

DHAKA TUESDAY FEBRUARY 4, 2025

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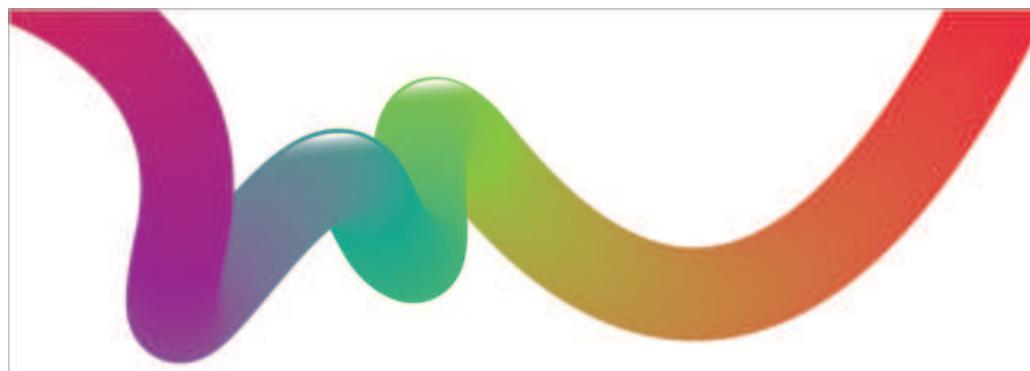
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ADMINISTRATION REFORMS

Zila parishad's abolition may be proposed

BAHARAM KHAN

The Public Administration Reform Commission is likely to recommend abolishing the zila parishad and strengthening the upazila parishad.

The commission may make the recommendation as the deputy commissioners' offices and the zila parishads do not cooperate and coordinate in their tasks, said multiple sources in the reform commission.

Besides, the tasks done by the zila parishads can be done by the offices of the deputy commissioners and others, they added.

To empower the upazila parishad, the reform commission may propose doing away with a legal provision that allows lawmakers to "interfere" in the upazila parishads as advisers.

It may propose appointing an officer of the rank of senior assistant secretary to the upazila parishad.

The Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office will deal with law and order, disaster management, public examinations, and mobile courts while the upazila parishad will handle development programmes, secondary education, NGOs, cooperatives and some other matters.

The reform commission members believe that these steps would put an end to the tension between UNOs and upazila chairmen.

However, some experts say this proposal may conflict with Article 59(l) of the constitution which states that elected representatives should be entrusted with the governance of every administrative unit of the republic.

Besides, some may ask why zila parishad should be abolished while upazila parishad remains.

Additionally, the commission is likely to propose discontinuing direct elections for upazila chairman. The proposal may include the abolition of the two vice-chairman positions in upazila parishes.

Currently, a single Circle assistant superintendent of police (ASP) is responsible for overseeing two to three upazilas. The commission may recommend appointing one Circle ASP for each upazila.

NO CAR LOANS

The administration reform commission is set to recommend scrapping the interest free car loans and car maintenance allowances for deputy secretaries and higher officers.

Officers of the ranks of deputy secretary and above currently get a loan of Tk 30 lakh to buy a car and a monthly allowance of Tk 50,000 to hire a chauffeur and bear the maintenance costs.

Members of the Commission want to end the benefits to save large sums of taxpayer money and because these are "discriminatory to officers who are not in the administration", said a source with knowledge of the development.

The car loan for admin officers was introduced in 2017. Officials of the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

LIKELY PROPOSALS

- ⦿ End MP's interference in upazila parishad
- ⦿ No direct voting for upazila chairman
- ⦿ Appoint ASP in every upazila
- ⦿ Scrap admin's car loan, maintenance allowance



Students of Titumir College stop a train in the capital's Mohakhali around 3:45pm yesterday, demanding that the college be upgraded to a university. The blockade was withdrawn around 9:30pm following discussions between the protesters and government officials. More photos on page 3.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

'Stay alert as if we're in a war-like situation'

Yunus tells law enforcers about bids to create chaos; central command to be set up for coordination between law enforcement agencies



"Our global image will be badly damaged if we can't protect our religious minorities. We will have to be very transparent in this regard."

PROF MUHAMMAD YUNUS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has directed the law enforcement agencies to stay on high alert and treat the current situation as a war-like situation.

"We have to be as alert as if we were in a war-like situation. This year is a very critical year for the country. We must not allow anyone to create chaos and anarchy," he said during a review of the country's law and order at a high-level meeting with chiefs of different law enforcement agencies at state guesthouse Jamuna yesterday.

According to the statement of the CA's press wing, Prof Yunus instructed the law enforcers to establish a central command centre for close monitoring of law and order.

The meeting was attended by Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, Special Assistant to the chief adviser Khuda Baksh Chowdhury, Senior Secretary of the home ministry Nasimul Gani, and the chiefs of police, Border Guard Bangladesh, Rapid Action Battalion, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Coast Guard, and Special Branch.

Prof Yunus stressed the need for the agencies to utilise the latest communication technologies for rapid

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

USAID to be shut in cost-cutting drive Says Elon Musk

REUTERS, Washington

Billionaire Elon Musk, who is heading US President Donald Trump's drive to shrink the federal government, gave an update on the effort early yesterday, saying work is underway to shut down the US foreign aid agency USAID.

Musk, who is also CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, discussed the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) in a social media talk yesterday on X, which he also owns. Trump has assigned Musk to lead a federal cost-cutting panel.

