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## Commute goes haywire in city of protests

July injured demonstrate in front of CA's residence; Titumir students to block road, railway today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Demonstrations on some major streets brought Dhaka traffic to a grinding halt yesterday, forcing commuters, patients and children to walk for hours.

After daylong demonstrations blocking roads near Shyamoli, the injured victims of the July uprising, some with life-changing injuries, arrived on Minto Road around 7:45pm to go to the chief adviser's residence.

They kept the road blocked and after midnight broke the barricades placed by law enforcers near the InterContinental Hotel. They then tried to breach another barricade set up by the army near the state guest house Jamuna, the chief adviser's residence on Hare Road.

The injured demand proper treatment, rehabilitation, and formal recognition of their sacrifice.

Law enforcers were trying to calm the situation when Anti-discrimination Student Movement leader Hasnat Abdullah went to the scene around 12:30am and talked to the demonstrators.

The protesters calmed down a bit, but vowed not to leave the spot until the chief adviser or a representative

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PROTESTS, GRIDLOCKS: THE DAILY STRUGGLE OF DHAKA DWELLERS - PAGE 3



Protesters trying to breach the barricades set up by Special Security Force members outside the chief adviser's residence on Hare Road in the capital. Those injured in last year's July uprising had been demonstrating since evening in front of the InterContinental Dhaka, demanding better medical care, rehabilitation, and state recognition.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## LIBYA TRAGEDY 56 migrants were aboard capsized boat

23 bodies, believed to be of Bangladeshis, wash ashore, more feared missing, says envoy

ZYMA ISLAM

Twenty-three bodies, believed to be of Bangladeshis, have washed up on Libya's shores, with many more feared missing, Bangladeshi Ambassador to Libya Abul Hasnat Mohammad Khairul Bashar said in a live stream on Facebook yesterday.

"A group of 56 migrants left the shores of Libya on January 25. The boat ran aground trouble the same night," he said.

Seven bodies washed ashore on January 28; 11 bodies on January 29; two bodies were found on January 30; and three more on January 31, said the ambassador. All of them washed ashore at Brega in eastern Libya.

"The Red Crescent and local government representatives responsible for processing the bodies for burial said the bodies 'looked' to be of Bangladeshis. However, since they did not have any documentation on them, there is no way to confirm if they are indeed Bangladeshis," said the ambassador.

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TITUMIR COLLEGE

## No hasty decision on univ status

Says edn adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government would not make any hasty decision on Government Titumir College students' demand for the institution's university status, Education Adviser Prof. Wahiduddin Mahmud said yesterday.

In the wake of days of public suffering due to a road blockade programme by the protesting students of the college, the adviser

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## Cash-strapped Padma Bank struggling to pay employees

Tk 5,000cr bailout package sought from BB

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Padma Bank, formerly Farmers Bank, has sunk into such a financial abyss that the lender is struggling to pay its employees' monthly salaries and has sought a Tk 5,000 crore bailout package from Bangladesh Bank to stay afloat.

Since August last year, the bank's 850-odd employees have been receiving their salaries in their accounts but they are not allowed to withdraw the full amount at once. They can take out the money in phases.

Additionally, incentives have been suspended for years and promotions have been halted since last year, The Daily Star has learnt from banks' officials who spoke on the condition of

anonymity for fear of reprisal.

The bank spends about Tk 5-6 crore every month on salaries while it recovers around Tk 14-15 crore from borrowers, according to internal data.

From the recovered amount, the bank repays small depositors and covers employee salaries, Kazi Md Talha, acting chief executive officer of the bank, told The Daily Star last week.

To address its fund crunch, Padma sought a Tk 5,000 crore bailout from the BB in January. However, the central bank has yet to respond to the request.

"If we receive the funds, we can repay both individual and institutional depositors," he said.

Padma Bank, which was granted

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Devotees in droves gather for Akheri Munajat at the first phase of Biswa Ijtima that began on the banks of the Turag on January 31 and ended yesterday. The photo was taken on Tongi flyover around 8:30am.



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PHOTOS: SHAHEEN MOLLA, PRABIR DAS

**Clockwise from left: A father carries his child, whose legs are in casts, home from the hospital. Commuters, including people going to work, students on their way to classes, and people leaving and arriving in the capital, head to their destinations on foot. Exhausted after a long trip from their village, a family navigates the capital in search of transport, their journey home far from over. The photos were taken from Shyamoli Shishu Mela area yesterday morning. There was no public transport on this road as there was a demonstration blocking the Mirpur Road.**



## Saraswati Puja today

BSS, Dhaka

Saraswati Puja, the worship of the goddess of knowledge, music, art, and culture, will be celebrated across the country today amid much enthusiasm, festivity, and religious fervour.

Saraswati Puja or Basant Panchami, falls on the fifth "Tithi" of the Bangla month of Maagh every year.

Traditionally, children are introduced to the alphabet on the day of Saraswati Puja, and this ritual is called "Hatekhor".

Toddlers are usually given a slate and chalk to scribble with on the auspicious day.

Major Hindu temples, schools, colleges, universities, and other educational institutions stage the festival with traditional gaiety and religious fervour.

The students in particular seek

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## 12kg LPG cylinder to cost Tk 19 more Price now Tk 1,478

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The price of a 12kg LPG cylinder has risen by Tk 19 and is now selling at Tk 1,478 in retail points, according to the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission.

The BERC authorities in a press conference at their office yesterday set the new prices of the bottled Liquefied Petroleum Gas for the month of February.

According to the new pricing, per kg LPG will be sold at Tk 123.16. Prices of other cylinder sizes, ranging from 5.5kg to 45kg, will adjust accordingly.

Additionally, auto gas (LPG for motor vehicles) prices have increased by Tk 0.47 per litre and are set at Tk 67.74 per litre.

## No hasty decision

FROM PAGE 1  
said giving a deadline to meet such a demand was illogical.

"We will no longer make decisions under pressure. Taking a hasty and illogical decision now will become a burden in the future," he told reporters after an ECNEC meeting.

If the Titumir College students wished to protest, they should have done it without causing public suffering, he said. The demonstrators should also realise that the interim government was not formed to fulfil every demand, the adviser added.

"Our goal is to establish a well-governed democratic system, and in the process, we can introduce some minor reforms, but not necessarily can we meet every demand."

Regarding the affiliation of seven colleges with Dhaka University, the education

Wahiduddin mentioned that Titumir College was among seven colleges affiliated with Dhaka University, but the colleges and the university recently took a "reasonable" decision to part ways.

The education ministry then formed a special expert committee led by the University Grants Commission chairman to explore the possibility of bringing the seven colleges, including Titumir College, under a new independent university-like institution.

"This committee is already engaging with students from these colleges to understand their grievances," Wahiduddin said.

Besides these seven colleges, there are many prestigious and historic colleges across the country, none of which was turned into a university, he said.

He criticised the previous Awami League government for the rapid establishment of public universities without preparation during its rule.

"We have 55 public universities in the country and half of them have been established in the last seven years. Bangladesh has set a record for the rapid establishment of universities, whereas, under normal circumstances, it takes years to do that from planning to execution," he said.

The protesting students of Titumir College continued their demonstration on Bir Uttam AK Khandakar Road outside the institution in Mohakhali, rejecting the adviser's statement.

They resumed the blockade of the road that links Mohakhali and Gulshan 1 around noon yesterday for the fourth consecutive day, bringing traffic to a complete halt.

After the education adviser made the comments on their demand, the protesters marched to Amtoli intersection in the evening, blocking the Mohakhali-Banani road as well.

They ended the demonstration for the day around 8:00pm, vowing to return to the streets if their demands were not met. Their other demands include the opening of law and journalism departments at the institution.

## Commute goes haywire in city of protests

FROM PAGE 1

gave them an assurance in writing.

Around 1:45am, they began to leave Hare Road after Hasnat promised he would try to make sure some of their demands were met within a week.

Helal Hafiz, who was shot in the stomach in July, told The Daily Star they would not leave until they were promised better treatment and rehabilitation.

Meanwhile, Titumir students, who want the college upgraded to a university, blocked roads in Mohakhali for the fourth day.

Around 11 last night, Habibullah Rony, an organiser, told reporters that the college would be shuttered until the demand was met.

The students will keep Gulshan-Mohakhali road and railway lines in Mohakhali blocked from 11:00am to 10:00pm today, he announced.

In another scene of protest, Inqilab Mancha, an organisation of mostly students, blocked the Eidgah Road in front of Shikkha Bhaban, demanding that the home adviser resign over the "state forces' failure" to stop the Awami League leaders and officials complicit in the July killings from leaving the country.

They tried to march to the Secretariat, but police stopped their procession near Shikkha Bhaban where they demonstrated for several hours in the

afternoon.

On major streets, tailbacks stretched across the city.

"This is a nightmare for my two ailing daughters. One has an ear infection and another has a fever. My wife and I brought them to the hospital after walking for 40 minutes only to find that the outdoor services have closed," Muhammad Rabbi told this correspondent at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital.

He and his wife had to walk, carrying their toddlers for over a kilometre. As garment workers, they cannot afford to take the girls to a private clinic.

Mizanur Rahman, 55, was also stranded outside the National Institute of Ophthalmology with his 18-year-old daughter.

"We missed her doctor's appointment. We were stuck near Kalyanpur for over an hour. There are 10 major hospitals in the area where thousands of patients visit. At least one side of the road should have been left open," he said.

Traffic gridlock was also seen in Mohakhali, Banani, and Gulshan as students of Titumir College roads.

Some students have been fasting unto death for 98 hours as of 7:00pm.

Iman Ali had to leave his Mymensingh-bound Alam Asia bus after it was stuck for more than half an hour due to the blockade.

## 56 migrants were aboard capsized boat

FROM PAGE 1

"Two people have been rescued in a critical state and they are in the intensive care unit of a hospital under the police or the army, but we are not sure where they are. We are still waiting for a clearance to travel to the region," said the ambassador.

The bodies retrieved so far were buried in Ajdabiya, which is about 40 kilometers away from Brega, on Friday, as they were decomposing.

Brega is governed by a parallel government.

Shakib Chowdhury from Gauripur in Narshingdi is fearing that his brother is among the missing. "My brother Rakib Miah was on board a boat that set sail in the early hours of January 25. The Libyan time would be approximately 3:00am. After he was given 'game', we got a call from a person in Libya who told us that our brother was put on a boat two hours before," said Shakib.

"Game" is the colloquial term used to refer to the process of smuggling a migrant from Libya to Europe by boat via the Mediterranean sea.

Meanwhile, another boat carrying 25 migrants was rescued off the coast of Malta by the NGO Alarm Phone. The NGO reported that two people from the group

had died at sea. The rescue took place on January 29, according to posts made on X (formerly Twitter) by the NGO.

It is being claimed that at least one of the two dead was a Bangladeshi man named Foyzal Ahmed Riyad.

Riyad's cousin Tushar told The Daily Star that their broker in Libya contacted the family and informed them that Riyad died on board but that the boat had reached Malta.

"Riyad was given 'game' on January 25. The broker called on January 29 to let us know the news," said Tushar.

The broker who had organised the "game" was a Bangladeshi man from Cumilla, claimed Tushar.

Tushar is yet to get any official confirmation about the death of his cousin.

Alarm Phone first received news about the boat on January 27, according to its social media posts.

An AFM patrol vessel took off to respond to the call. It took the vessel over 16 hours to reach the boat in distress, reported Malta Today.

While the AFM patrol vessel was en route, a nearby vessel provided interim assistance to the people on the boat. Upon reaching the site, AFM personnel

conducted a rescue operation and recovered 23 survivors and two dead bodies, reported Maltese newspaper.

Riyad had left Bangladesh four months ago and travelled first to Dubai. "Then he went to Egypt and finally to Libya. It took him six days to reach Libya," said Tushar.

Once there, he spent his time in hiding until he was given "game". "We spent Tk 16 lakh on him. He had not even finished high school and was uncertain about his future in Bangladesh," said Tushar.

The Bangladeshi ambassador to Libya said since he took over in June 2023, he had rescued and repatriated over 4,200 Bangladeshis from situations of exploitation.

Libya is a key entry-point for irregular migration to Europe through the Central Mediterranean route.

Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, said in a report published on January 14, that departures from Tunisia and Libya accounted for about 67,000 crossings into Europe in 2024. Bangladeshis predominantly use this route, said the report.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that 2,300 people of different nationalities lost their lives at sea in 2024.

## Cash-strapped Padma Bank struggling to pay employees

FROM PAGE 1

a licence in 2013 on political considerations, has struggled with financial irregularities since its inception. More than Tk 3,500 crore was siphoned out of the bank within just three years of its establishment.

As of September last year, the bank's defaulted loans stood at Tk 4,856 crore, which is 86 percent of its total disbursed loans, according to BB data.

Some of the major loan defaulters include Mass Shipping Recycling Industries (Tk 140 crore), Nahar Agro (Tk 60 crore), Apollo Engineering (Tk 80 crore), Mim Jute (Tk 60 crore), and East West Properties (Tk 60 crore), a concern of Bashundhara Group.

Additionally, the bank recently rescheduled Tk 83 crore in loans for Meghna Cement, another concern of Bashundhara Group, while Tk 23 crore of Beximco Group's loans defaulted in the December quarter.

For years, it has failed to return depositors' money. Its unpaid deposits amount to Tk 6,100 crore.

Padma owes significant amounts to several corporate depositors, including Tk 722 crore to the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund, Tk 182 crore to the Chittagong Port Authority, Tk 153 crore to the Investment Corporation of Bangladesh (ICB), Tk 109 crore to Bangladesh Jiban Bima Corporation, Tk 68 crore to the Mongla Port Authority, Tk 58 crore to Titas Gas Transmission & Distribution and Tk 80 crore to Bangladesh Infrastructure Finance Fund.

The bank, which has been incurring losses since 2017, currently faces a current account deficit of Tk 235 crore with the central bank.

The bank's financial health took a turn for the worse after its inclusion in the Awami League-led government's plan in March last year to merge 10 weak banks with stronger institutions.

This triggered fresh panic among depositors, leading to increased withdrawals. Since then,

approximately Tk 600 crore in deposits has been withdrawn from the bank.

After the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government in August last year, Padma's planned merger with Shariah-based EXIM Bank was aborted.

"Padma Bank was not as weak as some Shariah-based banks but its financial health worsened after the merger announcement by the government at that time," Talha said.

The merger uncertainty also led to an exodus of employees. Around 200 temporary officials, hired for loan recovery efforts, left the bank, and approximately 30 permanent employees resigned since the merger decision.

Bank officials admitted that they are struggling to recover the defaulted loans as many were issued through fraudulent means and irregularities.

The bank's financial troubles date back to 2015-16, when the central bank detected massive irregularities. In response, its ownership and management underwent significant restructuring in 2017, after Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir, a former presidium member of the Awami League, resigned as the chairman.

To rescue Farmers Bank from collapse, the government intervened with financial support. State-owned institutions, including the ICB, Sonali, Janata, Agrani and Rupali Bank, collectively acquired a 60 percent stake for Tk 715 crore.

In January 2018, Chowdhury Nafeez Sarafat, chairman of RACE Asset Management, took over as the chairman of the bank, which was subsequently rebranded as Padma Bank in 2019 in an attempt to restore credibility. However, the institution remained plagued by its past scandals.

Sarafat stepped down from the post of chairman in January last year.

## PHQ for halting recruitment to 310 police posts

FROM PAGE 12

"Recruitment for a BCS batch involves multiple stages. The hiring process for these BCS batches has already progressed significantly. At this stage, we need to carefully assess whether suspending the recruitment would be appropriate," the official said, requesting anonymity.

A source from the public administration ministry said it did not have updated information on the current status of recruitment from these BCS exams. It may consult the Public Service Commission (PSC), which oversees BCS recruitment, for its opinion. The ministry was yet to officially communicate with the PSC.

Another source said that the government has already faced significant criticism due to repeated police verifications in recent BCS recruitments. Suspending police cadre recruitment from four BCS exams could further complicate matters for the government.

A revised notification for the 47th

BCS exams on December 26 last year announced 3,487 vacancies, including 100 under the police cadre. The application process started on December 29 and will run until January 30.

Revised results of the 46th BCS exams were published on November 27 last year, and the remaining process to fill 3,140 vacant posts, including 80 under the police cadre, is pending.

