



Artists perform at the National Poetry Festival at Hakim Chattar, next to Dhaka University Central Library yesterday. The two-day event is organised by Jatiya Kabita Parishad.

PHOTO: STAR

Girls' football match Energy laws lack

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Haji Madrasa, expressed regret over the incident and apologised for the disruption of the women's football match in Tilakpur on Tuesday.

"A misunderstanding among locals led to this unfortunate event, and we feel ashamed before the nation and the world. We assure that such an incident will not happen again in Joypurhat," he said.

Nazrul Islam, president of Tilakpur union unit of Jamaat-e-Islami, said, "We support sports being conducted in accordance with government regulations. The

incident was caused by a misunderstanding among local Muslims, and we do not want such occurrences in the future."

Abdus Samad, khatib of Tilakpur Puroho Bazar Jam-e-Mosque, clarified that there had neither been any opposition to the match itself nor were any objection to the game taking place openly.

Samuil Hasan, president of the organising club T-Star and also organisational secretary of the upazila unit BNP, described the incident as a "misunderstanding" and assured that the issue would be resolved promptly.

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"We have made many contrasting policies in the past," said Mehedi. "Previous energy policies predicted that we would need 40,000 MW by this year, but currently we only need 16,000 MW."

"We should be exporting electricity, not having an energy sector dependent on imports," he added, pointing out that multiple studies have shown Bangladesh can generate up to 30,000 MW of electricity from wind.

Speakers also discussed the risks of challenging various laws during the previous Awami League-led government.

"We could not garner the courage to challenge

the indemnity clause of the law during the previous regime," said Dr Quazi Zahed Iqbal, an advocate of the Supreme Court.

CR Abrar, executive director of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit, said, "We need clarity on how international agencies helped the state against the people's interests."

Speakers highlighted the need to document the political backdrop in which anti-people laws were drafted.

"Electricity is neither affordable nor universal, yet the general public are paying through the nose for it," said Sekender Ali Mina, executive director of the Safety and Rights Society.

1,800 people get free

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specialised doctors provided service to around 1,800 people from surrounding villages.

The services include blood pressure and diabetes check-ups. They were also given medicines free of charge.

The camp was held commemorating Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain.

Faraaz has become an epitome of supreme sacrifice for the cause of humanity. His refusal to leave his friends during the militant attack at Gulshan's Holy Artisan Bakery on

July 1, 2016 was not only an act of bravery that the world saluted but also set the burning example of what a pristine youthful mind can do when it comes to choosing the right path at the expense of mere mortality. A discussion was also held as part of the event.

Among others, Narail Deputy Commissioner Sharmin Akter Jahan, Bangladesh Southern University VC Sharif Ashrafuzzaman and former Narail Sadar upazila chairman Sharif Humayun Kabir were present.

Cancer accounts

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The study was conducted on a total of 2,01,668 participants from 46,631 households in Hossainpur upazila of Kishoreganj, with 48.4 percent being male and 51.6 percent female, since July 2023.

The researchers conducted face-to-face interviews at every household using web-based National Cancer Registry software.

The study found a total 214 cancer patients among the participants. Of them, 92.5 percent were aged 18-75 years, while 2.4 percent were aged below 18 years and 5.1 percent were over 75 years old.

The five most common cancers were breast (16.8 percent), lip and oral cavity (8.4 percent), stomach (7 percent), larynx (7 percent), and cervix (5.1 percent).

The researchers found that 46 percent of all cancer cases were linked to tobacco use, with 75.8 percent of

male cancer patients being smokers. Also, 40.5 percent males and 60.6 percent females consumed chewing tobacco. According to the study, co-morbidities among cancer patients included hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, and stroke.

The study also found that 60 percent of cancer patients received a combination of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy, while 7.4 percent did not receive any treatment after diagnosis.

A follow-up was conducted on 58,539 participants from 13,411 households between July 1, 2024 and January 14, 2025. During this time, 52.9 new cancer patients were added per 100,000 population.

BSMU Vice Chancellor Prof Md Shahinul Alam chaired the event while Prof Md Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the chief adviser for health, spoke among others.

Stand by us

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Reema Akter, whose husband Mohammad Sohag was killed in Bangshal, said, "Why is the government ignoring us? Why do we have to beg for what is rightfully ours? We cannot bear this anymore. Please stand by us."

Rabiul Awal, whose brother Imam Hasan (Taim) was killed in police firing in Jatrabari, said he has been seeking justice for six months without any progress. "For months, I've run from one government office to another, but none of the perpetrators have been arrested or put on trial," he said.

Shahina Begum, mother of Sajjad Hossain, who was killed in Ashulia on August 5 and had his body burned after his death, broke down in tears.

"They killed my son like an animal and then burned his body. Yet no one has been arrested. If the criminals are not caught, how will justice be served?"

Many families also spoke of their struggles after losing their primary earning members.

Saidur Rahman Khan, grandfather of Shahrar Khan Anas, who was shot dead in Chankharpu, said, "This government was formed based on the martyrs' sacrifices. But now it has abandoned us. Its first responsibility should have been to support the martyrs' families, yet we are being forced to protest for our rights."