The conversation, which included former Republican presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy and Republican Senators Joni Ernst and Mike Lee, began with Musk saying they were working to shut down the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

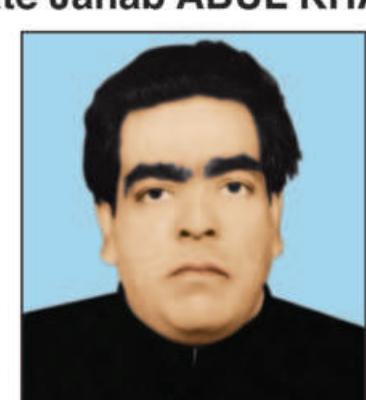
US FUND CUTS TO WORSEN ROHINGYA CRISIS: TOUHID — PAGE 3

47th Death Anniversary

(Abul Company) The founder of Abul Khair Group

noted industrialist and social worker

Late Janab ABUL KHAIR



Death: 4th February, 1978

In accordance with the will of Almighty Allah the Beneficent, you left this mundane world, leaving us and many of your relations overwhelmed by grief. In our everyday life your bright ideals serve as beacon. You are immortal in your death. We pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of your departed soul.

May Allah the Beneficent bless you with the eternal bliss of paradise. Ameen.

Your loving
Sons, Daughters and Relatives



Women are waiting in front of an OMS shop to buy rice at a subsidised price at Kazdia Bazar of Khulna's Rupsha upazila around 11:30am yesterday. Low-income people from different villages come to the place to purchase the staple as its price remains high.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

11-yr-old girl goes missing in the capital



Arabi Islam Suba

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An 11-year-old girl went missing from the capital's Mohammadpur area on Sunday evening.

Arabi Islam Suba, a class 6 student at a school in Barishal, came to the city with her family for the treatment of her mother, who is battling lung cancer.

Suba's family started living in a house in the Mohakhali area as her mother initially received treatment at a private hospital in Gulshan, said Suba's uncle Maidul Rakib.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



LANDMARKS ON BANKNOTES

Canvases of history, heritage



PHOTOS: JAWWAD SAMI NEOGI

JAWWAD SAMI NEOGI

Imagine you're flipping through a book on Dhaka's history. As you turn the pages, you come across a chapter on the Tara Mosque. Something about it feels familiar. You're right -- you've seen it before.

You reach into your pocket, pull out a Tk 100 note, and there it is, right on the back. Unknowingly, all this time, while searching for Dhaka's history in books, you didn't realise you had been carrying parts of Dhaka with you all along -- right in your very pockets.

Holding a banknote in your hand makes you think -- something that has travelled across places, and quietly carried the story of the capital. You would be even more surprised to learn that it's not just the Tk 100 note and the Tara Mosque -- many other banknotes from Bangladesh depict Dhaka's magnificent mosques and historical landmarks.

For years, our capital has been a favourite theme on Bangladeshi banknotes.

Syed Bin Salam, a passionate banknote collector and owner of Salam Stamp Centre, believes banknotes are more than just currency.

"Iconic landmarks of cities, like Egypt's pyramids or Cambodia's temples, are often featured on banknotes, carrying the stories of culture, history, and identity," Salam shares.

Highlighting Dhaka on banknotes, Salam adds, "We have several banknotes that depict Dhaka, such as the country's only polymer note -- the Tk 10 note -- which portrays the National Parliament Building and Baitul Mukarram Mosque on the back."

Salam hopes for more polymer notes in the future, with a greater emphasis on other Dhaka landmarks.

"It would be great to see iconic sites like Hatirjheel, Shapla Chhatar, or other archaeological and historical places

featured," he shares.

Speaking of Tk 10 note, let's take a journey back to Dhaka of the past. The three-domed Lalbagh Fort Mosque, also known as the Quilla Mosque also made its way onto the Tk 10 note issued in 1997-98. Even before that, the Tk 100 notes from 1977, 1981, and 1983 2000 showcased the ruins of Lalbagh Fort, built during the Mughal era.

Another Mughal-era landmark, the Sat Gambuj Mosque (Seven Domed Mosque), has also had its time in the spotlight, featured on the Tk 50 note in 1979 and later on the Tk 500 note between 2000 and 2010.

On our list of Dhaka's mosques, last but not least, the national mosque, Baitul Mukarram, has also been featured on different versions of the Tk 10 note since 2000. It's no surprise that Dhaka is known as the "City of Mosques", with stunning mosques around every corner.

Meanwhile, the High Court Building

has also appeared in various designs of Tk 500 notes between 1976 and 2010. And no mention of Dhaka's historic sites would be complete without the iconic Curzon Hall, featured on the very first Tk 1,000 note ever issued in Bangladesh.

On the other hand, some banknotes aren't meant for exchange -- they're commemorative notes, issued to honour significant people, events, or milestones. For example, there's a Tk 100 commemorative note, released to celebrate 100 years of the Bangladesh National Museum, located at Shahbagh.

Banknotes are like windows into a country's culture and history. Dhaka's rich history, architectural beauty, and culture come to life through these designs, reminding us of the importance of preserving these iconic landmarks for generations to come.

USAID to be shut down in cost-cutting drive

FROM PAGE 1
"It's beyond repair," Musk said, adding that President Trump agrees it should be shut down.

Meanwhile, most USAID staffers were told not to report to the agency's headquarters in Washington yesterday and to work remotely, according to a copy of an email to personnel reviewed by Reuters. "Further guidance will be forthcoming," the note said.

