BANK		
Year	Operating profit	Net Profit
2023	2261	610
2024	3400	

BRAC BANK		
Year	Operating profit	Net Profit
2023	1393	730
2024	2400	

PUBALI BANK		
Year	Operating profit	Net Profit
2023	1535	679
2024	2375	

CITY BANK		
Year	Operating profit	Net Profit
2023	1350	615
2024	2287	

DUTCH BANGLA BANK		
Year	Operating profit	Net Profit
2023	1431	800
2024	2285	



## Fantastic 5



**Obayed Ullah Al Masud, Chairman of Islami Bank Bangladesh, stresses the need for regulatory reforms to curb financial mismanagement. He reveals that tycoons linked to the former administration siphoned off \$17 billion, highlighting the urgency of stricter oversight.**

FROM PAGE J3

**City Bank**  
City Bank, known for its strong focus on consumer loans while maintaining a substantial portfolio of corporate and SME customers, joined the Tk 2,000 crore club in operating profit. In 2024, the bank recorded its highest-ever operating profit of Tk 2,287 crore, up from Tk 1,350 crore in 2023. The net profit for 2023 stood at Tk 615 crore.

Commenting on the achievement, Md. Arup Haider, Deputy Managing Director and Head of Retail Banking at City Bank, says, "Through consistent performance over the years, we reached a significant milestone in 2024 by crossing an operational profit of Tk 2,000 crore. City Bank fosters trust and delivers excellent service through strong corporate governance. Despite offering lower deposit rates compared to other banks, customers continue to trust us and deposit their money, prioritizing our services and reliability over higher interest rates."

**Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited**  
Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited, a pioneer in mobile banking services in the country, achieved an operating profit of Tk 2,285 crore in 2024, up from Tk 1,431 crore in 2023. The bank's net profit in 2023 stood at Tk 854 crore. Its low cost of funds significantly contributed to this strong financial performance.

"We are now a happy family of 6.30+ crore customers. They have contributed to a huge amount of low-cost deposits for the bank. The bank maintains a strong liquidity base. We have sufficient capital to finance large corporates," notes Abul Kashem Md Shirin, Managing Director of Dutch-Bangla Bank.

**Sustaining Growth: The Road Ahead**  
As these five banks celebrate their record-breaking operating profits, their leadership remains focused on ensuring

long-term stability and sustainable growth in Bangladesh's banking sector. With the industry at a crossroads, key stakeholders are advocating for strategic reforms, technological advancements, and stronger governance frameworks.

Obayed Ullah Al Masud, Chairman of Islami Bank Bangladesh, stresses the need for regulatory reforms to curb financial mismanagement. He reveals that tycoons linked to the former administration siphoned off \$17 billion, highlighting the urgency of stricter oversight. He advocates for Basel III adoption, stronger anti-money laundering measures, and corporate governance reforms, including board accountability and independent audits. Addressing non-performing loans, he calls for better credit risk management, asset reconstruction, and faster insolvency resolution, with ESG principles integrated into banking decisions.

Mashrur Arefin, Managing Director & CEO of City Bank, underscores the urgency of banking reforms, highlighting five critical areas: restoring public trust, ensuring financial inclusion, embracing technological adaptation, prioritising sustainability, and strengthening governance. He insists that the sector must undergo a cultural shift, with banks, regulators, and customers working together to build a more resilient financial ecosystem.

Selim R. F. Hussain, Managing Director & CEO of BRAC Bank, reinforces the significance of governance and transparency. He believes that sound financial management, coupled with innovation and a customer-centric approach, will be the key to sustainable banking. By balancing digital transformation with human connection, banks can create long-term value for both customers and society.

For Mohammad Ali, Managing Director & CEO of Pubali Bank, strong corporate governance and skilled leadership are essential. He argues that the banking industry must offer competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain top-tier professionals, ensuring the sector is led by individuals with expertise and integrity.

Abul Kashem Md Shirin, Managing Director of Dutch-Bangla Bank, emphasises the transition towards a cashless economy. He believes that discouraging cash transactions by making them costly, while keeping digital transactions free, will accelerate financial inclusion. He also stresses the need for wider adoption of QR payments in rural areas and improved banking facilities for expatriates to boost remittance flows.

## ADHERENCE TO SHARI'AH PRINCIPLES is Our Key to Success



audit firms, motivated employees, and worked diligently to restore good governance. Within just five months, the board succeeded in adding fresh Tk. 8,500 crore in deposits. This strong fund mobilization, along with the operating profit exceeding Tk 2,000 crore, underscores the effectiveness of the board's strategies in safeguarding depositors' funds.

strengthen our ethical foundation and ensure all operations align with these principles. Our focus is on balanced growth, efficient resource use, and cost-effective, accountable Strategic Business Units (SBUs). We will build resilience through a sustainable financial ecosystem that adapts to market dynamics. Enhanced connectivity, customized services, and advanced digital banking

**OBAyed ULLAH AL MASUD,**  
CHAIRMAN, ISLAMI BANK BANGLADESH

**The Daily Star (TDS):** Your bank has recently achieved an annual operating profit surpassing Tk 2,000 crore. What does this milestone signify for your organization?

**Obayed Ullah Al Masud (OUAM):** In 2024, Islami Bank Bangladesh PLC continued its strong performance, achieving an operating profit that surpassed Tk 2,000 crore, maintaining the trend of previous years. This achievement is particularly significant considering the challenging environment the banking sector has been navigating, shaped by factors such as an unusual liquidity crunch, a volatile foreign exchange market, soaring inflation, and rising non-performing loans (NPLs). It not only reflects our financial strength but also highlights our capacity to adapt to and thrive in difficult times.

This success is also a reflection of the bank's strong board of directors, whose prudent decisions have guided the bank through these turbulent times. The board was formed in response to the national call to protect depositors' funds. It reformed the management, set up independent

**TDS:** What key factors have contributed to reaching this milestone despite the current challenges in the banking sector?

**OUAM:** Our operations are guided by adherence to Shari'ah principles, complemented by effective funds and risk management strategies. Islami Bank strategically deploys funds across sectors like SMEs and microfinance, holding the largest market share in the import-export business. The bank also collects around one-third of the country's remittances, significantly contributing to our revenue. In 2024, our total investments surpassed Tk 1,57,600 crore, with profits rising due to increased investment returns. The use of cost-free and low-cost deposits further boosted profitability. Total deposits reached Tk 1,61,000 crore, with cost-free deposits accounting for 13%. We also saw strong performance in Offshore Banking Units and Shari'ah-compliant securities.

**TDS:** Looking ahead, what strategies do you have in place to ensure continued growth and adaptability?

**OUAM:** By embedding Shari'ah values in our business, we aim to

will boost customer satisfaction and trust, while good governance and professional ethics will be prioritized across all operations.

**TDS:** In your view, what are the most critical areas for reform in the banking sector, and how should they be addressed to ensure long-term stability and development?

**OUAM:** Tycoons linked to the former administration have siphoned off \$17 billion from the banking sector, highlighting the need for reform. Strengthening the regulatory framework is crucial to addressing scams, embezzlements, and misappropriations, with strong initiatives needed to recover these funds. Regulators must adopt Basel III standards, enforce anti-money laundering and terrorism financing regulations, and conduct regular stress tests. Corporate governance must also be reformed, with clear accountability for board members, independent audits, and stronger whistleblower protection. Addressing non-performing loans (NPLs) requires effective credit risk management, asset reconstruction, and quicker insolvency resolution, while integrating ESG factors into decisions.

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