The 45th BCS had 2,309 vacancies, including 80 under the police cadre. The written exams took place in January last year, but the results are yet to be published.

The number of vacant posts for the 44th BCS is 1,710, including 50 under the police cadre. As many as 3,930 candidates for the 44th BCS are taking fresh viva voce since the newly constituted PSC cancelled the previously conducted oral examinations and scheduled fresh tests from January 5 to February 5.

## Former AL leader

FROM PAGE 12

scene and, after nearly two hours of a tense situation, took the AL leader into custody.

According to social media posts, Bangladesh Tariqat Federation Chairman and former AL MP Syed Najibul Bashar Maizbhandari and former MP (Chattogram-2) Khadizatul Anwar Soni were also present at the wedding. Khadizatul Soni is Fakhruul Anwar's niece.

Meanwhile, police yesterday arrested 28 more leaders and workers of Jubo League, banned Chhatra League, and other AL-affiliated organisation members conducting raids in different areas of the city.

They have been accused in various cases filed with different police stations in the port city, said the Public Relations Department of CMP yesterday.

is voted into power, they will try their utmost to fulfil the reform promises they have made to the people.

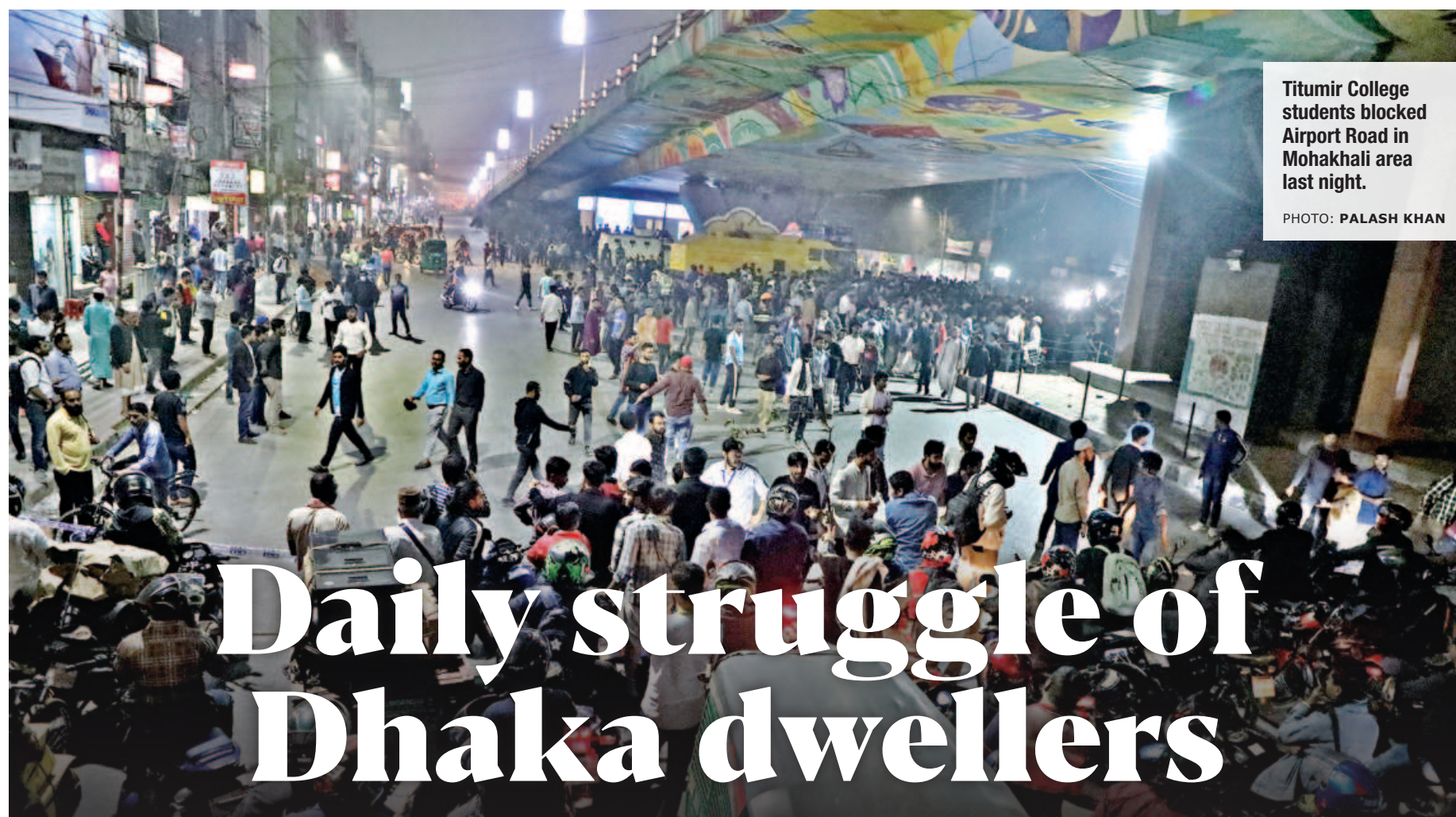
He said the BNP wants to bring about a qualitative change in politics by implementing the 31-point proposal, alongside taking effective steps to keep commodity prices within the people's buying capacity, ensuring fair prices for agricultural produce, and providing quality and cost-effective education and healthcare services.

Stating that traffic congestion and pollution are two major problems in Dhaka city, Tarique said effective steps must be taken, if BNP returns to power, to improve the traffic situation and air quality.

He said it is not possible for any government alone to resolve all civic problems without the help of the people. "So, city dwellers must remain alert and play a responsible role in overcoming many civic problems. There are many such problems in the country, and we must take measures to address them gradually," Tarique said.

He said the autocratic regime of Sheikh Hasina destroyed institutions and plundered public money in the name of development, as it was not accountable to the people. "When public representatives are elected through free and fair elections, they remain accountable to the people."

Tarique said many BNP leaders and activists endured torture in the struggle



Titumir College students blocked Airport Road in Mohakhali area last night.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

# Daily struggle of Dhaka dwellers

## A protest here, a gridlock there

MUNTAKIM SAAD and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Dhaka has worn many titles: the city of mosques, the Venice of the east, the rickshaw Capital of the World.

It's about time the metropolis gets a new moniker: the city of protests.

But Dhaka's protests are mostly a commuter's nightmare, as it amplifies the city's infamous traffic woes.

Since August 5 last year, following the fall of Sheikh Hasina through a popular

university status for their institution.

On January 30, both sides of the road were obstructed, resulting in hours-long traffic congestion. Commuters could do little but watch the clock tick.

The same group had previously blocked roads and railways in Mohakhali on November 18.

Meanwhile, injured protesters from the mass uprising took to Mirpur Road to demand better medical treatment and compensation. This caused significant

state guesthouse) to voice their demands. Over time, Shahbagh became another preferred protest site.

Protests have erupted in various areas, including Uttara, Mohakhali, Mirpur Road, Jatiya Press Club, Secretariat, Rampura, and Kakrail, blocking key roads.

Demands have varied widely. There have been protests against not taking the HSC exams, as well as movements demanding the exams to be held again. On

reinstatement.

On August 13, Ansar members demonstrated for job regularisation, which escalated on August 25 when they surrounded the Secretariat.

Besides, garment workers, tea labourers, families of ex-BDR members, minority rights groups, and various other groups demonstrated on the streets.

In an attempt to address this crisis, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) recently launched a partial traffic update



PHOTO: STAR

uprising, it seems all 24.65 million [estimated] residents of this city have at least one demand each.

And they want them all addressed – everything, everywhere, all at once.

Grievances, aspirations, and frustrations accumulated over the past 15 years are now flooding the streets of the capital.

From the logical to ludicrous, Dhaka's streets have become the stage for everything under the sun.

If you're navigating Dhaka's streets, consider this fair warning: the question isn't whether you'll encounter a protest, but when.

Take the recent Titumir College protests as an example. Yesterday, for the fourth day straight, students blocked the roads in front of their campus and at the Gulshan-1 intersection, demanding

disruptions on one of Dhaka's key arteries.

Simultaneously, "Inquilab Mancha" led a protest march to the home ministry, calling for the resignation of the home affairs adviser and denouncing the "safe exit" granted to individuals allegedly involved in the July killings.

January 22 saw two separate protests in Karwan Bazar and Shahbagh, while days earlier, four different protests erupted across the city – in Mohakhali, Shikkha Bhaban, Agargaon, and Shaheed Minar.

People have taken to the streets for multiple other reasons – some demanding job regularisation, others seeking to curb corruption, and some claiming to be victims of discrimination or deprived of their rights.

Many even gathered in front of the chief adviser's residence at Jamuna (the

multiple occasions, protesters have even forced their way into the Secretariat.

On August 26 last year, hundreds of pedal rickshaw drivers blocked roads in Shahbagh, demanding a ban on battery-operated rickshaws. However, on November 19, battery rickshaw drivers launched counter-protests after a High Court ruling restricted their movement.

Other major protests include demands for raising the government job entry age to 35 and dismissed workers seeking

service via the national emergency helpline 999. Introduced on January 28, the service provides real-time updates on road closures due to protests, construction, or accidents.

DMP Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali said, "I urge them [protesters] to stay on the sidewalk, but unfortunately, road blockades have become the preferred method of protest."

A traffic constable from DMP's Ramna division said the main reasons for increasing traffic congestion at key intersections like Shahbagh and Farmgate

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## 205 women, girls faced violence in January

### Says Mahila Parishad report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 205 women and girls were subjected to violence in January 2025, up from 163 cases in December 2024, according to a media monitoring report by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad.

The report, based on data from 16 national dailies, shows that 67 females, including 42 girls, were raped last month.

Among them, 20 were gang raped, while one woman and one girl were killed after being raped. Two others faced attempted rape.

Additionally, eight females, including four girls, were victims of sexual violence, while three women, including one girl, were sexually harassed.

Two women suffered acid attacks in January, one of whom succumbed to her injuries. Two domestic workers were tortured and two women faced dowry-related abuse.

The report also recorded 21 cases of physical abuse, including two children.

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## First phase of Ijtema ends with 'Akheri Munajat'

STAR REPORT

The first phase of Bishwa Ijtema concluded yesterday through "Akheri Munajat" seeking divine blessings for peace and prosperity of the Muslim Ummah.

The final prayer was conducted by Maulana Zubair, top spiritual leader of Shura-e-Nizam, Bangladesh.

Maulana Kefayet Ullah, another senior leader, said the prayer began at 9:00am and ended around 9:35am.

Nearly four million devotees joined the concluding prayers.

Habibullah Raihan, media coordinator of the Ijtema's Shura-e-Nizam, said around 3,050 delegates from 76 countries took part in the gathering.

The first phase, attended by followers of Maulana Zubair Ahmed, began on January 31 and is divided into two sessions. The Akheri Munajat

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## HC summons cop over student's torture in custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday summoned a police officer for allegedly torturing a college student in custody in 2014.

Sahidul Biswas, then a sub-inspector at Dhanmondi Police Station, has been ordered to appear before the HC on February 9.

Inzamamul Islam alias Zisan, a student of Dhaka City College, was allegedly tortured during remand in a case filed for the murder of Ayaz Haq, a student of Government Laboratory High School, in 2014.

The HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Nasreen Akter issued the order during the hearing of an appeal filed by Inzamamul, now in jail, challenging the trial court's verdict in the murder case.

A Dhaka court on December 10, 2020, sentenced Inzamamul to imprisonment until

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ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংকের

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আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী

## Khurshida Haque's death anniversary today

STAR REPORT

Today is the 14th death anniversary of Khurshida Haque, a social activist, said a press release. She was the wife of late MA Haque, a former minister, high-ranking police officer, writer, proponent of poverty alleviation, founding president of the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA), and founder of the Police Welfare Society (POLWEL).

On the occasion, food will be distributed to the poor and orphans, and special prayers will be offered in mosques for the salvation of her departed soul.



**PRAYER TIMING**  
FEBRUARY 3

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

## Daily struggle of Dhaka dwellers

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are the rising number of road blockades. **THE WIDER IMPACT** Dhaka, already crowned the world's slowest city by a 2023 report from the National Bureau of Economic Research, now teeters on the brink of a complete traffic meltdown.

Commuters, especially during school and office hours, endure hours-long delays, missing appointments and, in some cases, jeopardising their livelihoods.

"Yesterday, it took me over three hours just to reach my office in Karwan Bazar," said Sumaiya Rahman, a private bank employee. "By the time I got there, I had missed an important client meeting."

There are other factors that compound the city's traffic woes. An increasing number of rickshaws on major roads, ongoing construction projects, illegal parking, and vendors encroaching on footpaths all contribute to the chaos.

Randomly stationed buses and unregulated stops further clog the streets.

"Every day feels like a gamble," said Ashfaq Hossain, a father of two.

"I can never be sure if I'll be able to pick up my kids from school on time. The stress is unbearable."

The economic cost? Incalculable.

Delayed deliveries, missed business opportunities, and lost productivity add up to a staggering loss for the city's economy.

"I run a small business, and my deliveries are always late," said Kamrul Islam, a shop owner in Old Dhaka. "Customers get angry, and I lose money every day because of this mess."

**EFFORTS PROVE INSUFFICIENT**

Between September 1 and December 31, 2024, the DMP's traffic division issued 139,001 traffic violation cases, resulting in fines totalling nearly Tk 50 crore. The DMP also confiscated 45,457 battery-operated rickshaws and 5,979 foot-operated rickshaws during this period.

The police have deployed 4,200 officers and 600 student representatives to enhance enforcement.

Recently, the government has introduced traffic signal systems at four key intersections using manual technology and formulated a policy to regulate battery-

powered rickshaws.

Yet, these measures have done little to ease congestion.

Besides, construction for MRT Line-5 and Line-1 has prompted public advisories to avoid several areas, including Gulshan-2, Uttar Badda and Aftabnagar.

Traffic congestion persists in hotspots like Pragati Sarani, Vata, and Badda due to metro rail construction, while dug-up roads in Moghbazar-Mouchak and gridlocks in Old Dhaka worsen the crisis.

Lalbagh Traffic Division ADC Abu Sayeed blamed increasing auto-rickshaw numbers, street vendors spilling onto roads, and reckless bus operations as reasons behind Dhaka's traffic mess.

Echoing him, Mofizul Islam, deputy commissioner (Traffic-Gulshan) of the

DMP, said roads under his division have been narrowed down due to ongoing metro rail construction.

Those interviewed by this newspaper, both commuters and cops, said while protests are a democratic right, their unchecked proliferation — especially in a city as congested as Dhaka — requires urgent attention.

Authorities must strike a balance between allowing citizens to voice their grievances and ensuring that the city remains functional, they added.

Experts have called for designated protest zones, stricter enforcement of traffic regulations, and better urban planning.

For now, Dhaka's streets remain a battleground of demands and a cacophony of grievances disrupting the daily rhythm of life.

## First phase of Ijtema

FROM PAGE 3

for the second session of Zubair's followers will take place on February 5, with devotees from 22 districts expected to join.

Followers of Maulana Saad Kandhalvi will attend the second phase from February 14 to 16, with their Akheri Munajat scheduled for February 16.

Meanwhile, at least 40 people were injured in a commotion at the Ijtema ground after a drone crashed, triggering panic among devotees.

The injured were taken to Shaheed Ahsan Ullah Master General Hospital in Gazipur.

Faridul Islam, officer-in-charge of Tongi East Police Station, said the

drone crashed near the Mill Gate of the Ijtema venue, causing a sudden panic. As devotees rushed toward the exit points, many fell and sustained injuries.

It was not immediately clear who owned the drone or why it fell.

Mostafizur Rahman, emergency department officer at the hospital, confirmed that at least 40 injured devotees were brought in following the incident.

Five devotees attending the Biswa Ijtema have passed away during the first phase.

The deceased are Abdul Gafur, 75, Romij Ali, 60, Yakut Ali, 60, Abdul Quddus Gazi, 60, and Sabet Ali, 65.

## Work begins

FROM PAGE 5

Canal (4.46km), and Korail Lake (2.45km).

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan; Housing, Public Works, and Industry Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan; and LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan attended the ceremony.

After the inauguration, the advisers and officials walked to the banks of Baunia Canal, where a floating excavator had been stationed. They boarded the excavator, walking over the red carpet pathway.

The red carpet issue caused a storm on social media, with many users questioning the necessity of such a grand gesture for a canal excavation project.