On Sunday, Reuters reported the Trump administration removed two top security officials at USAID during the weekend after they tried to stop DOGE representatives from gaining access to restricted parts of the building, three sources said.

Trump later on Sunday told reporters that USAID has "been run by a bunch of radical lunatics," adding: "We're getting them out, and then we'll make a decision."

USAID is the world's largest single donor. In fiscal year 2023, the US disbursed \$72 billion of assistance worldwide on everything from women's health in conflict zones to access to clean water, HIV/AIDS treatments, energy security and anti-corruption work. It provided 42 percent of all humanitarian aid tracked by the United Nations in 2024.

The website of USAID appeared to still be offline on Saturday and some users could not access it on Sunday. USAID has a staff of more than 10,000 people.

11-yr-old girl goes missing in the capital's Mohammadpur

FROM PAGE 1
Recently, her mother's chemotherapy began at the National Institute of Cancer Research & Hospital, and four days ago, she along with Suba moved to her sister-in-law's home near Krishi Market in Mohammadpur.

Suba left the home around 6:00pm on Sunday with her younger cousin. While crossing the road near Prince Bazar in the Krishi Market area, her cousin moved ahead after passing a vehicle and reached home, but Suba did not, Maidul said.

The family immediately searched the surrounding area but could not find her. Later, they filed a general diary with Mohammadpur Police Station.

Hafizur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of the station, said they have engaged multiple teams to trace the girl.

Zila parishad's abolition

FROM PAGE 1
25 other cadres have since been demanding similar privileges.

According to the sources, most of the 11 members of the reform commission agree that the car loans are unacceptable. However, they will decide today whether to propose ending it.

The commission may also recommend abolishing supernumerary promotions, which means an officer gets promoted even if there is no vacant post for such an officer.

The reform commission headed by former secretary Abdul Muyeed Chowdhury will hand over the recommendations to the chief adviser on February 5.

The proposal may include forming two separate commissions for recruitment and promotion in the education and health cadres, said three officials with knowledge of the matter.

Since 2007, the judiciary has had the Judicial Service Commission which oversees hiring and promotions of lower court judges.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a commission member said, "This commission formed in the wake of a mass uprising is not acting in favour of any particular group. Our primary focus is to ensure that public interests are protected so that future generations cannot call us biased."

Families search for bodies

FROM PAGE 12

"To our knowledge, there were 22 Bangladeshi nationals on board and some other nationalities," said a spokesperson of the NGO to this newspaper.

There were two bodies on board and the bodies are currently in Malta, the spokesperson added.

The migrants, all coming from impoverished families had each given between Tk 14 lakh to Tk 16 lakh to make the perilous journey across the Central Mediterranean route and land in Europe.

"My nephew Titu Hawlader and an uncle of his, Bashar Akand, were given 'game' on the same day and were on the boat that capsized. We identified Bashar's body from a photo found on social media," said Saim Ahmed.

"Game" is the colloquial term for smuggling migrants from Libya into Europe.

Bashar left behind a one-year-old child and had been working in Libya for a year before he decided to try and make it to Europe. Titu was about 19 years old. They were both from Madaripur's Rajoir.

She added that his family spent Tk 17 lakh to send him to Libya. "The broker had told us that he would be taken aboard a fishing trawler. If we had known that he would be put aboard a rubber boat we would have never sent him," said Afsana.

Titu came from an extremely poor family. He dropped out of school after class 5. His father has disabilities. He just wanted to provide for his family," said Saim, himself a migrant worker who made it to Italy using the same route.

"He took the risk for the same reason as me. I had applied for a work permit twice and spent up to Tk 3 lakh, but the agent took all my money and never managed the permit for me. I was penniless and needed to make one last

effort to go abroad," he said.

Sadia too identified her brother-in-law Abul Kalam from the photos of the dead.

"We last spoke to him on January 24. He called in the evening and said that he would be given 'game'. He said that his cellphone and passport would be taken away from him by the traffickers," said Sadia. "After seeing the photo, my sister fell sick and had to be hospitalised."

Kalam was a junior officer at an insurance company. He had left for Libya two and half years ago.

"We spent Tk 14 lakh for the journey. Of this, Tk 11 lakh was borrowed. I do not know how to pay this money back now," she said.

A minor, Arafsan Ashik is likely among those who died. His aunt Afsana spoke to this newspaper and said that they confirmed his identity from a photo being circulated.

"He was a first year HSC student. His father is a woodworker and he was the eldest. Ashik's younger brother is only one and half years old," she said. Ashik is from Tekerhat in Madaripur.

She added that his family spent Tk 17 lakh to send him to Libya. "The broker had told us that he would be taken aboard a fishing trawler. If we had known that he would be put aboard a rubber boat we would have never sent him," said Afsana.

Tanshi is still looking for her brother Sujon Farazi who had left the same night as the boat that capsized. The family from Madaripur's Rajoir have heard a rumour that Sujon may have survived and might be one of the two in the hospital, and are holding on to that hope.

'Stay alert as if we're in a war-like situation'

FROM PAGE 1
intervention in crisis situations, said the statement.

"We have to set up a command centre or a command headquarters, which will coordinate among all the police and security agencies," he told the senior officials.

He said the new command structure would "skillfully and intensively" communicate among all agencies, police stations across the country, and all law enforcement authorities.

Yunus ordered the agency chiefs to stay vigilant against any attempt to disrupt the law and order situation.