Mosharrif Hossain, father of journalist Mehedi Hasan, who was killed in Jatrabari, asked, "What was his crime? Was reporting the truth a crime? The fascist regime murdered my son for delivering news. The interim government made many promises, but nothing has been done for us."

Abul Hasan, father of Shahriar Hasan Alvi, who was shot dead in Mirpur, moderated the event.

"The government hasn't inquired about any of the martyr families. Many of us are living in inhumane conditions. Some families can't even afford milk for their children," he said.

Arakan Army

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Land Port in Teknaf, said, "The boat is now anchored at the jetty. Once the procedures are completed, the goods will be unloaded."

The Arakan Army had seized three boats on January 16 at the Naf river estuary while those were en route to Teknaf carrying 50,000 sacks of dried fish, betel nuts, coffee, and other goods.

Later, on January 20, the Arakan Army released two of the cargo boats carrying 27,722 sacks of goods.

"The two other boats, which earlier reached Teknaf after being released from Arakan Army's custody, were unloaded and sent back to Yangon," Anwar Hossain added.

25 hurt as six

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Md Moniruzzaman, in-charge of the highway police outpost, confirmed the incident and said the situation returned to normalcy by afternoon.

He further explained that heavy sand and soil-laden trucks had left the road slippery, which, alongside poor visibility amid fog, caused the drivers to lose control over steering, causing collision.

"In many areas, visibility has significantly decreased. Drivers and passengers are advised to use headlights and drive cautiously," Moniruzzaman added.

High pumpkin

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for Tk 15-20 per kg. He said no significant problems exist in the sector.

Mohammad Samir Hossain Siam, agricultural marketing officer, said efforts are underway to find new markets with higher demand for pumpkins, which could help raise prices for local farmers.

The wait is over!

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The fair will be open daily from 3:00pm to 9:00pm, except on public holidays, and will run until February 29. On February 21, in observance of International Mother Language Day, the fair will open at 8:00am and continue until 9:00pm.

Publishers are hopeful for strong sales this year as visitors can finally enjoy the fair without restrictions.

"Our business has suffered over the past couple of years. This year, we hope to recover from those losses," said Aditya Antor, co-owner of Ittadi Grantha Prokash, speaking to The Daily Star.

MANUSCRIPT SCRUTINY
Regarding the scrutiny of manuscripts before publishing books at the book fair, Cultural Adviser

Mostofa Sarwar Farooki said, "A media report is causing misunderstanding. It cites a police official claiming that books should be submitted to Bangla Academy or the police for review before printing. This is unbelievable, this is absurd. It is nowhere near our government's policy."

He made these remarks yesterday morning while delivering the keynote speech as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of the Jatiya Kabita Utsab, held at the Central Library premises of Dhaka University.

DMP'S CLARIFICATION
The Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has clarified that no decision or suggestion has been made requiring police approval for manuscripts before

publication at the book fair. In a press release yesterday, the DMP said they had only requested Bangla Academy to be cautious in allowing "provocative" books at the fair.

During a security inspection at Suhrawardy Udyan on Friday, DMP Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali said, "We have asked Bangla Academy officials to ensure that no books containing provocative language or content are displayed at the fair. These should be carefully reviewed before being placed in stalls."

However, the DMP emphasised in its statement, "No decision or suggestion has been made by the police regarding the vetting or approval of books for future publication."

Pollution sources nearly doubled

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inform the ministry and take necessary actions," he said.

The DoE plans to finalise its response by mid-February, including the possibility of convening an inter-ministerial meeting.

However, critics remain skeptical.

"The last government spent around Tk 1,000 crore on projects to protect Dhaka's rivers, but the doubling of pollution sources shows that enforcement has been abysmal," said Mohammad Azaz, chairman of the RDRC.

Urban planner Adil Mohammad Khan said, "The absence of a city-wide sewerage treatment system and the unchecked dumping of industrial waste are key contributors."

"Solid waste mismanagement and improper disposal by city dwellers exacerbate the problem," he added.

He criticised Dhaka's city corporations for lacking clear guidelines and failing to penalise violators.

THE NUMBERS TELL THE STORY

The Buriganga bears the brunt of pollution, with 506 sources identified as contributors. These include 12 industrial waste lines and 20 large municipal sewerage lines, alongside 167 small private sewerage outlets discharging untreated waste.

The river is further polluted by 30 sluice gates and 21 service canals, which channel contaminants directly into its waters. Additionally, 92 large dumping stations and 162 smaller dumping points exacerbate the crisis, with six dockyards, four industries, and 11 kitchen markets adding to the river's woes.

The Turag is burdened with 97 pollution sources. These include 13 industrial waste lines and 12 large sewerage lines, along with five small private sewerage outlets. The pollution is compounded by four sluice gates and seven service canals, while 15 large dumping stations and 27 smaller dumping points contribute to its degradation. Industrial pollution is significant, with seven industries and seven kitchen markets identified as major culprits.