During a media interaction, a journalist raised the issue with Rizwana, pointing out that previous mayor-led inaugurations had not featured such elaborate arrangements.

She responded with a smile, "I didn't notice that. Did you?"

Earlier, Rizwana stressed the urgent need to restore Dhaka's canals, emphasising that action must begin immediately. She warned that the neglected waterways had become breeding grounds

for mosquitoes and severe pollution.

"We need better management in the surrounding areas," she said, citing rampant sewage dumping and even discarded furniture in the canals. "This will no longer be tolerated."

Addressing encroachments, she said illegal occupants would have to be removed, recognising that the process might face resistance.

According to officials, renovation work on four more canals will begin this month, with plans to start work on nine more before the rainy season.

"Our primary goal is to restore water flow. The work on all 19 canals will be done following a comprehensive master plan," she added.

**DNCC'S CLARIFICATION ON RED CARPET USE**

The Dhaka North City Corporation, which hosted the event, later clarified the use of the red carpet.

It said the measure was purely for safety reasons.

It said the temporary approach way to the floating excavator was steep, muddy, and slippery, and the red mat was laid to ensure safe movement and improve walkway visibility, not as a ceremonial gesture.

## Encroachment justified by time

FROM PAGE 5

Following the local government ministry's instructions, DSCC is now preparing revised designs and drawings.

"We have a working plan in place and expect to complete revisions by February. Field-level work will begin soon after," said Safulullah.

The previous plan had two components — cleaning and recovering the canals, and adding amenities like cycle lanes, bridges, and open spaces.

The revised plan limits the scope of adding the amenities.

"We will incorporate civic facilities where possible but will primarily focus on retaining walls, walkways, and waste removal," Safulullah noted.

Separate drainage lines will also be installed to treat sewage before discharge, he added.

**EXPERTS EXPRESS SKEPTICISM**

Contacted, Adil Mohammed Khan, president of Bangladesh Institute of Planners, said implementation often diverges from initial plans, necessitating alternative measures.

"We need to understand whether this shift is based on ground realities or aimed at protecting encroachers."

Since authorities are deviating from their earlier stance, they must provide a clear explanation," he said.

"The initial decision was made based on specific

considerations, so any change requires justified reasoning," he added.

Khan also recommended involving third-party experts for an objective assessment before making such changes.

Architect Fazle Reza Sumon, former BIP president, said, "Many areas are already heavily encroached upon as per the CS records. If authorities apply different laws in different places, no law will be enforced properly."

"I believe this approach will create major difficulties during execution," he added.

**CURRENT SITUATION OF THE CANALS**

A recent visit to the project sites highlighted the deteriorating condition of these canals.

At Manda canal, the bed near Sukhnagar Bridge showed signs of neglect.

Local Abul Hossain said DSCC started cleaning last year but left it incomplete after some equipment was stolen.

Sheikh Enam of Muga recalled how the canal once connected to the Balu river and was navigable by boats.

Jirani canal, once a vital waterway, is now clogged with waste. At its confluence in Begum Bibi Road, Modinabagh, solid waste filled the canal.

"No cleaning has been done in eight years," said resident Mohammad Siyam Hossain Bhuiyan.

Shyampur-Kadamtali canal has suffered from road construction and

encroachment. In the 1990s, a kilometre near Shyampur Bazar was piped and filled.

Kalunagar canal, part of Hazaribagh canal, is now filled with garbage. Resident Md Liton recalled its vibrancy two decades ago before it was converted into drainage pipes during road construction.

## HC summons

FROM PAGE 3

death while five others to life terms imprisonment for the killing.

Inzamamul's lawyer, Mohammad Shishir Manir, said the SI and several other cops beat him, gave him electric shocks, and repeatedly pierced his left leg with syringes.

They also allegedly demanded Tk 10 lakh from his family to spare him from further torture.

SI Sahidul, however, denied the allegations.

## 205 women

FROM PAGE 3

Meanwhile, 49 women and girls were murdered for various reasons, while attempts were made to kill 18 women, including six girls.

In January, 25 females, including seven children, died under mysterious circumstances.

The report further noted that five women, including three girls, were abducted, while seven others narrowly escaped abduction attempts.

**TRADE FACILITATOR**

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The Embassy of Sweden in Dhaka is recruiting a Trade Facilitator with expertise and experience from working with trade, politics and business in an international and/or European/Swedish context. To know more about the Swedish Embassy, please visit: <https://www.swedenabroad.se/en/embassies/bangladesh-dhaka/>

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- Excellent interpersonal skills who is flexible, and who can organize and plan their work and has the ability to work well in a team and respect individual differences.
- Excellent knowledge of English in speech and writing.
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Receipt of application will not be acknowledged. Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview.

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## Employment Opportunity

**KAFCO** Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company Limited (KAFCO) is an international joint venture leading Ammonia & Urea Fertilizer manufacturing company in Bangladesh. The plant is located at Rangadia, Anowara, Chattogram with its Corporate Office at Dhaka. KAFCO is inviting applications from eligible candidates against the below mentioned positions for the Plant Site at Chattogram.

## Senior Teacher (Mathematics)

## Requirements:

- B.Sc. (Hon.) & M.Sc. in Mathematics from any reputed University;
- At least a CGPA 2.25 out of 4.00 or 2nd class in B.Sc. (Hons) and in M.Sc.;
- Minimum GPA 3.0 or 1st division in S.S.C & in H.S.C level;
- No 3rd Class / Division is allowable in any academic carrier;
- Having Minimum 2 years' teaching experience in Secondary Level;
- Strong Communication skills in Bangla and in English;
- Maximum 35 years of age as on 31st January 2025 which may be relaxed for highly qualified candidates;

## Senior Teacher (Physics)

## Requirements:

- B.Sc. (Hon.) & M.Sc. in Physics from any reputed University;
- At least a CGPA 2.25 out of 4.00 or 2nd class in B.Sc. (Hons) and in M.Sc.;
- Minimum GPA 3.0 or 1st division in S.S.C & in H.S.C level;
- No 3rd Class / Division is allowable in any academic carrier;
- Having Minimum 2 years' teaching experience in Secondary level;
- Strong Communication skills in Bangla and in English;
- Maximum 35 years of age as on 31st January 2025 which may be relaxed for highly qualified candidates;

## Teacher (KG)

## Requirements:

- At least a CGPA 2.25 out of 4.0 or 2nd class in graduation from any reputed University;
- Minimum GPA 3.0 or 1st division in S.S.C and in H.S.C level;
- No 3rd Class / Division is allowable in any academic carrier.
- Should be a female person having minimum 3 years' experience in teaching KG, Nursery, Pre-Nursery class in any reputed school;
- Strong Communication skills in Bangla and in English;
- Maximum 35 years of age as on 31st January 2025 which may be relaxed for highly qualified candidates;

## Additional Requirement for all posts

- The offer for job shall be subject to physically fit after medical examination by Company Medical Officer.
- Can work under pressure, self motivated, oriented with company goals.
- Job Location - KAFCO Plant, Rangadia, Anowara, Chattogram.

## Application Procedure

- Name of the post should be mentioned clearly on the envelope and on the CV.
- Candidate should send their CV, attested copies of all Academic Certificates & Mark Sheets and Experience Certificates, Copy of NID and a recent passport size photograph (These are mandatory documents) to HR Department, KAFCO, IDB Bhaban (13th Floor), E/8-A, Rokeya Sharani, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka 1207 at the latest by 16th February 2025.
- KAFCO reserves right to cancel the recruitment process at any stage.
- Candidates will be disqualified at any stage of recruitment process for submitting fake/forged document/statement.
- Short listed candidates will be called for interview.
- Candidates who applied against previously published advertisement need not apply again.

## TODAY IS THE 27th DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF FORMER SECRETARY M. AKHTAR ALI



Today 3rd February 2025, Monday is the 27th Death Anniversary of former Secretary Late M. Akhtar Ali. Relatives and well wishers are requested to pray for the departed soul.

Mrs. Akhtar Ali,

House # 14/A, Road # 95, Gulshan # 2, Dhaka-1212.

Phone: 01713069583



## পঞ্চম মৃত্যু বার্ষিকী

বিসম্বাহুরি রাহমানির রাহীম

বিগত ০৩/০২/২০২০ইং তারিখে বলিয়াদী জমিদার পরিবারের বৌরানী খুরশীদ আজিম সিদ্দিকী আমাদের সকলকে ছেড়ে না ফেরার দেশে চলে গেছেন। তিনি একজন প্রখ্যাত রবীন্দ্র সঙ্গীত শিল্পী ছিলেন। আজ ০৩/০২/২০২৫ইং তারিখ

তার পঞ্চম মৃত্যু বার্ষিকী। তিনি সাবেক মন্ত্রী এবং এফ.বি.সি.আই ও ডি.সি.সি.আই এর সাবেক সভাপতি চৌধুরী তানবীর আহমদ সিদ্দিকী'র সহধর্মিণী ছিলেন। আমরা মরহুমার বিদেহী আত্মার প্রতি সকলের দোয়া ও মাগফেরাত কামনা করছি।

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তারিখ: ০২/০২/২০২৫ইং

**e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, বগুড়া ডব্লিউএসআই নিম্নলিখিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

ID	Title of Works
1069737	Repair and Maintenance of boundary wall (North side), control room, security post, ansar barrack at Siraigonj 13233 kV grid substation and construct a pick-Up shade at Siraigonj 230 kV switching station under GMD, Power Grid, Bogura
1070141	Supplying of LED lights & Electrical items for different grid substation under GMD, Power Grid, Bogura.
1069713	Repairing and painting works of Main Gate, Signboard and control building at Mahasthangarh and Sherpur (Bogura) 132/33 kV grid substation under GMD, Power Grid, Bogura
1069700	Making & Supplying of MS Tools Rack for different grid substation under GMD, Power Grid, Bogura.
1069484	Purchasing of Stationary materials for office and different grid substation under GMD, Power Grid, Bogura.

আগ্রহী ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

মোঃ মামনুন রশীদ সরদার  
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**নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

সিনিয়র সার্বিক হালপাড়াস কুমিল্লা ইন্ডাস্ট্রিজ লিমিটেড কর্তৃক বগুড়া জিএমডি ডিভিশনে নিম্নলিখিত পদের সাময়িক উদ্ভিচিত খোঁজার স্বপ্নের প্রকৃত বাস্তবায়নের নিমিত্ত হতে নিম্নলিখিত আবেদন করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক	পদের নাম	পদের সংখ্যা	মৌখিক বেতন	শিক্ষণীয় যোগ্যতা	বয়স	কর্মপরিসর	অভিজ্ঞতা
১।	ট্রিকিংস বিশেষজ্ঞ	০১	আগোশাস সাপেক্ষ	এমসিপিএ/এমডি/এসপি এস/সমমানের ডিগ্রী	অনুর্ধ্ব ৫৫ বছর	০৮০০ মাসিক হতে ৫০০০ রিকিট গোষ্ঠী দেখা।	সর্বত্রই কাজে অভিজ্ঞতা সাপেক্ষ প্রাথমিক অভ্যর্থিকার করান করা হবে
২।	স্ট্রাকচার বিশেষজ্ঞ	০১	আগোশাস সাপেক্ষ	এমসিপিএ/এমডি/সমমানের ডিগ্রী			
৩।	ড্রাইভার বিশেষজ্ঞ	০১	আগোশাস সাপেক্ষ	এমসিপিএ/এমডি/সমমানের ডিগ্রী			
৪।	স্ট্রী রোগ বিশেষজ্ঞ	০১	আগোশাস সাপেক্ষ	এমসিপিএ/এমডি/ডিগ্রী / সমমানের ডিগ্রী			
৫।	৩য় ও চৌম্বক বিশেষজ্ঞ	০১	আগোশাস সাপেক্ষ	এমসিপিএ/এমডি/ডিগ্রী / সমমানের ডিগ্রী			
৬।	পাসপোর্টফটোগ্রাফার	০১	আগোশাস সাপেক্ষ	এমসিপিএ/এমডি/ডিগ্রী / সমমানের ডিগ্রী			
৭।	আইসিএ	০২	২৫০০০	ডিগ্রী/সমমান	প্রাথমিক বয়স ১০-৩০ বছরের মধ্যে হতে হবে। তবে অবসর প্রাপ্তদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স ৫৫ বছর পর্যন্ত নির্ধারিত হবে।		

**শর্তাবলী**

- প্রাথমিক আবেদনপত্রে পদের নাম, প্রার্থীর নাম, পিতার নাম, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র নম্বর, জন্ম তারিখ, মোবাইল নম্বর, শিক্ষণীয় যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা, বর্তমান ও স্থায়ী ঠিকানা, জাতীয়তা এবং খামের উপর পদের নাম উল্লেখ করে কমাডাউন সিএমএইচ কুমিল্লা এর বরাবরে লিখিতভাবে আবেদন করতে হবে। আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণের শেষ তারিখ ১০ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫।
- প্রাথমিক আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সকল শিক্ষণীয় যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি, ০৪ কপি সনাক্তকৃত পাসপোর্ট সাইজের সত্যায়িত রঙিন ছবি জমা দিতে হবে। অবসরপ্রাপ্ত জেএস/এনসিওদের ক্ষেত্রে চাকুরী হতে অবসর গ্রহণ সনাক্তকৃত যাবতীয় নথিপত্র আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সযুক্ত করতে হবে। অসম্পূর্ণ ও ক্রটিপূর্ণ আবেদনপত্র বাতিল গণ্য হবে। যে কোন আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ, বাতিল ও সনাক্তকরণ অন্য যে কোন প্রসঙ্গে কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।
- ক্রমিক নং ১-৬ এ উল্লিখিত পদের প্রার্থীদের মৌখিক সাক্ষাৎকার আগামী ১০ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ তারিখ ০৯:০০ ঘটিকায় সিএমএইচ কুমিল্লা, কুমিল্লা সেনানিবাসে চিঠিবিস্তান কক্ষে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। উক্ত স্থানে প্রাথমিকের সকল প্রয়োজনীয় সার্টিফিকেট ও কাগজপত্রাদিসহ যথাসময়ে উপস্থিত থাকার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।
- ক্রমিক নং ৭ এ উল্লিখিত পদের প্রার্থীদের লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষা আগামী ১০ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৫ তারিখ ০৯:০০ ঘটিকায় সিএমএইচ কুমিল্লা, কুমিল্লা সেনানিবাসে চিঠিবিস্তান কক্ষে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। উল্লিখিত তারিখে সর্বত্রই পদের প্রার্থীদেরকে লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য যথাযথভাবে উপস্থিত হতে হবে।
- সর্বত্রই পদের বিপরীতে আবেদনপত্রের প্রত্যেক প্রার্থীকে কমাডাউন সিএমএইচ কুমিল্লা অনুকূলে ২০০.০০ (দুইশত) টাকার পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (অফেনেরকোপ) জমা দিতে হবে। নির্ধারিত লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আবেদনকারীকে কোন প্রকার ভাতা প্রদান করা হবে না।

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/৬৬  
০২/০২/২৫

কমাডাউন  
সিএমএইচ কুমিল্লা  
কুমিল্লা সেনানিবাস  
টেলিফোন: ৮৮০২০৩০৩২০৩৬  
মোবাইল: ০১৭৬৯-৩০২১১২

GD-336



Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan; Housing, Public Works, and Industry Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan; and LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan inaugurated the excavation work on six canals yesterday. The photo was taken at the banks of Baunia Canal in the capital's Mirpur.

PHOTO: PID

REVIVING FOUR DHAKA CANALS

Encroachment justified by time constraints?

DSCC revises plan to dismantle fewer illegal structures; experts skeptical

HELEMUL ALAM

The Dhaka South City Corporation has decided to revive its four-canal development project with a modified demarcation approach. Initially, the project was to follow the Bangladesh Water Act 2013, which requires keeping a 10-metre buffer from water to determine a river's width.

have faced demolition under the original plan.

Under the revised plan, 52 illegal structures will be removed instead of 470 in the Shyampur canal, 10 structures will be removed instead of 266 in the Jirani canal, 10 structures will be removed instead of 581 in the Manda canal, and 77 structures will be removed instead of 271 in the Kalunagar canal.

the restoration of four canals -- Kalunagar, Jirani, Manda, and Shyampur -- spanning a total length of 19.78 km.

DSCC officials argue that implementing the project under the Water Act would have been time-consuming due to extensive encroachments.