He alleged that cronies of the ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina were spending vast sums of money to incite unrest and spread misinformation. "We must stay vigilant. Everyone must fight against this disinformation menace."

He further directed the agencies to ensure the protection of human rights and take special measures to prevent attacks on religious and ethnic minorities.

"Our global image will be badly damaged if we can't protect our religious minorities. We will also have to be very transparent in this regard."

The chief adviser also ordered police

to launch a crackdown on extortionists in an effort to keep the prices of food and other essentials stable during Ramadan.

At the meeting, Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam said police have formed 10 teams to monitor the murder cases filed over the atrocities and killings during July and August last year, read the statement.

Yunus directed police to fast-track these cases and make sure that no innocent people are harassed because of these cases.

He also asked police to introduce an online system for filing cases, according to the CA's press wing statement.

Under the existing system, a first information report can only be filed in person with a police station. The procedure is cumbersome and leaves opportunities for abuse.

"Police should introduce a dedicated emergency number, like 999, to enable complainants to file an FIR from any part of the country," he said, instructing the IGP to implement the service as soon as possible.

The chief adviser also ordered the establishment of a call centre to assist those struggling to file cases online. "People who face difficulties in filing

cases online should be able to receive help from the call centre.

According to the statement, IGP Baharul said Bangladesh has requested Interpol to issue a red notice on Sheikh Hasina, who fled to India during the mass uprising. "We've made a request. We hope we will get some response soon."

DMP Commissioner Sheikh Md Sazzat Ali said the incidents of mugging and snatching in the capital have declined after police stepped up security. "Our efforts will continue."

Later in the evening, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam said they were not 100 percent satisfied with law and order, but efforts were underway to improve it.

He was talking to reporters after a meeting on security measures on the occasion of Language Martyr's Day and International Mother Language Day at the Secretariat.

The law and order situation has improved significantly, he said while responding to a reporter's query.

The home adviser said, "There is still room for further improvement. We are not 100 percent satisfied. That is why we are constantly working to improve the law and order situation."

People fume over Titumir protests

FROM PAGE 1
education ministry officials.

The officials sought seven days from the protesters to look into their demands, including the opening of law and journalism departments at the institution.

Earlier in the day, Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said the students were making people's lives miserable and the people would eventually remove them from the railway line.

Information and Broadcasting Adviser Nahid Islam urged the students to be patient, saying the government was working on a sustainable solution to the problem.

The blockade of the road linking Mohakhal and Gulshan I also continued for around three hours, causing immense suffering to commuters, including the elderly, patients, women and children.

Around 50 students of Titumir College resumed the road blockade

in front of the institution at 12:20pm. They left the place, marching to the level crossing at 3:30pm, after some 20 others joined them. Their number grew by around 30 in the evening.

Nazrul Islam, a passenger of the Rajshahi bound Silk City train, said he had to wait for the train for over an hour at Kamalapur Railway Station.

"We waited for another hour after reaching Mohakhal. Then the train returned to Tejgaon Railway Station."

He said the passengers contacted the stationmaster for a refund but he could not answer whether they would get any.

"We don't know when we will reach our destination. Students are doing whatever they wish. Where will we go?" asked a frustrated Nazrul, as the situation was becoming more and more uncertain.

As buses and other vehicles used the Mohakhal flyover to bypass the level crossing, many passengers carrying luggage had to walk past the place.

Ahsan Ullah, a Tejkunipara resident,

and James Vince just in time for the crucial eliminator.

However, Khulna Tigers' local trio -- Nasum Ahmed, Mehedi Hasan Miraz, and Mohammad Naim -- outshone Rangpur's big foreign names in an emphatic nine-wicket victory, sealing their spot in the second qualifier.

Nasum plucked three in Rangpur's catastrophic batting collapse -- removing Vince by taking a spectacular one-handed return catch before taking the scalps of Mehedi Hasan and David.

In response, Khulna made short work of the chase, with opener Mohammad Naim hitting an unbeaten 48. "All of our local players are doing really well... Whether anyone plays or not, all are united," said Nasum, adjudged Player of the Match.

DRAFT CYBER ORDINANCE It may hinder independent journalism Says Article 19

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The draft Cyber Protection Ordinance in its present form could severely undermine independent journalism and the right to freedom of expression in the country, says rights group Article 19.

In a press statement issued yesterday, the UK-based international organisation accused the government of failing to hold meaningful consultations with relevant stakeholders before drafting the ordinance.

It demanded that such consultations be held effectively before the enactment of the ordinance. Civil society members also questioned the drafting process, noting the lack of consultations, it added.

Many terms in the newly approved draft lack clear definitions, and their vagueness may create opportunities for misuse, according to the statement.

The draft retains several provisions from its predecessors the Cyber Security Act (CSA) and the Digital Security Act (DSA) which had been widely

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

Seven journos attacked in 3 dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven journalists came under attack in three districts yesterday.

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City dwellers have been suffering for the last couple of days as Titumir College students blocked roads and rail line, demanding to change the status of their college into a university. Yesterday, the blockade started at 12:20pm and continued till 3:30pm. Students blocked the Mohakhali to Gulshan-1 Road and then moved to the Mohakhali rail crossing. From left, a man adjusts his wife's oxygen tank as they wait for a train at Kamalapur Railway Station. People wait with their luggage inside the station. A man pushes a woman on a wheelchair while many others opt to walk on foot amid the road blockade.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, ANISUR RAHMAN



Second phase of Ijtema begins

STAR REPORT

The second phase of Bishwa Ijtema began on the banks of the Turag River in Tongi early yesterday.