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In the Shitalakhya, 173 pollution sources were recorded, making it one of the most heavily polluted waterways. These include 42 industrial waste lines and 20 large sewerage lines, as well as 26 smaller sewerage outlets. The river is also affected by 18 service canals, 33 small dumping points, six dockyards, 21 industries, and seven kitchen markets, all of which contribute to its declining health.

The Balu suffers from 33 sources of contamination. These include three industrial waste lines, three large sewerage lines, and two small private sewerage outlets. Eight service canals and eight small dumping points further pollute the river, alongside six industries and three kitchen markets.

The Old Buriganga is affected by 89 sources, including seven large sewerage lines, four sluice gates, and one service canal. The river is further burdened by 28 large dumping stations and 46 small dumping points. Industrial activity contributes as well, with one industry and two kitchen markets adding to the river's contamination.

The Tongi Canal faces pollution from 79 sources. These include 29 industrial waste lines, 13 large sewerage lines, and 11 small sewerage outlets. Six service canals,

four large dumping stations, and seven smaller dumping points exacerbate the problem, with five industries and four kitchen markets also playing a role in polluting this vital waterway.

The Karnatali river suffers from 26 pollution sources.

These include five small sewerage outlets and one service canal, as well as five large dumping stations and 14 smaller dumping points. One kitchen market further adds to the river's environmental stress.

Finally, the Dhaleswari has six identified sources of pollution. These include three industrial waste lines, two industries, and one kitchen market.

In 2019, the High Court declared rivers as legal entities, with the National River Protection Commission designated as their legal guardian. While the judgement marked a historic milestone, the ground reality remains dire. The NRPC has struggled to act decisively, hampered by limited enforcement power and institutional inertia.

Meanwhile, industrial development has come at a devastating cost to the environment.

"Unchecked pollution is not only destroying rivers but also harming farmlands," said Khan, the urban planner.

"A balance between industrial development and environmental sustainability must be struck, but the government has consistently failed in this regard."

PRAYER TIMING
FEBRUARY 2

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:30	12:45	4:15	5:52	7:15
JAMAAT 6:05	1:15	4:30	5:56	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Buying House /Agents Required
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NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Center of Excellence in Higher Education

TENDER NOTICE
Tender No. NSU/24-25-T06

North South University is inviting sealed offer from bona fide/ reputed organization/ tailoring house/ manufacturer for making and supplying liveries; and supplying shoes, socks and sandals.

Detail of the items are mentioned below:
Lot: 1- Making and supplying of liveries
Lot: 2- Supplying of shoes, socks and sandals

Interested bidders may collect a schedule of tender from Southeast Bank Ltd. Bashundhara Branch, Dhaka from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on all working day's till **February 16, 2025** by paying non-refundable amount of Taka 1,000.00 (One Thousand) in cash for each schedule.

The bidders must submit **earnest money @ 2.5%** of the quoted price in the form of Pay Order issued from any scheduled bank drawn in favor of North South University along with their offer. The sealed offer must be submitted on **February 17, 2025** by 2.15 p.m. at the office of the undersigned. **The offers will be opened at 2:30 p.m. on the same day.** Representatives of the participating bidders may remain present at the time of opening the bids. NSU authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without showing any reason.

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Mercantile Bank PLC.
61, Dilikusha C/A, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh. Website: www.mblbd.com Contact Centre: 16225

INVITATION OF TENDER

Mercantile Bank PLC. is hereby inviting tender from bonafied security printing firms as per terms & conditions stated below:

Name of Procuring Entity	Mercantile Bank PLC.			
Tender Name	Printing of MICR Cheques and other Security Instruments			
Procurement Method	Open Tender			
Details of Tender Schedule				
Date of Tender Invitation & Publication	Starting Date of selling	Ending Date of selling	Submission Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
02.02.2025	03.02.2025	09.02.2025	10.02.2025 within 11.00 AM	10.02.2025 after 11.30 AM
		(10.00 AM to 05.00 PM)		
Name & address of the tender selling and receiving office	Mercantile Bank PLC., General Services Division, Monir Mansion (3 rd Floor), 18, Dilikusha C/A, Dhaka-1000. Interested tenderer shall submit a request on official letterhead and collect the tender documents upon payment of Tender price.			
Eligibility of Tenderers	Bonafied security printing firms having well experience in Security Printing of MICR cheque & other security Instruments for Automated Clearing House (ACH), as per specification and standardization of Bangladesh Bank guidelines.			
Price of Tender Document	Tk.4,600/- (Four thousand six hundred) only in cash mode (non-refundable).			
Earnest Money	Each tender must be accompanied by Earnest money for 5% (Five Percent) of the total work out amount on the basis of the rate quoted by the tenderer in the form of Pay Order from any schedule Bank of Bangladesh in favor of Mercantile Bank PLC.			
Other terms & conditions can be found in the tender document.				
Mercantile Bank PLC. reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever at any stage of the procurement process.				

Vice President & Head General Services Division