"It was practically impossible to follow the act. Demolishing so many structures would have taken a long time," said DSCC Superintendent Engineer Mohammad Safiullah Siddique Bhuiyan.

The Ecnc initially approved the Tk 898.73 crore project on October 21, 2022.

Aimed at reducing Dhaka's waterlogging, the project covers

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Boat Museum demolished in Barguna

BNP, Jubo Dal men 'led the vandalism'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Activists of BNP and its affiliated organisations allegedly demolished the Bangabandhu Boat Museum in Barguna, the country's lone boat museum, on Saturday.

Despite the museum's location near the administrative offices in Barguna town, including the DC office and Sadar Police Station, local authorities did not take any step to prevent the vandalism, alleged locals.

The museum, shaped like a boat measuring 165 feet in length and 30 feet in width, was inaugurated on December 31, 2020 by Mustain Billah, the then deputy commissioner of Barguna.

It was set up on 78 decimals of land adjacent to the Barguna DC office, showcasing replicas of 100 varieties of traditional boats, including many that have gone extinct.



Contacted, Barguna DC Md Shafiqul Alam said he had heard about the incident, adding that it fell under the municipality's jurisdiction to take steps in this connection.

Former BNP district organising secretary Rezbul Kabir, former central Jubo Dal assistant organising secretary Muraduzzaman Khan, and district Jubo Dal organising secretary Muraduzzaman Khan (Tipon), allegedly led the vandalism, deploying local BNP, Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal activists.

Rezbul Kabir claimed that the site originally had a municipal library and that the previous administration built the boat museum to please the then ruling AL.

Muraduzzaman said, "The Bangabandhu Boat Museum was demolished due to public outrage over its name. We demand that it be replaced with the Shaheed Zia Memorial Library."

Contacted, Animesh Biswas, additional deputy commissioner (general) and administrator of Barguna municipality, said, "A mob came and dismantled the museum. This land belongs to the municipality and had a public library here once. Later, the then DC set up the museum privately. There was no government allocation for it."

Work begins to restore Dhaka waterways

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three advisers of the interim government yesterday inaugurated the excavation work on six canals, in a step towards restoring Dhaka's waterways.

Upon arrival, the advisers walked down the red-carpeted path to board a floating excavator, officially launching the dredging process.

The initiative, led by Dhaka north and south city Corporations, is part of a broader effort to rehabilitate 19 canals and reservoirs across the city. The project aims to improve water flow, reduce pollution, and reclaim canals from decades of neglect, addressing key environmental and urban challenges.

The six canals slated for renovation are Baunia Canal (7.19km), Rupnagar Canal (3.5km), Begunbari Canal (1.69km), Manda Canal (4.37km), Kalunagar

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

BNP leader 'assaults' headteacher

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A BNP leader has been accused of assaulting a high school headteacher in Noakhali for not recommending his son as the president of the school's ad-hoc governing body.

Rezaul Haque, 55, president of BNP ward-1 in Char Kakra union, allegedly attacked ANN Yasin, headteacher of Panditerhat High School in Companiganj. The incident occurred around noon yesterday at Panditerhat Bazar, said Md Zakir Hossain, assistant headteacher.

He said Rezaul wanted his 27-year-old son to be proposed as president in the committee, but due to his young age, other names were submitted instead. Angered, Rezaul stopped the headteacher on his way home and assaulted him, he said.

Following this, the school students vandalised Rezaul's pharmacy and held him captive until police intervened. He later publicly apologised.

Contacted, Rezaul denied the assault but admitted to verbally abusing the headteacher.

Companiganj police OC Fozlul Azim said the issue was settled with no complaints filed.

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

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গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার বঙ্গ অধিদপ্তর বিক্রয়মসি ভবন (১০ম তলা) ৭-৯, কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৫ www.dot.gov.bd সংশোধিত ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি শিফার্বর্ড ২০২৪-২০২৫

## WHAT'S THE HAPS?

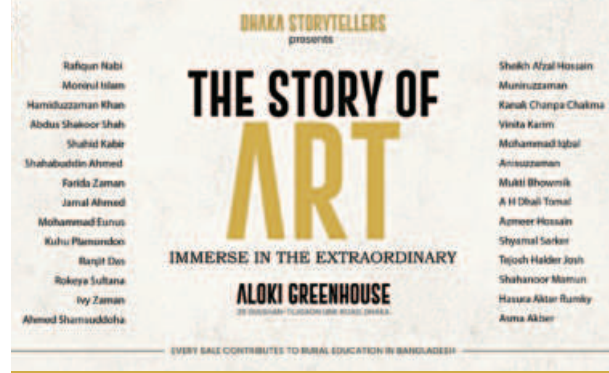
### The Story of Art

Dhaka Storytellers presents *The Story of Art*, a major group exhibition showcasing diverse paintings, sculptures, and mixed-media works by Bangladesh's most celebrated visual artists. The event is set to feature art talks, offering insights into the artists' creative journeys and artistic styles — to create an inspiring experience for art lovers and collectors alike.

**Date:** Saturday–Thursday | February 8–13

**Time:** 11am–10pm

**Venue:** Aloki Convention Center, Tejgaon



## A NEW NAYEEM on Feb 14

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

This Valentine's Day, FS Nayeem featurette *Jole Jwote Tara* is set to hit theatres. Directed by Arun Chowdhuri, the government-granted project also features Rafiath Rashid Mithila.

Nayeem shared his thoughts on the film and his role with The Daily Star.

"I play Hossain Majhi in this film, and this role is a blessing for me," he shared. "We filmed in a village by the riverbank and before the shoot, I stayed in a village to absorb the essence of my character. I moved there even before filming began and spent several days observing the villagers' lives up close, which helped me fully immerse myself in the role."

He also shared that during the 17 days of shoot, he wore a *lungi*, draped a *gamchha* over his shoulder, and walked along the village's uninhabited roads. "I put in a lot of effort to portray the character convincingly. This preparation made it easier for me to face the camera."

Regarding audience expectations, the *Mission Huntedown* famed actor shared, "I can assure you that the audience will see a different side of me—a fresh story and a new Nayeem."

Speaking about the film's songs, he said, "The songs are incredibly beautiful. One of them has been voiced by Kona and Imran, and I'm sure everyone will love it."

Nayeem made his silver-screen debut with *Jaago* which was released many years ago. *Jole Jwote Tara* is his second film. Two more films—*Shekor* and *Neel Jochhonar Golpo*—await release.

Talking about his co-star, the actor shared, "Mithila is a mature actress. She gained a lot of recognition for *Kajol Rekha* and received immense praise. Her performance in *Myself Allen Swapan* was also critically acclaimed. Right now, she is at the peak of her acting career. As a friend and co-actor, she is fantastic."

"Arun *da* is the kind of director whose projects turn actors into stars or feature those who are already stars," hailed Nayeem.



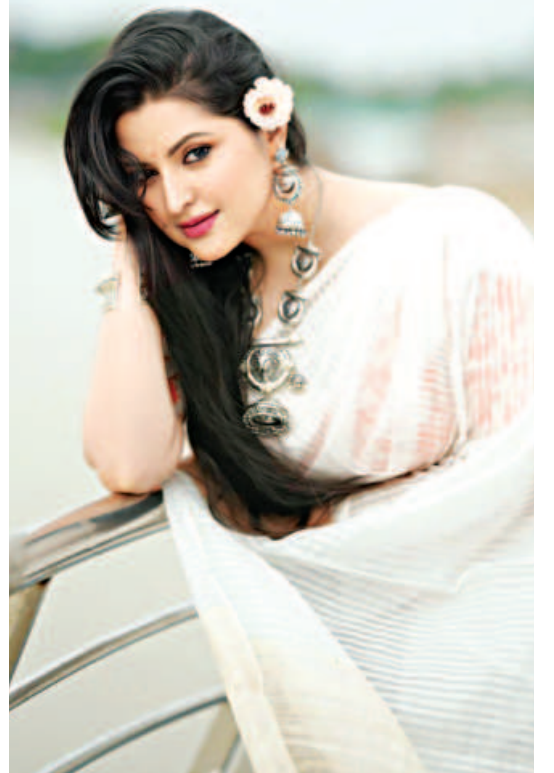
## Pori Moni signs new film

Md Samsul Huda is set to direct a political thriller titled *Golaap*, which was officially announced late last month with its poster featuring lead actor Nirab Hossain. Yesterday, it was confirmed that Pori Moni will take on the role of the female lead.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Pori Moni confirmed her involvement in the project, stating, "I will be portraying the character of Rupa in this film. She will dance, fall in love, and even take part in action sequences."

The screenplay, dialogues, and story of *Golaap* have been penned by Anik Biswas. It is being produced under the banner of Golpowala Production.

The actress has been in the headlines in recent weeks, as she was not allowed to participate in a showroom opening ceremony due to protests from a local Islamist group. Later that week, she secured bail in a previous case that she was embroiled in.



## Bapparaj to make OTT debut

The '90s heartthrob, renowned actor Bapparaj, has been away from the screens for eight years. Despite receiving offers, he did not take up any roles as they did not appeal to him. Now, he is ready to return to the screen, particularly marking his OTT debut with the web-series *Roktawrin*.



Yesterday, the actor shared a glimpse of the series on his social media account, much to the delight of his fans.

The actor informed local media that the project, directed by Mostofa Khan Shihan, is still in progress, and he has already participated in several shoots. "The work isn't finished yet. We are still filming. Once everything is in place, I will share more details about it," he said.

## Disney+ Hotstar to stream the 2025 Grammy Awards live

The 67th Annual Grammy Awards will be streamed live on Disney+ Hotstar, airing today from 7:00am to 10:30am (Bangladesh Standard Time).

The event, which traditionally takes place at Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles, will feature performances by artists like Brad Paisley, Janelle Monáe, Stevie Wonder, and Coldplay's Chris Martin. Beyoncé leads the nominations with 11, followed by Charli XCX, Billie Eilish, and



Kendrick Lamar with seven each.

Trevor Noah will return as host for the fifth consecutive year. Viewers can expect a special tribute to Quincy Jones and a segment highlighting wildfire relief efforts.

Notable nominations include Beyoncé's *Texas Hold 'Em* for Record of the Year and Taylor Swift's surprise album *The Tortured Poets Department* for Album of the Year.

## NEWS

### The second Shaheed Minar

FROM PAGE 12  
was formed in Jashore town, with Alamgir Siddiqui and Ranjit Mitra as its joint conveners.

This council became the driving force behind the movement in the town.

On March 2, a meeting took place at Michael Madhusudan College, bringing together student leaders like Sudhir Roy, Hamida Rahman, and Alamgir Siddiqui. It was here that the call for a full-scale strike and procession on March 11 was issued. The students, determined to amplify their voices, held meetings on March 7 and organised separate processions and rallies on March 8 and 9.

The authorities, sensing the growing unrest, attempted to quell the movement by imposing Section 144 in Jashore town on March 10. However, this repressive measure only fuelled the students' resolve. They held an emergency meeting and decided to violate Section 144.

On March 11, students took to the streets as planned, their procession echoing with the powerful slogans "We want Bangla as the state language".

The peaceful protest was met with brute force as police arrested 50 student leaders. This act of repression, however, did not break the students' spirit.

According to Badruddin Umar's book "Purbo Banglar Bhasha Andolon O Totkaleen Rajniti [Part II]", the strike on March 11 was successful, shutting down virtually every school and college in town. Processions poured out from various educational institutions. At a meeting of the Sangram Parishad that day, it was decided to continue the strike indefinitely.

The most eventful day of the 1948 movement in Jashore was on March 13.

A massive procession, joined by people from all walks of life, including government employees, marched in



The present Central Shaheed Minar that stands in Jashore town's Bakultala area was inaugurated in 2018.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

support of the arrested students who were being produced in court.

As the procession neared the Collectorate building, the demonstration turned violent after the police intervened.

The baton charge by the police was met with resistance from the crowd, turning the area near Dartana intersection into a battlefield. The police then opened fire, and Alamgir Siddiqui was shot in the leg.

The events of March 13 reached East Bengal Chief Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin, prompting him to assure an investigation into the police excesses. The movement in Jashore continued beyond March 18.

#### SPIRIT REKINDLED

The spirit of resistance was rekindled in 1952. News of the student killings in Dhaka on February 21 once again ignited protests in Jashore, with Michael Madhusudan College becoming the epicentre of the renewed movement.

According to Ahmed Rafiq's book

"Bhasha Andolon: Teknaf to Tetulia", a meeting was held at the Jashore Town Hall, where a decision was taken to erect a Shaheed Minar.

Students started building the memorial that very night and the work was completed early morning on February 22. This makes it the second Shaheed Minar after the one in Rajshahi. Afterwards, students placed floral wreaths there as a silent tribute to the fallen heroes.

On February 28, Jashore observed a symbolic Martyr's Day. The town reverberated with processions and rallies demanding Bangla as the state language.

From the initial sparks of 1948 to the renewed fervour of 1952, the people of Jashore played a crucial role in the fight for linguistic and cultural rights, leaving an indelible mark on the history of the Language Movement.

Translated and edited by Subrata Roy.

### Ex-MP Rana, nine others acquitted

FROM PAGE 12  
League Saniyat Khan Bappa — and Masudur Rahman, Farid Hossain, Nasir Uddin Nuru, Alamgir Hossain Chan, Sanowar Hossain and Babu.

The court also fined the convicts Tk 5 lakh each, in default of which they have to serve one year more in jail.

Mukti, Babu, and Nuru were in the court during the verdict.

Mohammad Saidur Rahman Swapan, the state counsel, told journalists that they would file an appeal against the verdict.

Contacted after the verdict, Ahmed Majid Sumon, son of Faruk, stated that the accused tried to obstruct the judicial process at multiple stages,

including filing the case and gathering witness statements.

On January 18, 2013, the bullet-ridden body of Faruk Ahmed, a member of the district unit of AL, was recovered near his house in Collegepara area in the town.

Three days later, his wife Nahar Ahmed filed a murder case against unknown accused with the Tangail Sadar Police Station.

In August 2014, detectives arrested two people — Anisul Islam and Mohammad Ali — suspecting their involvement in the murder.

During remand, they admitted their crimes in court.

On February 3, 2016, the then officer-

in charge of DB, Golam Mahfizur Rahman, submitted a charge sheet against 14 people including Amanur Rahman Khan Rana and his three brothers.

On September 6, 2017, the trial of the case began with the framing of charges against the accused.

During the trial, two of the accused — Anishur Rahman Raja and Mohammad Samir — died in prison.

The court heard a total of 27 witnesses during the trial.

On January 26, after the concluding arguments of the plaintiff and the defendants' counsels, the judge set today for announcing the verdict.

### Saraswati Puja today

FROM PAGE 2  
the blessings of Goddess Saraswati in their pursuit of knowledge, art, music, and culture.

In most temples, houses and educational institutions, the puja will begin in the morning to be followed by "Anjali" or divine offering. Then the children will be imparted "Hatekhor" and later prasad (food offering to the goddess) will be distributed among devotees.

According to the Hindu faith, the goddess Saraswati represents power, creativity, and inspiration and presents herself when the weather is pleasant and nature is in its full grandeur.

Depicted as a graceful woman with a crescent moon adorning her brow, she is shown riding a swan or a peacock, or is seated on a lotus flower.

The most gorgeous Saraswati Puja will be arranged on the premises of

Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University, where a huge number of devotees and crowds will throng to perform the religious rituals and visit the pandals circled on the playground of the university's largest dormitory.

According to hall authorities, students of as many as 72 departments are arranging 72 puja pandals this year, as the Fine Arts Faculty will erect a gigantic Saraswati idol made with styrofoam, bamboo, and other materials at the centre of a pond on the hall premises likewise every year, which attracts most of the devotees as well as the visitors. Puja will also be arranged at Dhakeshwari National Temple, Ram Krishna Mission, Jagannath University, Siddheshwari temple, Supreme Court premises, Farashganj, Shakhari Bazar, Tanti Bazar and different other places in old Dhaka, Banani, Dhaka College, Eden Girls' College, BUET, Ramna Kali

Mandir and Maa Anandamayi Ashram, Tejgaon College, Stamford University and different educational institutions in the city.

On Dhaka University campus, the puja is also organised at all female dormitories — Rokeya Hall, Samsun Nahar Hall, Bangladesh Kuwait Moitri Hall, Begum Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall and Kabi Sofia Kamal Hall.