The Ijtema commenced with Aam Bayan (general sermons) after Fazr prayers and will conclude with Akheri Munajat (final prayers) on February 5, said Tabligh Jamaat Bangladesh Shura-e-Nizam Media Coordinator Habibullah Raheen.

Following the final prayers of the first phase on Sunday, participants have vacated the Ijtema ground, making way for those joining the second phase.

The ground is now fully prepared for second phase attendees, with devotees from 22 districts, including parts of Dhaka, set to participate, he added.

Currently, about 3,050 foreign guests from 76 countries are staying at the Ijtema venue.

To ensure the safety and convenience of foreign guests, members of Gazipur Metropolitan Police have arranged for a general diary system in the foreign tents. The first phase of Ijtema was held from Friday to Sunday, where five devotees passed away. Around 40 lakh devotees participated in the final prayer of the first phase.

Convictions in graft cases hit 8-year low

Rate dropped to 47pc in 2024, says ACC annual report

DIPAN NANDY

The conviction rate in corruption cases in Bangladesh dropped to 47 percent in 2024, the lowest in the past eight years, raising concerns about the effectiveness of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in combating corruption.

This marks a sharp decline from a 57.18 percent conviction rate in 2023, a 10 percent drop in one year. Over the past four years, the conviction rate has fallen from 72 percent in 2020 to 47 percent in 2024 -- a total decline of 25 percent.

Experts attribute this decline to several factors, like weak investigations, lack of skilled public prosecutors, and inadequate supervision.

According to data, more than half of the accused in corruption cases were acquitted in 2024. A total of 341 corruption cases were resolved in 2024, with 47 percent resulting in convictions.

Cases filed by the now-defunct Anti-Corruption Bureau had a lower conviction rate of 29 percent, while cases filed by the ACC had a slightly higher rate of 48 percent.

According to ACC's annual reports, the conviction rate was 60.98 percent in 2022, 60 percent in 2021, 72 percent in 2020, 63

CONVICTION RATES IN LAST 10 YEARS

2024	:	47%
2023	:	57.18%
2022	:	60.98%
2021	:	60%
2020	:	72%
2019	:	63%
2018	:	63%
2017	:	68%
2016	:	37%
2015	:	35%

The rate of case disposal has also declined, with only 8.65 percent of cases disposed of in 2024 compared to 10.17 percent in 2023.

Meanwhile, the ACC continued

to face a backlog, with 3,410 pending cases in lower courts -- 3,066 filed by the ACC and 344 by the erstwhile Anti-Corruption Bureau.

Despite this backlog, courts ordered fines totalling Tk 1,147.33 crore in corruption cases in 2024, while assets worth Tk 11.75 crore were seized.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Executive Director and head of the ACC Reform Commission, Iftekharuzzaman, told The Daily Star, "This reflects the ACC's lack of effectiveness, which peaked in the final year before the fall of the authoritarian regime. The new leadership is expected to overcome this legacy and restore public trust, given the opportunities created by the July uprising."

"The low conviction rate is also due to the slow and complex judicial process. Reforming the ACC must be part of broader state and judicial reforms," he added.

ACC Director General (Prevention) Akbar Hossain said the commission is working diligently to prove corruption charges.

"Successful convictions depend on the quality of evidence presented in court. ACC is focusing on capacity building to strengthen investigations," he said.

FOREIGNERS WITH EXPIRED VISAS 11-member task force formed to address issue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Ministry of Home Affairs yesterday formed an 11-member task force to determine the course of action regarding foreign nationals residing illegally in Bangladesh.

Led by the additional secretary (Security and Immigration) of the Security Services Division, the task force will be convened by the joint secretary of the Immigration-2 Wing, who will also serve as the member secretary.

According to its terms of reference, the task force will coordinate and provide recommendations on all matters concerning foreign nationals living in the country without proper documentation.

It is also authorised to issue directives and, if necessary, formulate further recommendations on related issues.

According to the home ministry's database as of January 20, a total of 33,648 foreign nationals are either residing illegally or have overstayed their visas.

Schoolgirl raped and murdered; body dumped in Hatirjheel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of an eighth-grader was recovered from Hatirjheel Lake on Sunday, 17 days after she went missing from Dhaka's Dakshinkhan.

The 13-year-old was abducted on January 16 and later gang raped and murdered, but the crime came to light after her body was recovered, said Rawnaq Jahan, deputy commissioner (DC) of the Uttara Division, in a press briefing yesterday.

Two suspects, Robin Hossain, 32, and Rabbi Mridha, 26, were arrested on January 30 in Sreepur of Gazipur, in connection with the crime, said the Uttara DC.

Her father filed a general diary (GD) with Dakshinkhan Police Station on January 19 and later lodged a kidnapping case on January 27 after learning from locals that a group of men had abducted her in a private car near Joynal Market in Dakshinkhan.

Using technological assistance, police traced the suspects through the victim's mobile number and arrested Robin and Rabbi. The two were remanded for two days following a court order on January 31.

During interrogation, they admitted to their involvement in the crime and led police to recover the victim's body from a roadside slope in Hatirjheel at 8:45am on Sunday.

In their confession under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code, Robin and Rabbi said they trapped the victim and took her to a house in Mohakhali, where the two along with three others raped her after tying her hands, feet, and face.