Jagannath Hall administration is organising the dormitory's central puja at the dormitory's place of prayer while employees of the hall have staged several pandals to worship Saraswati.

Apart from Dhaka, Saraswati puja is also celebrated at temples, educational institutions and residences across the country.

Chattogram city and Madaripur district town see the biggest celebration of Saraswati Puja every year.

### US fund crunch hits dev projects

FROM PAGE 12  
The fund cuts against such a backdrop are likely to add insult to injury, said development experts.

AKM Jashim Uddin, director of the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB), warned of widespread consequences if US funding is curtailed.

"We hope that the new US administration will make a positive decision after the review," he said.

According to the Economic Relations Division, the US disbursed \$450 million for 96 development projects last year.

Officials fear funding for projects focused on gender, LGBTQ rights, immunisation, health, and climate change could be discontinued as Trump withdrew from the World Health Organization and the Paris Climate Agreement.

An estimated 20,000 professionals work in US-funded projects across Bangladesh. Additionally, vendors, dealers, and several million beneficiaries could be affected by a prolonged aid freeze.

Already, icddr,b has sacked over 1,000 employees, mostly from a USAID-funded tuberculosis project. The US State Department also suspended funding for Asian University for Women's (AUW) Afghan students, jeopardising their education.

"There are about 550 Afghan students enrolled, with 330 more expected. We are in real trouble," AUW Vice-Chancellor Rubana Huq told The Daily Star. The university has made a public appeal for alternative funding to sustain education for the Afghan students.

#### SHRINKING DEV SECTOR

According to the NGO Affairs Bureau, aid for the NGOs has been on the decline for several years.

The foreign aid that was \$945 million in 2019 came down to \$741 million in 2023, it said.

NGO officials highlighted that most jobs in the development sector are contractual and project-based and have limited end-of-service benefits.

"The sector was already shrinking. If the US cuts funding, the impact will be severe," said an NGO official.

Over 50 percent of NGO funding in Bangladesh comes from the US government, the official added.

#### STRATEGIC SHIFT

The previous US administration under Joe Biden had been critical of Sheikh Hasina's government over human rights concerns and election irregularities. It had also welcomed the interim government led by Prof Muhammad Yunus, pledging support for the transition.

However, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a US based think tank, cautioned that Trump's decision to freeze aid could push Bangladesh closer to China.

In a January 29 article, CFR's senior fellow Joshua Kurlantzick noted that interim leader Prof Yunus is committed to reforms, and cutting aid now could set back a major success story.

Beyond development setbacks, the move could have geopolitical ramifications. Bangladesh, a strategic country, may turn to China for financial support if US aid remains suspended,

he wrote.

Kurlantzick said that before Hasina's ouster, Bangladesh had strong economic and strategic ties with China, while maintaining friendly relations with India. If the US disengages, Beijing is likely to step in with increased investments and loans.

China has already backed several Belt and Road projects in Bangladesh and extended support to the interim government. Following the US aid freeze, Dhaka has intensified efforts to strengthen bilateral relations with Beijing.

Kurlantzick warned that such a shift would undermine US regional influence. "If the US abandons Bangladesh, China will seize the opportunity, altering the balance of power in South Asia."

The next 90 days will be critical in determining the fate of US-funded projects and Bangladesh's broader geopolitical alignment.

Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Itekhazuzaman said Trump's abrupt and indiscriminate way of reviewing foreign aid is an "unprecedented disgrace" for the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, especially the principle of mutual accountability for international development aid donors and recipients.

He said he hopes that good sense will prevail on Trump's review team to recognise that development assistance is as much a token of burden-sharing for global developmental injustice as it is a means of promotion of shared values and objectives.

## US carries out airstrikes on IS in Somalia

Says Trump; local gov't confirms 'key' IS figures killed

AFP, Palm Beach

The United States military on Saturday conducted air strikes on Islamic State (IS) group targets in Somalia, President Donald Trump announced.

"This morning I ordered precision Military air strikes on the Senior ISIS Attack Planner and other terrorists he recruited and led in Somalia," Trump said on Truth Social.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said the strikes targeted IS-Somalia operatives in the Golis mountains in the semi-autonomous Puntland region.

The government of Somalia's semi-autonomous Puntland region said yesterday that US military strikes in the Golis mountains had killed "key figures" in the Islamic State group.



Smoke rises during an Israeli army operation in Jenin, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, yesterday. The Israeli military said it had destroyed "several buildings" in Jenin, with a journalist reporting clouds of smoke billowing over the surrounding area. PHOTO: REUTERS

## Iran unveils new ballistic missile in show of force

AFP, Tehran

Iran revealed a new ballistic missile yesterday that it said was capable of travelling 1,700 kilometres, unveiling it in a Tehran ceremony attended by President Masoud Pezeshkian.

State television broadcast images of the missile, dubbed Etemad, or "trust" in Persian, saying it had a maximum range of 1,700 kilometres (1,056 miles) and was "the most recent ballistic missile" built by the Iranian defence ministry.

Western countries have grown concerned over advances in Iran's ballistic missile programme, accusing it of destabilising the Middle East.

Iran's missiles, including this newest design, are capable of reaching its arch-foe Israel, which it targeted twice last year as the Gaza war spilled over.

"The development of defence capabilities and space technologies... aims to ensure that no country dares to attack Iranian territory," Pezeshkian said in a televised address.

## BOARDING SCHOOL IN KURSK Russia, Ukraine trade blame for missile strike

Four killed; 84 people receive medical assistance

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukraine and Russia traded blame for a deadly missile strike on Saturday that killed at least four people in the dormitory of a boarding school situated in a part of Russia's Kursk region held by Kyiv forces.

Some of the war's fiercest battles in recent months have been taking place in the Kursk region that borders Ukraine, where Kyiv forces have held swaths of the land since staging a major cross-border incursion last August.

Ukraine's Armed Forces said on the Telegram messaging app that Russia had launched an aerial bomb from Russian territory that struck a boarding school in Sudzha, killing at least four. The boarding school housed people preparing for evacuation.

As of 10:00 pm (2000 GMT) on Saturday, 84 people had been rescued or received medical assistance, the statement said. Four of the injured were in a serious condition. Rescue efforts to clear rubble were proceeding.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr



Zelensky said the attack on Sudzha, some 12 km (7.5 miles) from the border with Ukraine, showed how Russia fights the war.

"They destroyed the building even though dozens of civilians were there," Zelensky wrote on the X social media platform.

"This is how Russia waged war against Chechnya decades ago. They killed Syrians the same way. Russian bombs destroy Ukrainian

homes the same way."

Russia's Defence Ministry said early yesterday on Telegram that Ukrainian forces had launched "a targeted missile strike on a boarding school in the city of Sudzha" from Ukrainian territory.

In a statement, Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova called the strike a "terrorist attack" and vowed to bring Kyiv to justice.

## UK to become first country to criminalise AI child abuse tools

AFP, London

Britain will become the first country to introduce laws against AI tools used to generate sexual abuse images, the government announced late Saturday.

The government will make it illegal to possess, create or distribute AI tools designed to generate sexualised images of children, punishable by up to five years in prison, interior minister Yvette Cooper revealed.

It will also be illegal to possess AI "paedophile manuals" which teach people how to use AI to sexually abuse children, punishable by up to three years in prison.

"This is a real disturbing phenomenon. Online child sexual abuse material is growing, but also the grooming of children teenagers online. And what's now happening is that AI is putting this on steroids," interior minister Yvette Cooper told Sky News yesterday.

## GAZA TRUCE-2ND PHASE Israeli PM travels to US for talks

One Palestinian killed in Israeli raid in West Bank

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday left for the United States where he will become the first foreign leader to meet Donald Trump since the US president returned to office.

His visit comes as a fragile truce holds between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, and between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon. Both groups are backed by Iran. Netanyahu will begin talks on a second phase to the Gaza ceasefire, his office said.

Before boarding his flight, Netanyahu said the pair would discuss "victory over Hamas, achieving the release of all our hostages and dealing with the Iranian terror axis". Netanyahu spoke with the US President's Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff on Saturday and agreed that ceasefire negotiations would "begin when they meet in Washington".

Netanyahu's office said Witkoff would talk to Qatar and Egypt, key mediators, before discussing with the Israeli premier "steps to advance the negotiations, including dates for delegations to leave for talks".

Meanwhile, Palestinian health ministry said one person was killed by Israeli soldiers in the West Bank yesterday. The Israeli military launched a major offensive in the area last month dubbed "Iron Wall" aimed at rooting out Palestinian groups from the Jenin area.

## US ICE CRACKDOWN Over 7.2K illegal migrants arrested in 9 days

NEW YORK POST ONLINE

US Federal immigration officials have arrested more than 7,200 illegal migrants since President Trump green-lighted deportation raids nearly two weeks ago.

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents as of Friday had rounded up 7,260 illegal migrants, according to a compilation of daily totals of arrests since January 23 posted on X by ICE.

The agency also reports lodging 5,763 "detainer" requests with local authorities, asking them to turn over migrants targeted for deportation.

The raids are centred on sanctuary cities like New York City, Chicago and Boston and those arrested include illegals accused of rape, sex crimes against minors, and guns and drug offenses, ICE said. The effort is part of the major crackdown in large cities across America that Trump promised on the campaign trail and also has led to weeding some members of the notorious Tren de Aragua and MS-13 gangs off the streets.

ICE has provided limited information on just a few dozen of the arrested migrants — all of whom were previously convicted of felonies, facing criminal charges in their home countries.



**"Most democratic nations have elections in their time of war. I think it is important they [Ukraine] do so."**  
Says Trump's special envoy for Ukraine and Russia Keith Kellogg

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Divisional Forest Officer  
Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Division, Dhaka.

Memo No-22.01.0000.106.42.000.2025.389 Date: 02.02.2025

### e- Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the works below.

Sl. No.	Tender /Proposal ID	Work/Tender Description	Publication Date &Time	Last selling Date &Time	Closing & Opening Date &Time
1.	1066449	Supply of medicines and medical equipment for protected wildlife of safari parks, Gazipur.	03-Feb-2025 10:00	17-Feb-2025 17:00	18-Feb-2025 12:00
2.	1066450	Supply of Uniform for the employee	03-Feb-2025 10:00	17-Feb-2025 17:00	18-Feb-2025 12:30
3.	1066451	Providing food for wild animals (mainly monkeys) roaming freely in Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka Old Airport, Dhaka Gandaria and various areas of Dhaka, Gazipur and Manikganj districts.	03-Feb-2025 10:00	17-Feb-2025 17:00	18-Feb-2025 13:00
4.	1067940	Supply of stationary for Office of the Project Director Feasibility Study for Biodiversity Conservation and Ecotourism Development in Bhawal National Park.	03-Feb-2025 10:00	24-Feb-2025 17:00	25-Feb-2025 12:00

The interested person/firms may visit the website [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) to get the details of the tender. This is an online Tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP system portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@procure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@procure.gov.bd), 02-41080100, 01916522803).

(SHARMIN AKTER)  
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GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
EDUCATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT  
MANIKGANJ  
[eed.manikganj.gov.bd](http://eed.manikganj.gov.bd)

### e-Tender Notice (Open Tendering Method)

Memo No:-EED/Manikganj/Notice-12/2024-25/895 Date: 02-02-2025

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

SL No.	Tender ID	Name of Works	Online Tender Publishing Date (On/After)	Online Tender Opening & Closing (Date & Time)
01	1071080	Construction of Retaining wall to Govt. Debendra College at sadar Upazilla, Manikganj District	03-Feb-2025	Please visit the Tender Notice on the e-GP Website

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of following Package from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the Procuring Entity Office, National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

(Mujahidul Islam Alif)  
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## Time to reform social safety net schemes

### Task force report highlights barriers to poverty alleviation

We are not surprised by the findings of a government task force that has revealed significant shortcomings in the social safety net programmes. These challenges—including misallocations, beneficiary inclusion errors, inadequate provisions, poor programme design, and the absence of robust income support measures—have long served as barriers to achieving their core objective of addressing poverty. The task force's report, submitted last week, sheds light on these issues in considerable detail. Using the 2022 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, it estimates that between 2010 and 2022, social safety net programmes contributed to reducing extreme poverty by only 0.6 percentage points, and moderate poverty by only 0.8 percentage points.

It goes without saying that these outcomes could be improved significantly if the structural problems were resolved, despite resource constraints. Currently, 53.9 percent of the poor and vulnerable families are excluded from social protection programmes, mainly because of inclusion errors. On the contrary, 62 percent of non-poor households receive some form of benefit. Ensuring that the funds reach only the vulnerable and deserving families should have been a top priority, yet successive governments have failed to address it. Corruption by officials and local elected representatives who are in charge of enlisting beneficiaries is not the only factor here—the very manner in which this is one is also problematic.

There are also too many unrelated, often overlapping, schemes that not only inflate the budget but also limit their transformative potential. For example, we have repeatedly questioned the logic of including schemes such as pensions for government employees, subsidies, or interest payments on national savings certificates within the social safety net. The extent of this misallocation or rather manipulation can be understood from the fact that of the six largest schemes by budget allocation, only one—for old-age allowance—can be considered a genuine social protection measure. It is no wonder that while, on paper, social protection spending in FY 2024-25 accounts for 2.5 percent of GDP and 17 percent of national budget, it drops to only 1.2 percent and 7 percent, respectively, when schemes linked with pensions and subsidies are excluded.

These issues not only affect the number of potential beneficiaries but also the size of benefits received. The task force's report also talks about the fact that there has been virtually no progress in introducing interventions based on social insurance principles (such as unemployment insurance), while the capacities of different ministries and departments remain grossly inadequate, with persistent dependence on development partners. The lack of income support measures means that the beneficiaries remain trapped in the cycle of poverty, and in need of continued support, which is the opposite of what such measures should be aiming for.

These issues and inadequacies should be addressed urgently if the social safety net is to deliver its promised outcomes. The interim government is in a unique position to reform the whole structure and ensure that the poor are not only properly identified and supported but also given the means to be self-reliant over time.

## Saving rivers is our duty

### Outcome of govt actions must be more visible

It is hardly surprising that pollution sources around Dhaka's rivers have nearly doubled over the last five years, given the unchecked degradation of rivers and other waterbodies in the country. Industrial units, government agencies, and private individuals have all contributed equally and untiringly to poisoning the waters of Buriganga, Turag, Shitalakha, Balu, Karnatali, and Dhaleswari rivers—Dhaka's lifelines for centuries. Despite repeated calls to save them, successive governments have failed to take effective measures to prevent pollution or hold the polluters and encroachers accountable, emboldening them further.

As a result, according to a recent River and Delta Research Centre (RDRC) study, the number of pollution sources—industries, kitchen markets, dockyards, municipal sewerage lines, private sewerage outlets, and waste dumping stations—has surged from 608 to 1,024 in just five years. Even sluice gates and service canals are contaminating major rivers like Buriganga and Shitalakha by channelling pollutants directly into them. All this means that the Tk 1,000 crore spent by the previous government on projects to protect Dhaka's rivers literally went down the drain. Evidently, corruption and political favouritism compromised its commitment to saving rivers.

The interim government, free from such biases and with environment activist Syeda Rizwana Hasan in its ranks, is expected to show greater dedication to protecting rivers and the environment. However, while efforts to restore 19 canals across Dhaka have recently begun, actions against major river polluters and encroachers have remained inadequate. No one expects the government to solve the deep-rooted issues involved with river protection overnight, but its measures must be more visible, especially against key offenders, to deter others.

Additionally, the National River Conservation Commission (NRCC) must be reactivated and empowered without any further delay. It is baffling that this vital agency is still operating with minimal staff months after the interim government revoked its chairman's appointment. Further delays in making it functional will only worsen pollution and allow more rivers to fall to encroachers. Ultimately, saving our rivers is a collective responsibility. While the government must act decisively, citizens, too, must refrain from polluting activities. Our rivers are essential for our survival—we all must do the best we can to protect them.

# Our development model is poisoning Dhaka



Anu Muhammad is a former professor of economics from Jahangirnagar University.

ANU MUHAMMAD

After the fall of a deeply corrupt and irresponsible government through a mass uprising, we believed that many things would improve. But our hopes have been shattered. One of our most critical concerns is related to survival—our ability to simply breathe and live.

Dhaka's air pollution remains among the worst in the world. The city continues to hold the infamous record of having the most hazardous air globally. When the Air Quality Index (AQI) exceeds 300, the air is classified as "extremely dangerous." In some areas of Dhaka, AQI has surpassed 400, even approaching 500. Even on Sunday morning, Dhaka had the worst air in the world. At such levels, the concentration of harmful particulate matter in the air makes it dangerous for humans. The situation is dire, particularly for children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing health conditions. The rate at which cases of respiratory diseases, neurological disorders, fever, cough, and lung infections are rising is alarming.

Despite these circumstances, we have not seen the government take meaningful steps to address the crisis. The situation has deteriorated to the point where people are forced to organise movements simply to protect open, green spaces like Bahadur Shah Park, Tetultola playground, Panthakunja Park, and Khilgaon playground in Dhaka, as well as in other cities. The previous government showed complete negligence to these issues, and we had hoped that the new interim government would be more responsive. However, this has not been the case.

For instance, the Panthakunja Park, which used to be a small open space with some trees, has been taken over for the construction of a ramp of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway. To prevent this, some young activists have been protesting on site for more than 50 days, and concerned citizens have expressed solidarity with them, yet the government has not responded positively. Instead, officials claim that these projects cannot be cancelled or revised. However, the ramp being built in Panthakunja was not a part of the original plan. It was introduced later to benefit certain private companies

seeking to maximise their profits. An article by Kallol Mustafa recently published in this daily has detailed how such projects are often linked to private interests rather than genuine public needs.

There have been numerous proposals and projects to protect Dhaka's environment, including efforts to clean up the Buriganga River and other nearby rivers, to clean up the city's air. Loans worth hundreds of crores of taka have been organised from the World



People are being forced to organise movements to protect what's left of open, green spaces like Panthakunja Park.

FILE PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Bank and other lenders in the name of the environment's improvement. Yet, there are no visible results. Where has this money gone? Many argue that protecting the environment requires significant financial investment, but this is incorrect. Environmental protection does not require excessive funds, rather it requires stopping disastrous spending. In fact, unnecessary investments and projects that serve private interests are actively destroying the environment.

One of the primary causes of environmental degradation in Dhaka is unregulated construction. Without proper planning or assessment of long-term consequences, construction activities are going on unchecked. The construction sector now accounts for around eight percent of Bangladesh's

GDP (2021). To maintain this economic growth, open spaces are being filled in, parks are being encroached upon, and land is being leased for commercial purposes. Even historic places like Bahadur Shah Park are being leased out for commercial purposes.

The fundamental issue here is that no serious effort is being put into reducing air pollution in Dhaka. Many of the environmental projects funded by international funding agencies such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) have ironically contributed to its destruction instead. For example, under the guise of "social forestry" projects, natural forests in Bangladesh at various locations have been destroyed and replaced with commercial plantations of eucalyptus and acacia, which have had a devastating ecological impact. The destruction of the Chakaria Sundarbans is a prime example of that. In the name of energy development,

approach, including consultation with industry stakeholders and ensuring the availability of viable substitutes. But instead of implementing a structured transition plan, the government simply issued a top-down directive, which predictably failed.

Bangladesh has no shortage of natural fibres, and we could have developed a thriving industry around environment-friendly products to replace polythene. Unfortunately, there has been no development in the jute industry. Loans from the World Bank, rather than promoting jute-based alternatives, contributed to the industry's decline. Meanwhile, because of indiscriminate use of cheap polythene, Dhaka's drainage system remains clogged, leading to severe waterlogging and further river pollution.

Dhaka could have been a much healthier city. Surrounded by rivers, it had the potential to be an environmentally sustainable urban area. If its rivers had been preserved, its open spaces protected, and large-scale afforestation efforts undertaken, the city's air quality would have significantly improved. Adequate greenery—fruit-bearing trees, flowering plants, and natural forests—could have dramatically reduced disease rates and provided a much healthier living environment.

Instead, Dhaka is surrounded by countless brick kilns, despite repeated discussions about their harmful impact. Most of these kilns operate illegally. They must be shut down, and viable alternatives to bricks must be introduced.

If immediate steps are not taken, Dhaka will fully transform into a city of sick people. We are already witnessing a sharp increase in illnesses, and this will only worsen if urgent measures are not implemented. There are no playgrounds for children, no open spaces where people can breathe fresh air, and the water we drink is contaminated. Citizens cannot even enjoy a clean and peaceful time by the river.

This extreme deprivation stems from the current development model, which prioritises profit maximisation for a select group over public welfare. Projects are designed to benefit certain influential groups through lobbying, while the common people—who bear the consequences—are entirely excluded from the decision-making process.

The present government frequently talks about reforms, but what kind of reforms are they referring to? Reform is not an abstract concept; it requires concrete actions. True reform should involve policies that protect Dhaka's residents and their right to a liveable city.

## Civil service 2.0: A prototype for reform



Rassiq Aziz Kabir is research associate at the Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID).

RASSIQ AZIZ KABIR

Civil service, inarguably, is one of the most, if not the most, lucrative career options in Bangladesh. The July uprising, which ultimately led to the ouster of the former regime, was initially triggered by the overturning of a Supreme Court order—which reinstated the farcical enactment of a disproportionate quota system in the civil service as well as other government jobs.

Although a lot can be said about the civil service obsession of the people in general, it is one of the guaranteed pathways towards upward mobility in Bangladesh, a country where socioeconomic advancement is quite restricted. However, the civil service of Bangladesh is in dire need of overhauling, not only in order to catch up with the international best practices but also for more efficiency and transparency.

The Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) stands on the framework of the Imperial Civil Service (ICS), the colonial service in British India, which later succeeded into the Central Superior Services (CSP) in Pakistan. The BCS currently has 26 cadres, with 14 general and 12 technical cadres. The exam system ensues a preliminary exam of MCQs, followed by a written exam and a viva voce. A lot of questions might be raised regarding the current nature of the evaluation process; however, the greater problem lies in

the organisational and operational framework within the civil service as well as the unequal power dynamics.

The Indian Civil Service—with the administrative and police services wielding perhaps a similar influence in the power structure when compared to the Administration and Police Cadre of Bangladesh—is quite different due to the fact that the civil service has rather a federal outlook compared to the more centralised nature of the BCS. The Indian Civil Service is trifurcated into All India Services, which include the administrative, police, and forest services; the central service, which includes departments such as foreign service, revenue service, and so on; and the state service, which includes the state police, state forest service, and so on. There is a state-level provision as well, which, given India's vastness, is quite rational.

For Bangladesh, adopting a federal structure in the governance structure might be quite cumbersome at the beginning, but a more federal stature in the civil service might be a pathway to that—as it would not only decentralise the administration but also reduce the Dhaka dependence when it comes to streamlining bureaucratic as well as regulatory obstacles. Dividing Bangladesh into a few regions and later adopting a regional as well as a central tier in civil service would remove a

lot of administrative inefficiencies. However, adopting such a system would automatically translate to the remodelling of the current one, which might place a financial strain.

The British Civil Service, the one on which the BCS was customised, is quite decentralised as well, which only reinstates the case for a more federalist structure in our civil

**For Bangladesh, adopting a federal structure in the governance structure might be quite cumbersome at the beginning, but a more federal stature in the civil service might be a pathway to that—as it would not only decentralise the administration but also reduce the Dhaka dependence when it comes to streamlining bureaucratic as well as regulatory obstacles.**

service, albeit taking into account the unique complexities and challenges. The British Civil Service also has a comprehensive performance appraisal system on a yearly basis, along with a policy for managing poor performance that encompasses multiple warnings followed by a dismissal decision if those warnings are not heeded. In Bangladesh, although in theory, there is a performance appraisal system, there is a lack of efficiency and implementation of the system.

Bangladesh's civil service is

notoriously analogue and looking at some global examples of countries with some similarities in the socioeconomic fabric, such as Rwanda and Kenya, Bangladesh effectively has to digitise the civil service. Rwanda has an integrated electronic case management system, and Kenya has an eCitizen portal, and both these systems are instrumental in addressing the woes of the citizens, which would be difficult to confront.

For some highly technical positions that require specific operational skill sets, Bangladesh can appoint civil technocrats on a contractual basis, a practice that has been in vogue in many developed countries, such as Singapore and France. Although this practice has been adopted in some instances in Bangladesh, it has often been criticised for nepotism and politicisation, which invalidated the real purpose of the practice. Hence, the adoption of the practice in future instances should be subject to more scrutiny.

However, there is a lot of scope to be optimistic. Following the July uprising, as like many other fields, the Public Administration Reform Commission has proposed that promotions to positions of deputy secretary and above, alongside other cadres beyond the Administration cadre, be determined through examinations. This proposal, aiming to ensure that at least 50 percent of these positions are held by other cadres, despite some criticisms, can be a welcome move in order to curb the inter-cadre power imbalance.

Post August 5, there is a new rejuvenation regarding the idea of reform, of which the civil service is a big part. However, modernising the civil service by incorporating the context-specific good practices across the world is a dire necessity of this time.



On his Inauguration Day on January 20, 2025, US President Donald Trump laid out a sweeping plan to maximise fossil fuel production, rolling back environmental protections and withdrawing the US from the Paris Agreement. FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

## TRUMP'S RE-WITHDRAWAL FROM PARIS AGREEMENT

# What it means for the world



Mizan R Khan is technical lead at the LDC Universities Consortium on Climate Change (LUCCC).

MIZAN R KHAN

On the very first day of assuming office on January 21, 2025, US President Donald Trump signed an executive order to immediately withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement. His justification is that the agreement imposes an unfair burden on the US economy, and it favours other big emitters like China. This second-time withdrawal will take effect after one year. We may recall that Article 28.1 of Paris Agreement restricts exiting by any party after three years of its ratification date. Then it takes another year for the withdrawal to be finally effective. So, the last time Trump pulled out of the agreement, it ultimately took almost four years to take effect. However, it lasted only for four months—from November 2020 till President Joe Biden rejoined the treaty in early 2021.

This sad but expected news comes at a time when 2024 has been the hottest year on record. The global average temperature in 2024 reached 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial levels—the aspirational goal under the Paris Agreement. The whole world is reeling from multifarious impacts of climate change: from the raging wildfires burning Los Angeles, to the devastating hurricanes in Southeast US, to torrential rainfall submerging Spain's Valencia, to floods in several districts in Bangladesh.

Global data from the last decade shows that developed countries in particular are being affected by the changing climate much more than before. The Global South has been suffering from climate change more severely, with their poor adaptive capacity. According to the 2024 UNEP Emissions Gap Report, the world is on its way to see up to 3.1 degrees Celsius warming by the end of this century. Before President Biden left office, he announced the new US goal to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by more than 60 percent from peak levels by 2035, a goal that would likely require a rapid transition away from fossil fuels. Currently, the US is the second largest emitter, contributing to around 13 percent of global emissions, but it is historically the largest contributor, with 25 percent of global share. So, it cannot shirk off its responsibility from solving the signature problem of runaway climate change.

On the domestic front, the US's re-withdrawal from the Paris Agreement will be accompanied by an aggressive roll-back of Biden-era environmental and climate initiatives, as was done during Trump's first term. But domestic politics and economics in the US is not likely to allow him to fully reverse the momentum of climate and renewable energy initiatives.

For example, the achievements under the Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will continue to push clean energy forward while state, local and private sector leaders will carry the torch even farther. Elon Musk, Trump's close confidant, is avant-garde in producing and marketing electric vehicles for global markets. Unlike the federal government's non-leadership, 24 states have formed the bipartisan US Climate Alliance, which represents 54 percent of the US population and 57 percent of its economy, committing collectively to achieve net zero emissions in no later than 2050. Another area of bipartisan consensus that Congress passed and Biden signed is the ADVANCE Act, which will incentivise for developing new nuclear energy technologies.

But Trump's withdrawal is likely to have a more severe global impact than during its short-lived earlier exit. The US will remain away not just from the most open and public form of global diplomacy, but also lose its leadership in transitioning away from dirty fuels.

Second, the provision of climate finance will suffer the most, affecting acutely vulnerable low-income countries and small island developing states in particular. The US was the largest contributor, but Trump is bent on cutting all international climate finance, which will weaken global mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage actions. The ongoing reforms of the multilateral financial institutions led by the World Bank and aimed at ensuring a minimum level of climate

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justice are likely to stall, or progress at a snail's pace.

Mobilisation of private sector finance will heavily suffer as well. The US has the greatest influence on mobilising private and other forms of international finance, which are channelled to drive climate action. This is happening at a time when major European nations, such as France, Germany and the UK, are slashing their aid budgets.

With the absence of US leadership in climate diplomacy, European countries, China and other major economies of G20 are likely to play bigger roles. European countries, with their shrinking aid budget, may not be able to compensate for the US exit. Obviously, China is likely to step in, consolidating its lead role. It is currently the largest polluter, contributing around 30 percent of global emissions alone, but its historical share is about 12 percent since the First Industrial Revolution.

The Chinese vice-president, in his statement at COP29, said since 2016, China has provided over \$24.5 billion to support climate actions in other developing countries. Also, the country pledged to expand its south-south climate cooperation fund, established almost a decade ago, to channel resources for promoting renewable energy, adaptation, and technology transfer to vulnerable countries. This support aims at bridging the gap left by unmet pledges from Western nations, including the US.

Though China still emits the most, its leadership in the renewable energy supply chain will further fuel protectionist backlash in Western countries. Several countries have imposed substantial tariffs on China's electric vehicles, including elimination of Chinese processed metals from their factories. China is the world's largest producer of wind turbines, solar panels, lithium batteries and electric vehicles.

But the Western objection to classifying China as a developing country under the UNFCCC remains, because it is not obligated to contribute to climate finance, but only "encouraged" to do so under Article 9.2 of the Paris Agreement. Their argument is that China, as the second largest economy and the largest emitter, must share the global cost of its own pollution. With the expected lame duck role of the US delegation at the upcoming COP30, let's look forward to seeing the leadership stints to be played by major powers including China.

## QUICK ENHANCEMENT OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY SUPPLY ACT

# A repeal that retains impunity



Shuvo Kibria is a senior journalist and engineer.

SHUVO KIBRIA

During Sheikh Hasina's rule, the power and energy sector enjoyed the ultimate lack of accountability. This is the first sector where the fascist regime established an ideal model for political and economic corruption, and later implemented it in other sectors, including education, health, and transportation.

The basis of this structure was a black law, the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act, 2010, which contradicted the constitution's basic principles, undermined public interests, and destroyed the country's economic capacity. After the fascist regime's fall and during the interim government's tenure, the demand to repeal this law quickly took shape. In the meantime, the validity of two of its sections, which were most detrimental to public interests, were challenged in the High Court followed by their annulment. Eventually, the government issued an ordinance to repeal the entire law. But two articles were added in that ordinance that are potentially more dangerous than the repealed law. They not only undermine public interests, but also degrade the spirit and aspirations of the July uprising.

But why is the interim government taking this seemingly anti-public stance? Before we look for the answer, let's see what this law actually contained and what became of it after the repeal.

**The government issued an ordinance to repeal the entire law. But two articles were added in that ordinance that are potentially more dangerous than the repealed law. They not only undermine public interests, but also degrade the spirit and aspirations of the July uprising.**

### The black law's history and evolution

Often termed the "Impunity Act," the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply (Special Provisions) Act was supposed to be in force for a period of two years from 2010, but was later extended for a total of 16 years in four phases, with the implementation period being till 2026.

Under the sub-heading "Publicity of the plans or proposal," Section 6(2) states, "Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), the Processing Committee mentioned in section 5 shall consult and bargain with a single or limited number of organizations about any purchase, investment plan or proposal and, with approval of the Minister, Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources, select an organization for the said work..."

That is, work can be awarded, with the consent of the minister, through

communication and negotiation with a single or limited number of organisations, ignoring competitive tenders or bids.

Under the sub-heading "Bar to jurisdiction of Court, etc," Section 9 states, "No question regarding the validity of any act done or purported to be done, any action taken or any order issued or direction given under this Act, shall be raised in any court."

After Hasina's fall, Supreme Court lawyers Dr Shahdeen Malik and Tayeb-Ul-Islam Showrov filed a writ with the High Court, challenging the validity of sections 6(2) and 9. On November 14, 2024, the High Court bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice Debashish Roy Chowdhury declared the provisions

**The government issued an ordinance to repeal the entire law. But two articles were added in that ordinance that are potentially more dangerous than the repealed law. They not only undermine public interests, but also degrade the spirit and aspirations of the July uprising.**

illegal. Then on November 28, 2024, the interim government repealed the law by promulgating the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy (Special Provisions) (Repeal) Ordinance, 2024.