They then wrapped her body in a bag and dumped it near Hatirjheel using a rickshaw. Police are now working to arrest the remaining suspects involved in the rape and murder, added the official.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

POLITICAL UNREST IN JAN 124 incidents led to 15 deaths and 987 injuries: HRSS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four people including Touhidul Islam, a union-level Jubo Dal leader in Cumilla, died in the custody of law enforcement agencies in the country last month, Human Rights Support Society (HRSS) said yesterday.

Besides, one person was killed in Rangamati during "gunfight" with law enforcement agency members, HRSS said in a media release, as it released its monthly rights situation report.

The custodial torture victims include a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver in Kishoreganj, a former union-level Chhatra Dal assistant general secretary in Noakhali, and a grocer in Shariatpur,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

UK rights envoy meets BNP leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

UK Human Rights Ambassador Eleanor Sanders yesterday met with BNP leaders Abdul Moyeen Khan and Shama Obaid to discuss the human rights situation and upcoming national elections in Bangladesh.

The meeting was held at the British High Commission in Dhaka at 3:30pm.

A source present at the meeting said the UK rights envoy expressed concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in Bangladesh, as well as the ongoing rights issues, including the recent alleged extrajudicial killing of a Jubo Dal leader in Cumilla.

The BNP delegation briefed Sanders on the background of the July-August uprising and the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Italian citizen mugged; items recovered in 12 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have arrested two snatchers, including a ride-sharing driver, and recovered an Italian citizen's stolen passport, mobile phone, cash, and other belongings within 12 hours of the reported mugging.

Khorshed Alam, 28, an Uber motorcycle driver, and Shahin Mia, 22, were arrested in Turag area on Sunday.

Speaking at a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre yesterday, Rawnaq Jahan, deputy commissioner of Uttara Division, said Italian citizen, Tania Mohammad Sheikh Noor, arrived at Dhaka airport on a flight from Italy around 4:00am.

She hired an Uber motorcycle from outside the airport to travel to a hostel in Uttara (sector 19). However, instead of taking her there, the motorcycle

US fund cuts to worsen Rohingya crisis: Touhid

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Possible funding cuts by the new US administration will further complicate efforts to address the Rohingya crisis, said Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain yesterday.

"Foreign aid for over a million Rohingya has already been declining, and any US fund cuts will worsen the situation," he said at a seminar at the Foreign Service Academy (FSA) in the capital.

The Department of International Relations of Dhaka University organised the event in collaboration with the FSA.

Since the 2017 influx, Bangladesh has struggled to manage the Rohingya crisis. The situation worsened last year when about 80,000 more Rohingya entered amid intensified conflicts between Myanmar's military and the Arakan Army in Rakhine State.

The new Trump administration has issued an executive order to review foreign funding projects, though emergency food assistance remains out of its purview.

According to the UN, of the US \$852.4 million required for the Rohingya in 2024, donors have provided \$548.9 million, with the US contributing \$301 million -- 55 percent of the total.

"Many see the Rohingya crisis as Bangladesh's problem, but it is a global issue. If the Rohingya become desperate, it will challenge not just Bangladesh but the entire region," the adviser said.

The international community must come forward

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

EKUSHEY BOI MELA A celebration of knowledge

DIPAN NANDY

On a bright morning filled with the promise of spring, the Ekushey Boi Mela sprang to life, drawing in crowds eager to celebrate literature and culture.

Coinciding with the vibrant festivities of Sarawati Puja yesterday, the fair transformed into a lively hub of activity, where the worship of knowledge and the joy of reading merged beautifully.

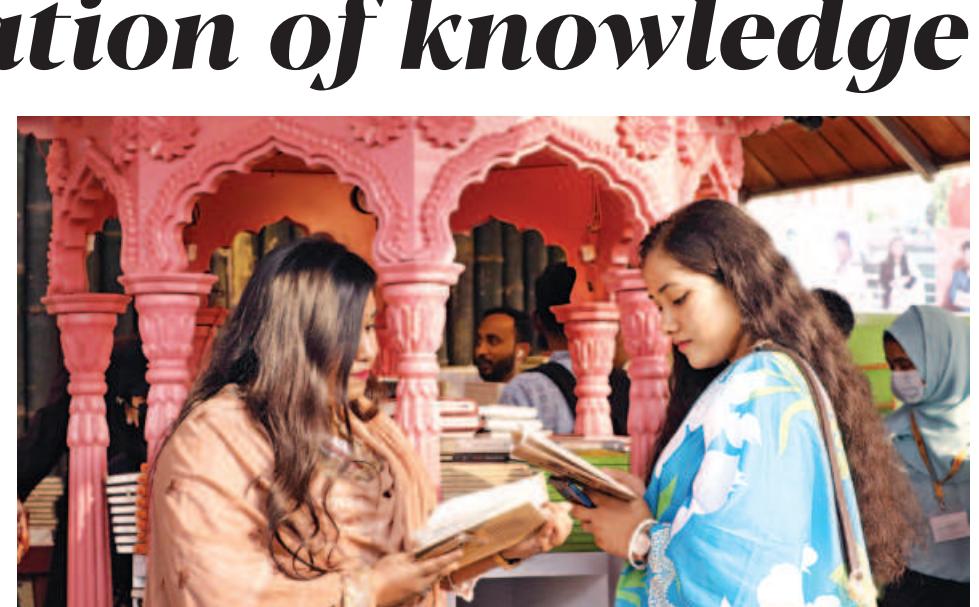
Visitors arrived in droves, their excitement palpable as they explored the myriad stalls brimming with new releases and beloved classics. Couples, friends, and families wandered from stall to stall, sharing recommendations and discovering new titles.