**New 'impunity' in the ordinance**  
In the repeal ordinance itself, the government has added new provisions for impunity in sections (2) (a) and (b) under Article 2.

Section (2)(a) states, "Any contract entered into or any action taken under a contract entered into under the said act immediately before such repeal shall be deemed to have been validly entered into or taken."

Section (2)(b) goes on to say, "Any proceeding under a contract entered into or taken under the said act shall continue or be carried out as if the said act had not been repealed."

That is, all projects taken under the law till the repeal have been considered valid, and can continue. That means the government has

repealed the law but considers all the previous sins as virtues. This is against the constitution's fundamental rights, the consumer's fair rights, and a violation of energy justice. This ordinance has set a terrible precedent by hindering fair energy transition.

So, is the repeal ordinance an attempt to protect the interests of the corrupt oligarchic class in the power and energy sector? Or is there a subversive attempt to make this government unpopular and lead it astray? Let us explore the possible reasons.

First, the power and energy ministry was known as a hotbed of corruption and misrule during Hasina's rule. An anti-national nexus of dishonest bureaucrats, businesspeople, and politicians was the driving force behind this misrule. They have created an oligarchic class and looted the sector by establishing a legal framework. This class has thrown away the people's rights by making plunderous expenses, and in turn, profits.

Because of them, the cost of generating electricity per unit grew from around Tk 2 in 2009-2010 to above Tk 11 in 2023-2024. Because of them, Bangladesh's power and energy sector has lost its domestic capacity and has become an import market.

This oligarchic class has gradually weakened the sector's public branch and enriched privatisation in the name of reform. They have created opportunities to loot thousands of crores in the name of capacity charges by keeping private power plants idle for years. To continue this looting and shield criminals of the fascist era, they have imposed these provisions.

Second, the current energy adviser, who is the former energy secretary, is not keen on breaking the cycle of privatisation. That is why, although the new government formed reform commissions on 11 issues, none has been formed for the power and energy sector as yet. Such anti-people decisions indicate towards his new position not being free from conflict of interest.

Third, the main spirit of the student-mass uprising was to eliminate discrimination. But discriminatory provisions have been left in place to stop all competition in the energy sector.

Fourth, the nexus of corrupt bureaucrats, businesspeople, and politicians—who are allies of autocracy and are trying to prevent progress—has re-emerged. These looters of public wealth are determined to protect laundered money and have facilitated these new provisions.

By providing new legal protection for these crimes, the government has shown that the ghost of tyranny is still present, and instead of chasing it away, it may very well be protecting it.



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02.	IMP/RM/SEM/47/2024-2025 dated 02/02/2025	<b>Pharmaceutical Raw Materials: (specification as per tender schedule):</b> 01. Microcrystalline Cellulose & Carboxymethyl Cellulose Sodium (Avicel RC-591) USNF 02. Potassium Chloride BP 03. Lactic Acid BP	Tk. 1,650.00/set Equivalent to US\$ 14.00 Non-refundable	Closing: 04/03/2025 At 11.00 AM Opening: 04/03/2025 at 11.15AM

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For : Managing Director

# SATYENDRA NATH BOSE

## A Visionary Who Elevated Dhaka University to Global Renown

**At Dhaka University, Satyen Bose was teaching Planck's formula in class when he identified logical inconsistencies in the derivation. Imagine how cutting-edge the classroom discussions at Dhaka University must have been! While teaching, Bose recognised flaws in the existing formula and sought to resolve them. He succeeded.**

KAMRUL HASAN

Satyendra Nath Bose, more widely known as Satyen Bose, devoted 24 of the best years of his life to Dhaka University. On 1 July 1921, Dhaka University commenced its academic activities with only four departments, one of which was Physics. Prior to this, on 1 December 1920, P. J. Hartog assumed office as the university's first Vice-Chancellor. It was Hartog who appointed Walter Allen Jenkins, a Physics teacher at Dhaka College at the time, as the head of the Physics Department. Under Jenkins' leadership, the department began its journey in the magnificent main building of Curzon Hall.

Hartog was an insightful and visionary leader. He aspired to make Dhaka University a model educational institution, akin to Cambridge and Oxford, by recruiting talented educators. Jenkins, too, was a dedicated professional who played a key role in equipping the Physics Department with research-grade instruments and laboratories. From the outset, Vice-Chancellor Hartog was keen on appointing a truly talented and promising young physicist as a Reader in the department. In response to the advertisement, two gifted physicists applied, both of whom had been students of Jagadish Chandra Bose.

importance attached to an entry-level position, with the Vice-Chancellor himself engaging in informal discussions with the candidate.

On 02 July 1924, within three years of his appointment, Satyendra Nath Bose accomplished one of the most groundbreaking works in physics while seated in the Physics Department at Curzon Hall, Dhaka University. This work traces its origins back to 1859, when Gustav Kirchhoff proposed the blackbody radiation concept, describing it as one of the most challenging problems in theoretical physics. Since then, the world's leading physicists had refined various theoretical models to address the problem. In 1896, Wilhelm Wien proposed an empirical formula, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1911, though it only partially solved the problem. In 1905, Lord Rayleigh and James Jeans introduced a model that explained another portion of the blackbody spectrum.

In 1900, the renowned German experimentalist Professor Rubens attended a dinner at Max Planck's residence. During the meal, Rubens discussed his experiments on the blackbody spectrum, lamenting that no theoretical explanation could account for the entire spectrum. That very night, after bidding farewell to his guest, Planck worked through the night to devise a formula. He



A gathering of pioneering scientists of colonial Bengal. (Seated, L-R) Meghnad Saha, Jagadish Chandra Bose, Jnan Chandra Ghosh. (Standing, L-R) Snehomoy Dutt, Satyendra Nath Bose, Debendra Mohan Bose, N.R. Sen, Jnanendra Nath Mukherjee, N.C. Nag.

paper on this work to *Philosophical Magazine*. However, it was outright rejected at the editorial desk without being sent for review. Frustrated, Bose sent the paper directly to the great physicist Albert Einstein. The accompanying letter was so well-written and articulate that it could not have been phrased any better. Upon reading it, Einstein was astonished and informed Ehrenfest that what European scientists had struggled with had been solved by an Indian physicist working in Dhaka.

At Bose's request, Einstein translated the paper into German and arranged for its publication in a German journal. At the end of the article, Einstein appended a note emphasising the significance of the work and stating that he would soon build upon it. The paper was published on 2 July, and through this, Satyen Bose's name became eternally linked with Einstein's in

Mohan Bose. However, the decision ultimately went in Satyendra Nath Bose's favour, as Devendra Mohan declined the offer.

This highlights how rigorous the hiring and promotion processes were a century ago. In stark contrast, today, a 20-minute interview can secure a university teaching position, and the probationary period for promotions has been significantly shortened. Unless we implement at least a three-step filtering process for faculty recruitment, ensuring high-quality hires will remain a challenge. Equally crucial is offering competitive salaries. The fact that Satyen Bose, Jnan Chandra Ghosh, and Ramesh Majumdar joined Dhaka University exemplifies this. Without salaries that exceeded those at the University of Calcutta, they would not have been motivated to relocate to Dhaka, nor would the vice-chancellor of the University of Calcutta have released them.

required only a master's degree and an M.Ed. later evolved to require an M.Phil., then a PhD. Today, even a PhD is no longer deemed sufficient; postdoctoral experience has become a standard prerequisite, often involving multiple postdoctoral fellowships. Despite these qualifications, many candidates still begin their academic careers in non-tenured positions. Achieving tenure typically requires evaluations based on teaching effectiveness, research publications, peer reviews, and the ability to secure research funding through grants.

Dhaka University, the oldest and most prestigious university in Bangladesh, still adheres to a recruitment process that has changed little over the past century. Even today, SSC and HSC results are scrutinised, and teachers are appointed through a single interview after obtaining a master's degree.

In contrast, universities worldwide follow far more rigorous and competitive hiring processes. For instance:

1. Interested candidates submit their CVs, cover letters, teaching philosophy statements, research statements, transcripts of their honours, master's, and PhD degrees, publication lists, and any previous teaching evaluations.

2. A search committee (equivalent to a recruitment board) shortlists eight to ten top candidates for each position.

3. Online interviews are conducted with these candidates (via platforms like Zoom or Skype), and the top three to four candidates are invited to the campus.

4. On campus, candidates deliver demonstration classes and research presentations.

5. The search committee conducts individual interviews with the candidates.

6. Department chairs, deans, and the university's vice-chancellor or pro-vice-chancellor engage with the candidates for further evaluation.

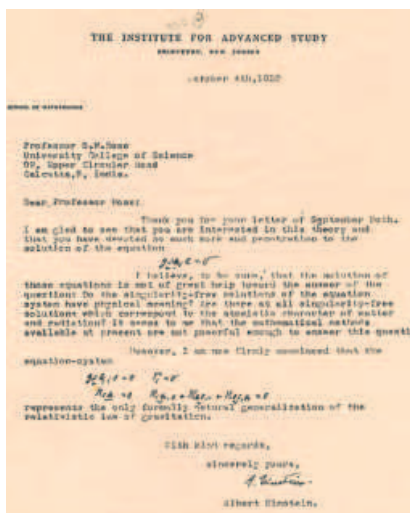
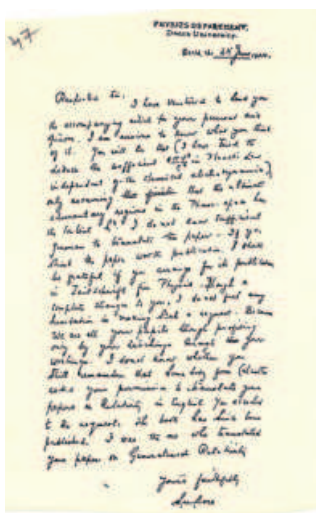
7. The search committee prepares a report analysing the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate, ranks them, and submits the findings.

8. The university then extends an offer letter to the most suitable candidate for the position.

This rigorous process ensures that the best talent is recruited. By contrast, Dhaka University's outdated and oversimplified recruitment process risks compromising the quality of education and research.

On 1 January this year, we celebrated the 131st birth anniversary of Satyendra Nath Bose. To mark the occasion, the Satyen Bose Club of Jagannath Hall organised a seminar, where I, along with Professors Golam Dastagir Al Qadri and Ratan Chandra Ghosh, delivered lectures. Additionally, the students of Dhaka University's Department of Physics hosted a day-long programme on 4 January. We should have celebrated this day nationally, for Satyen Bose demonstrated that world-class research is possible in this part of the world, despite challenges and limitations.

*Kamrul Hassan is a professor in the Department of Physics at the University of Dhaka.*



(L) A Letter from Bose to Einstein. (M) A Letter from Albert Einstein to S.N. Bose. (R) Satyendra Nath Bose (1st January, 1894 – 4th February, 1974) in London, 1925

P. J. Hartog, a devoted and prudent educationist, forwarded the applications to the newly appointed department head for his opinion. After carefully reviewing the applications, Jenkins recommended Satyen Bose as the most suitable candidate and informed Vice-Chancellor Hartog in a letter. In his assessment, Jenkins noted that while both candidates were strong and innovative researchers, Meghnad Saha had produced more substantial and superior work. However, Bose's most recent article in *Philosophical Magazine* demonstrated exceptional promise. Additionally, based on personal interactions, Jenkins found Bose to be enthusiastic and highly collaborative, making him a more suitable candidate than Saha.

Vice-Chancellor Hartog, placing

sent it to Rubens the next morning on a postcard, which Rubens found flawless. In his response, Rubens confirmed that this was the formula physicists had been searching for. However, the way Planck derived the formula was largely an educated guess. His aim was merely to bridge Wien's empirical formula and the Rayleigh-Jeans law. It lacked a rigorous theoretical foundation.

Nonetheless, the destination was now clear. Planck was desperate to find a proper derivation, as were Europe's brightest physicists—Einstein, Debye, Ehrenfest, Rayleigh, and others. Planck eventually derived the formula by assuming that atoms in the walls behaved like harmonic oscillators with discrete energy levels. Although this approach allowed him to derive the formula, it did



Bose with Niels Bohr, the pioneering physicist known for his foundational contributions to quantum mechanics and the atomic structure.

significant weight on the department head's recommendation, decided to appoint Satyen Bose as the Reader. However, instead of proceeding directly with the appointment, Hartog chose to engage with Bose personally to better understand him. Bose responded to Hartog with letters dated 14 January and 24 February, in which they discussed salary, promotion, and other employment terms. These exchanges, which took place before the official appointment and joining, illustrate the level of

not entirely satisfy the scientific community, and the search for a more rigorous derivation continued.

At Dhaka University, Satyen Bose was teaching Planck's formula in class when he identified logical inconsistencies in the derivation. Imagine how cutting-edge the classroom discussions at Dhaka University must have been! While teaching, Bose recognised flaws in the existing formula and sought to resolve them. He succeeded.

Bose submitted his research



Bose playing the Esraj for the Mahalanabises on their wedding anniversary.

the annals of science. Moreover, this achievement established Curzon Hall, Dhaka University, and by extension, Bangladesh, as the birthplace of quantum statistics.

Satyendra Nath Bose's appointment underscores the significance of hiring the right teachers. It was not just about the appointment itself; the importance of promotions at that time becomes evident when we examine the story behind Bose's promotion to professor. After publishing his seminal paper, Einstein facilitated Bose's visit to Europe. Upon his return, Bose applied for promotion to professor but faced competition from Devendra Mohan Bose, a nephew of Jagadish Chandra Bose, and Anandamohan Bose. Devendra Mohan Bose held a PhD from the University of Cambridge and had years of research experience in Germany, working alongside some of the most renowned physicists of the era. By contrast, Satyen Bose did not even have a PhD at the time. To strengthen his application, Bose sought a recommendation letter from Einstein.

Both candidates' applications were sent for evaluation to the eminent German physicist Arnold Sommerfeld, who had mentored four PhD students and three postdoctoral fellows who later won Nobel Prizes. After reviewing the applications, Sommerfeld recommended Devendra

Now, let us examine the current recruitment process at Dhaka University. Remarkably, the minimum qualification for university teacher appointments in 1921 was a master's degree, and it remains the same even today in 2021. A century ago, candidates had to submit their SSC, HSC, honours, and master's certificates, and the same requirements persist today. Although the recruitment process worldwide has evolved significantly, Bangladesh's system has failed to keep pace.

At Bangladeshi universities, applicants must complete a prescribed form—including fields for nationality, gender, and religion—and submit attested copies of their SSC, HSC, honours, and master's certificates, along with a citizenship certificate and a list of publications, all in eight complete sets. Every document in each set must be attested. Globally, asking for nationality and gender identity in applications is now considered discriminatory. Moreover, requiring SSC and HSC results alongside honours and master's certificates from candidates who already hold PhDs and postdoctoral experience is outdated and redundant. These practices urgently need modernisation.

Meanwhile, universities worldwide have progressively raised the bar for faculty appointments. What once



PHOTOS: FORTUNE BARISHAL/RANGPUR RIDERS

Fortune Barishal skipper Tamim Iqbal (left) seemed focused in their practice session in Mirpur yesterday as the defending champions, who finished top of the standings in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) league phase, will be looking to make it into their third final when they take on Chittagong Kings in the Qualifier 1 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium today. Meanwhile, allrounder Mohammad Saifuddin and opener Soumya Sarkar will try to help Rangpur Riders, who lost their last four games following a brilliant start in the tournament, bounce back to winning ways as they face Khulna Tigers in the Eliminator earlier in the day at the same venue. The losers of Qualifier 1, however, will have another chance to make it into the all-important final on Friday as they will be taking on the winners of Eliminator in Qualifier 2 next Wednesday.

## BFF committee interviews players as U20s join camp

SPORTS REPORTER

A seven-member special committee of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday began the process of interviewing the 18 rebel footballers who are boycotting the training camp under national women's team coach Peter Butler, demanding his resignation.

A member of the special committee, who wanted to stay anonymous, said they had interviewed two of the protesting players by yesterday evening to better understand their allegations against the coach and both players told the committee that they had no objection in playing under Butler.

The committee is expected to sit down with all 18 players who have boycotted the training camp which includes many of the top women's booters of the country like Sabina Khatun, Masura Parvin, Sanjida Akhter, Maria Manda, Monika Chakma, Ritu Porna Chakma and Shamsunahar Sr. The committee is expected to submit a report on the matter by Thursday.

Meanwhile, some 20 players from the Under-20 women's team joined the national team's preparation camp yesterday.

Butler had initially called up players from both the senior and the U-20 women's team for the preparation camp ahead of Bangladesh's upcoming FIFA friendly matches against hosts the United Arab Emirates, scheduled to take place on February 26 and March 2.

But most players from the U-20 team, many of whom are from Bangladesh Army and BKSP, could not join the training camp in the middle of January due to institutional training. They have now finally joined the camp after the delay.

"As many as 20 players from the Bangladesh U-20 women's team joined the ongoing camp today [Sunday] and they will be starting training under the coach from tomorrow [Monday]," BFF media manager Sadman Sakib told The Daily Star yesterday.

While 18 of the top national team players continued their boycott for the fifth consecutive day, 13 junior players again showed up to train under the coach at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday and had a gym session after conducting two training sessions.



## Marquee foreign players uncertain for BPL playoffs

SPORTS REPORTER

Pre-tournament favourites Fortune Barishal and Rangpur Riders are in a scramble against time and circumstance to secure the services of marquee foreign players for the knockout phase of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), which begins in Mirpur today.

In the day's opening game, Rangpur will take on Khulna Tigers in the eliminator at 01:30 pm while defending champions Barishal will face Chittagong Kings in the qualifier 1 at 06:30 pm.

Both Rangpur and Barishal are trying to fly in T20 stars from overseas for the knockout phases, something teams have often done in the previous editions of the tournament, however, many of their targeted players are still involved with the ongoing ILT20 in Dubai.

The Rangpur management insisted that they have contacted many star cricketers such as West Indies' Sunil Narine and Andre Russell and Australia batter Tim David to get their services in the knockouts.

Barishal, on the other hand, through a media release informed that Kiwi pacer Adam Milne will join the team on February 3.

However, as these cricketers are still tied up with their respective franchises in the ILT20 and there is uncertainty when their stints would eventually end, the chances of them landing in Dhaka in time to play in today's eliminator and first qualifier is very slim.

Rangpur's targets Narine and Russell's team Knight Riders played their last league phase match yesterday night against Dubai Capitals where if they win, they can still mathematically qualify for the playoffs.

But even if they lose and get eliminated, it will be interesting to see whether Rangpur can avail their service by flying them to Bangladesh on match day, a scene which has taken place in the previous BPL

editions as well.

Their other target David is playing for the Gulf Giants' in the ILT20 and although his team's league phase matches are already over, they are still in contention to reach the playoffs and thus the chances of him being available for Rangpur in today's contest is very slim.

Rangpur's team director Shanian Taneem said they are also 'confused' over who they can actually bring in for the knockout phase.

"The foreign players need to complete their stints in other leagues before coming here. They are still playing in the ILT20. There is nothing concrete so far," said Shanian.

"No teams have been knocked out from that tournament [ILT20]. If a team is eliminated, only then a player from that team can board the flight. Before that, it will be inappropriate to say anything.

"A lot depends on the results of today's [yesterday's] matches. Actually, we are also confused," concluded Shanian, whose team lost four matches in a row after eight successive victories to lose their chance for a top two finish.

Meanwhile, Milne's Sharjah Warriors beat MI Emirates to qualify for the playoffs in the ILT20 yesterday, which all but nullifies the chances of the New Zealander to play for Barishal in the playoffs.

"He [Milne] is currently playing for his side [Sharjah Warriors] at the ILT20 today [yesterday] and it depends on his team's result. He has commitment with the other franchise at the moment. Once he is available, we can say he is coming," Barishal's batting coach Nafees Iqbal told The Daily Star yesterday ahead of their match against Chittagong which will determine the first finalist of the competition.

The 11th edition of the BPL has failed to attract many big names so far as most top players have preferred to play in the ILT20 and the SA20 and it seems like it will continue to be the case in the playoffs as well.

**"The foreign players need to complete their stint in other leagues before coming here. They are still playing in the ILT20. There is nothing concrete so far."**

Rangpur Riders team director **Shanian Taneem** on uncertainty over foreign players coming for BPL knockout phase.

## Salah first to 20 goals in Europe this season

AGENCIES

Mohamed Salah scored twice to take Liverpool nine points clear at the top of the Premier League by beating Bournemouth 2-0 on Saturday.

Salah's double took him above Frank Lampard as the sixth-highest goal-scorer in Premier League history on another significant day in the Reds' charge towards a record-equalling 20th English top-flight title.

Bournemouth had not lost in 12 games in all competitions and had beaten Arsenal and Manchester City at home earlier this season.

"It feels good to be scoring goals, to be winning, but my main target this season is to win the Premier League with the team so we must keep going," said Salah, whose contract at Anfield expires this summer.

Saturday's brace saw Salah reach 20 Premier League goals in a season for a fifth time. Only Alan Shearer (7), Sergio Aguero (6) and Harry Kane (6) have done so more times than him. He became the first player in Europe's top five league to reach 20 league goals with his first strike, while his second was his 178th goal which took him past Lampard in the all-time record books.

The 32-year-old also leads the charts for most assists in the league this season, providing 13 for his teammates. This season he has needed just 23 games to reach 20 goals—fewer games that he has ever taken to reach the landmark.



## 'Real Madrid still up for title fight'

AGENCIES

Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said his side are still in the driving seat in the LaLiga title race despite a shock 1-0 defeat by Espanyol on Saturday.

Real lead the Spanish top flight on 49 points, one ahead of Atletico Madrid, who beat Mallorca 2-0, with the city rivals set to meet next weekend.

"We had chances and could have scored, but despite the defeat we are still in the fight. We have to focus on the next game," Ancelotti told a press conference.

"Espanyol played a very good game in my opinion, they defended very well, they did what they had to do. Could we have done more? Yes," he added.

The Italian manager also criticised the decision not to show a red card to eventual goalscorer Carlos Romero for a foul on Kylian Mbappe, who was running up the field on a breakaway attack.

"It's important to protect the players. It was a clear foul, a very ugly tackle, lucky there's no serious injury.

"To us it's inexplicable that they didn't send him off," the coach said.



LaLiga top-scorer Robert Lewandowski netted his 18th goal in the league on Sunday as hosts Barcelona beat Alaves 1-0. The win saw third-placed Barca, with 45 points from 22 games, cut the gap with league leaders Real Madrid to four points.

PHOTO: AFP



India continued their dominance right till the end of the ICC Women's Under-19 T20 World Cup, thrashing South Africa by nine wickets in a one-sided final at the Bayuemas Oval, Kuala Lumpur yesterday to retain the title that they won in the inaugural edition two years back. After bundling out South Africa for just 82 runs in 20 overs, India cruised over the line in just 11.1 overs, with opener Gongadi Trisha smashing an unbeaten 33-ball 44 and Sanika Chalke scoring 22-ball 26 not out.

PHOTO: ICC

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- Application Date: 30.01.2025 (Thursday) -19.02.2025 (Wednesday)
- Verification of Applications (If Necessary): 25.02.2025 (Tuesday) from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
- Publication of the Shortlisted Candidates: 04.03.2025 (Tuesday)
- Admission Test: 08.03.2025 (Saturday)
- Publication of Merit List: 16.03.2025 (Sunday)
- Modification of Program Choice: 17.03.2025 (Monday)
- Publication of Merit List with Selected Program: 19.03.2025 (Wednesday)

**NOTE**

- Candidates have to apply through (<https://iims.aust.edu/admission/>) by paying the necessary application processing fees through bKash.
- Candidates passing SSC or O-level or equivalent examinations in 2020 and onwards, and HSC or A-level or equivalent examinations in 2022 and onwards can apply.
- Detailed application procedures and other information are available on the University Website (<http://admission.aust.edu>).

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### AMAR EKUSHEY-3

This year marks the 73rd anniversary of the 1952 Language Movement. Drawing on research based on various published books, this 21-part series tells the story of the historic struggle for our mother tongue.

### The second Shaheed Minar

AHMAD ISTIAK

Jashore's fight for mother tongue began in February 1948, and during the course of the language movement, it eventually became the home to the second Shaheed Minar after Rajshahi in February 1952.

According to Fakhre Alam's book "Jashore Er Bhasha Andolon", on February 28, just like in Dhaka, a "Rashtrabhasha Sangram Parishad"

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A seller shows a book of colourful drawings to a toddler held by her father at the Amar Ekushey Boli Mela on the second day of the month-long event at the capital's Suhrawardi Udyan.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## 44TH-47TH BCS EXAMS PHQ for halting recruitment to 310 police posts

BAHARAM KHAN and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The Police Headquarters has recommended suspending the recruitment process for all 310 police cadre posts from the 44th to 47th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations.

The public administration ministry held preliminary discussions on the matter yesterday but made no final decision after receiving the recommendation via the home ministry.

At least four officials from both ministries confirmed this to The Daily Star.

A home ministry source said the Police Reform Commission proposed the formation of a separate commission for recruitment to the force.

Since this matter is currently under process, the PHQ suggested suspending recruitment so that future police appointments can be conducted through the proposed commission, the source said.

Another home ministry source said it did not take a separate stance on the issue. Since recruitments fall under the jurisdiction of the public administration ministry, the recommendation was forwarded to it.

Confirming the receipt of the letter containing the PHQ recommendation, a senior public administration ministry official told The Daily Star, "We have received the recommendation, but no final decision has been made yet."

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## 7 lumberjacks 'abducted' in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Bandarban

Seven lumberjacks have been reportedly abducted from Soroi Union in Bandarban's Lama upazila.

The incident occurred around midnight on Saturday in the remote Pomu Khal forest of Ward No. 9 in the Lemu Palong area.

Local sources said the Bangalee workers were taken from the jungle when they went there for collecting logs.

Mobile network coverage in the remote area is limited, making details scarce.

However, neither locals nor police could identify the abductors or abductees.

Sub-Inspector Mohammad Atikur Rahman confirmed the incident. He said the workers were employed by a timber trader named Mohammad Helal from Adu Nagar.

No official complaint has been filed, he added.

Soroi Union Chairman Md Idris Company also confirmed the abduction.

Additional Superintendent of Lama Police Abdul Karim said police and joint forces have launched a rescue operation.

## US fund crunch hits dev projects

Many professionals fear for their jobs

PORIMOL PALMA

Thousands of Bangladeshi development professionals face uncertainty as US government-funded projects have been halted following an executive order by the Trump administration on January 20.

Though the order mandates a 90-day review, many employees have already been terminated, and all project activities have come to a standstill. The USAID website has also gone offline.

Project personnel have been advised to avoid office visits. In some cases, staffers attend offices to maintain appearance but are not engaged in any work.

Authorities have instructed employees not to comment publicly on the executive order or its implications, said a diplomatic source.

"We come to the office but spend time on social media or learning new skills," said a mid-level official of a USAID-funded project in Dhaka. "The uncertainty is frustrating."

Another project official said they had been told to work from home but had no actual tasks. "We don't know if we will still have jobs after the 90-day period."

The executive order comes amid Bangladesh's economic struggles, including high inflation and foreign currency challenges due to high foreign loan repayments.

The country, which is undergoing a political transition following Sheikh Hasina's removal from power, faced floods and cyclones that damaged crops and rendered many people displaced.

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2.66 million people were seeking employment as of September 2024, a 6 percent increase from the previous year. Inflation remains close to 10 percent, further burdening ordinary citizens.

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## FARUK MURDER Ex-MP Rana, nine others acquitted

Two get life term

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Tangail

A Tangail court yesterday sentenced two people to life term imprisonment and acquitted 10 others, including former Awami League MP Amanur Rahman Khan Rana, in a case filed over the murder of Awami League leader Faruk Ahmed nearly 12 years ago.

Tangail's First Additional District and Sessions Court Judge Mahmudul Hasan handed out the verdict in absence of the convicts — Mohammad Ali and Kabir Hossain.

The acquitted are Tangail-3 (Ghatail) former AL MP Rana, his three younger brothers — former Tangail municipality mayor Sahidur Rahman Khan Mukti, former Tangail Chambers of Commerce president Jahidur Rahman Kakon, and former central vice-president of Chhatra



Faruk Ahmed

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## Polls only way for quick state overhaul: Tarique

UNB, Dhaka

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday urged the government not to delay the election by taking too much time in the name of reforms.

Speaking virtually at a workshop, he said an election is the only way to promptly implement the state-overhauling proposals by elected representatives.

He also warned that the country will fall into a deep crisis and the fallen fascists will reemerge if the election is delayed due to prolonged discussions on reforms.

BNP's Dhaka South City Unit organised the programme at Kadamtali Balur Maath in the Shyampur area to train party leaders and workers on its 31-point state reform outline.

"We're now hearing continuous discussions about reforms. We would like to tell those talking about reforms that the BNP stands at the forefront in support of them," Tarique said.

However, there was no alternative to holding elections and handing over power to the elected representatives to implement the reform proposals, he added.

"Elections are the only way to implement the proposals made by the BNP or the interim government's commissions."

The BNP leader said those contesting the election would have to promise the people that, if given the opportunity, they would implement these reforms.

Only those entrusted with the responsibility by the people through the election would be able to begin the work on reforms, and they must be the ones to start it, he said.

According to him, the further the government delays the election, the longer the reform implementation will take.

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## Ex-AL leader detained at his son's wedding

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,  
Ctg

Fakhrul Anwar, former industry and commerce affairs secretary of the Awami League, was sent to jail by a court yesterday, a day after his arrest during his son's wedding at a community centre in Chattogram's Tiger Pass area.

Earlier, Khulshi Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mozibur Rahman said Fakhrul was taken into custody for interrogation in connection with a case filed at Kotwali Police Station for attacking protesters during the July uprising.

Police detained Fakhrul Anwar on Saturday night after a mob gathered outside the Navy Convention Hall, where the wedding was taking place, as news spread that a group of AL leaders and activists were at the event, said witnesses.

According to social media footage, over a hundred men surrounded Fakhrul and tried to harass him.

Upon receiving the news, additional police forces along with army and navy personnel arrived at the

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## Canada, Mexico hit US with retaliatory tariffs China vows countermeasures

REUTERS

US President Donald Trump on Saturday ordered sweeping tariffs on goods from Mexico, Canada and China, demanding they stanch the flow of fentanyl - and illegal immigrants in the case of Canada and Mexico - into the United States, kicking off a trade war that could dent global growth and reignite inflation.

Mexico and Canada, the top two US trading partners, immediately vowed retaliatory tariffs, while China said it would challenge Trump's move at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and take other "countermeasures."

In three executive orders, Trump imposed 25 percent tariffs on Mexican and most Canadian imports and 10 percent on goods from China, starting tomorrow.

He vowed to keep the duties in place until what he described as a national emergency over fentanyl, a deadly opioid, and illegal immigration to the US ends.

"Will there be some pain? Yes, maybe (and maybe not!)" Trump wrote in all caps on his Truth social media platform. "But we will Make America Great Again, and it will all be worth the price that must be paid," he added.

Responding to concerns raised by oil refiners and Midwestern states, Trump imposed only a 10 percent duty on energy products from Canada, with Mexican energy imports facing the full 25 percent tariff.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Canada would respond with 25 percent tariffs against \$155 billion of US goods, including beer, wine, lumber and appliances, beginning with \$30 billion taking effect tomorrow and \$125 billion 21 days later.



After submerging a dinghy full of Bashphul paddy in the river for four days, farmers pull the paddy out of the water to dry it in the sun for two more days. Bashphul paddy is processed into a narrow variety of rice, each maund of which is sold by these farmers for around Tk 3,000. The photo was taken last week in Banaripara upazila of Barishal.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## 4 of a family killed as car, truck collide

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Sylhet

At least four people of a family were killed in a collision between a car and a truck in Osmaninagar upazila of Sylhet yesterday.

The deceased are Saima Akter, 35, her son Ayan, 6, Saima's sister Shamima Yasmin, 38, of Dhaka's Ashulia area and their cousin Sohel Bhuiyan, 38.

Quoting family members, Monayem Miah, officer-in-charge of Osmaninagar Police Station, said a car carrying seven members of a family collided head-on with a truck on the Dhaka Sylhet highway in Unish Mile area around 7:30am.

The accident left two car passengers dead on the spot and five others injured.

The injured were taken to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

The police official also said dense fog might have caused the accident.