Shantinagar resident Debayan Choudhury, said, "Worshiping the Goddess, celebrating Basanta Panchami, and enjoying the book fair -- there couldn't be a greater coincidence than this. This is a truly special moment."

Sanjida Alrin, a visitor from Hatirpool, said, "The fusion of Sarawati Puja and Boi Mela created a unique experience, where the pursuit of knowledge and creativity thrived in unison."

The publishers were also seen busy helping visitors find their favourites.

Amzad Hossen Kajol, manager of Oitijhya, said, "Readers have been coming



in since day one, and sales haven't been bad either. We hope on Fridays and Saturdays both readership and sales will increase."

As the day unfolded, the main stage of the fair hosted various discussions and cultural programmes, enriching the experience for attendees.

According to Bangla Academy, the fair saw the release of 32 new books on its third

day. Notable titles included Hasnat Abdul Hai's "Chindeshe Koyekbar" and Anwara Syed Haque's "Somoy Bohiya Gelo".

As evening approached, the excitement of discovery kept the energy alive. Many attendees lingered, reluctant to leave the treasure trove of literature that surrounded them.

DAHAGRAM-ANGARPOTA HOSPITAL

One doctor for 22,000 residents

SDILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Around 22,000 inhabitants in Dahagram union, located in Lalmonirhat's Patgram upazila, are deprived of regular health services at the Dahagram-Angarpota 20-bed Hospital.

The facility has only one doctor, who is not consistently present.

Situated on two acres of land, the hospital features a one-storey building, equipment, staff quarters, and a garden.

Dahagram is a former enclave of Bangladesh situated within Indian territory, connected to the mainland through the Tin Bigha Corridor.

Sultan Mia, 55, a resident of Dahagram village, said he visited the hospital three times in January but did not see any doctor. "A nurse prescribed me some medicine," he said.

Shukur Ali, 62, from Thanapara village, said, "The hospital is the only health facility in Dahagram, and the elderly cannot afford to go to a private clinic or the government-run upazila health complex 16 kilometres



away."

The hospital was built at a cost of Tk 12.84 crore between 1988 and 1992. The hospital began operations in 1995 with funding from the Asian Development Bank and ran full swing with ultrasound, X-ray, and ambulance facilities until 2000.

From 2001, the decline of the hospital began after it came under full government control, and from March 2012, the hospital stopped admitting patients.

Hospital sources said it now only operates outdoor services six days a week from 8:00am to 2:00 pm. Out of 25 sanctioned posts, only one medical officer, four nurses, a ward boy, and a cook are present. The hospital's medical officer, Dr Noor Arefin Prodhan, said, "No doctor wants to be posted here as the area is remote, but I have been working here for the last 16 years. I try to come to the hospital regularly, but sometimes I am late due to communication problems."

Patgram Upazila Health Officer Dr Debrata Kumar Roy said, "I have informed the matter to the higher authorities. I will take steps following their instructions."

124 incidents led to 15 deaths

FROM PAGE 3

said the report, prepared based on newspaper reports, accounts of family members and HRSS's own findings.

Identity of the "gunfight" victim remained unknown but the report claimed the victim was a member of regional political party UPDF.

According to the report, last month 28 journalists were tortured and harassed

in at least 19 incidents.

There were at least 124 incidents of "political violence" which left at least 15 persons killed and 987 persons injured.

In five incidents along the Bangladesh-India border, two Bangladeshis were killed by Indian Border Security Force, two Bangladeshis were injured, and another one arrested.

Also, nine people died

and seven were injured in 13 "mob beating" incidents.

Moreover, 26 workers were killed and at least 87 others injured in 39 incidents of torture.

In January, at least 127 women and girls faced violence and 54 of them were victims of rape.

Besides, 88 children were victims of violence last month of whom 36 were killed.

8 hurt, 30 houses

FROM PAGE 5

between two supporters from the rival groups over fishing in a local pond on Sunday afternoon.

That night, police held a arbitration between the two groups.

However, Hashem Khan's supporters allegedly attacked the house of Akkas Matubbar and his followers around 8:30am yesterday.

In retaliation, Matubbar's men attacked Hashem's house. During the clash, at least 30 houses were vandalised and eight people from both sides were hurt.

Law enforcers brought the situation under control.

Akkas Matubbar said, "We had agreed not to engage in violence after police intervention. But Hashem Khan's supporters

attacked us."

Denying the allegations, Hashem Khan said, "It was Akkas' supporters who attacked my house."

OC Asaduzzaman of Faridpur Kotwali Police Station, said, "Additional police have been deployed in the area."

UK rights

FROM PAGE 3

current political climate in the country.

They said the rights situation is unlikely to improve until a political government is elected.

They assured that BNP would prioritise improving rights situation and ensuring better law and order if it comes to power.

Schoolgirl

FROM PAGE 3

expressed deep concern and outrage over the incident.

The organisation demanded swift justice, and urged the authorities to ensure exemplary punishment for the culprits.

The organisation said, "Such heinous acts are not only alarming but also severely impact women's and girls' ability to live freely and move forward in life."

The statement was signed by Fauzia Moslem, president of Mahila Parishad, and Maleka Banu, its general secretary.

US fund cuts

FROM PAGE 3

to provide support, he added.

In another session, former ambassador M Humayun Kabir said both Myanmar and Bangladesh are experiencing change, and a new generation is viewing the crisis from fresh perspectives.

"We may find new ways to engage with multiple forces, both within and beyond Myanmar, to reach a solution," he said.

Prof Niloy Ranjan Biswas of DU IR said global and regional geopolitical

interests have complicated the crisis.

DU IR Associate Prof Obaidul Haque emphasised Bangladesh's need for a strategic approach to resolving the issue.

PRAYER TIMING
FEBRUARY 4

Faz	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



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Women and children catch fish in the muddy waters of a local field yesterday. As the water is drained for paddy planting, that gives the locals an opportunity to catch various native fish species, including puti, bele, and taki. The photo was taken in Jashore's Keshabpur area.

REQUIRED/WANTED VERY URGENT

Looking for foreign official staff to work in Bangladeshi Group of Company, Based in Dhaka, anyone can apply for the Following positions: Manpower Recruitment officer, All kinds of Business Visa Counseling & Processing, All kinds of Visit/Tourist Visa Counseling & Processing, All Kinds of Student Visa Counseling & Processing, Import and Export officer. All positions should have enough jobs experienced.

Contact: House # 323, Plat B-2, 2nd Floor, Road # 5, DOHS Baridhara, Dhaka. Email: digitalgropupbd01@gmail.com

Request for Proposal (RFP)



International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka invites proposals from interested Firms/Organizations for the Request for Proposal (RFP) to conduct 10 Capacity Development Training Programmes at both the National and Divisional levels under the Reintegration of Return Migrant Workers initiative. The bidding documents and guidelines to participate in the tender are available in the *United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM)* at <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/258464>

The deadline for submission of proposal is Tuesday, March 04, 2025, by 04:30 PM (BST time).

BIRDEM GENERAL HOSPITAL

(An Enterprise of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh)

122 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.

■: 41060501-24, Fax: 41060476

Website: www.birdembd.org, www.dab-bd.org

INVITATION FOR TENDER

1. Division /Entity	Diabetic Association of Bangladesh
2. Procuring Entity	BIRDEM General Hospital, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000.
3. Source Of Fund	Revenue & Govt. Grant, BIRDEM General Hospital
4. Reference No	BIRDEM/Purchase/OTM/Equipment/2025/02 Dated: 3 February 2025
5. Details of Work	Lot-A: Air Cooled Water Chiller Type Air Conditioning System for OPD Lot-B: 800 mA High Frequency Digital X-Ray Machine for Radiology Department. Lot-C: 150 mA Mobile X-Ray Machine for Radiology & Anesthesiology Department. Lot-D: Visual Field Analyzer (VFA) for Ophthalmology Department. Lot-E: Defibrillator Machine for OT, Emergency, GOT & Ward, BIRDEM. Lot-F: Digital Autoclave Machine (Steam Sterilizer) for Microbiology Department. Open Tender Method (OTM)
6. Procurement Method	Director (Hospital Administration), BIRDEM General Hospital, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000, On behalf of Director General, BIRDEM General Hospital
7. Name, designation & address of official inviting tender	Procurement Section, Room: 230, 1 st floor of OPD Building, BIRDEM General Hospital, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000.
8. Name & address of the office selling tender documents	Tender documents will be available from <u>5 February 2025 to 3 March 2025</u> on all working days (09.00 am to 01.00 pm).
9. Date of selling of tender documents	5 March 2025 (From 08.00 AM to 12.00 PM).
10. Tender closing date & Time	5 March 2025 at 12.30 Noon (In presence of the tenderers or their authorized agent, if anybody available).
11. Tender opening date & Time	Tk. 5000/ (five thousand) only. (Non-Refundable)
12. Price of tender document	3% of the quoted amounts have to be deposited in the form of Demand Draft or Pay-order from any local commercial bank in favour of Director General BIRDEM General Hospital for each lot separately.
13. Tender Security	A pre bid meeting will be held on 19 February' 2025 in the room no: 246 at 12.00 PM.
14. Pre bid meeting	The tenderers should be the manufacturer or their authorized supplier/distributor or dealer of the items.
15. General terms & conditions for the Tenderers:	a. Evaluation will be done by lot wise. Bidder may participate in any individual & or all lots. b. Lot wise detail specifications, terms & conditions, warranty & after sales service shall be enumerated in the tender schedule. c. The tenderers shall have valid trade license, TIN, VAT, Income Tax Certificate & All other related documents as per Tender Schedule. d. Detail terms & conditions are mentioned in the Tender documents.
16. BIRDEM authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.	
17. In case of holiday or any unavoidable circumstances last date of dropping & opening will be the next working day.	

Brig Gen Dr. Md. Nasir Uddin Ahmed (Retd)
Director (Hospital)
BIRDEM General Hospital, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000.
03/02/2025

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Chandpur.

Invitation for Tender (IFT)
e-Tender Notice No: 35/2024-2025/(7016-SHED).

Memo No: XEN/EED/Chandpur/e-Gp/124
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following work, details is given below.

SI No Package No. Name of Works Procure -ment Method Tender ID No. Tender/Proposa l Document Last Selling/ download Date and Time Tender/Proposa l Opening Date and Time

01. 06/SHED- 2016/2020- 21/XEN/EED/Ch andpur/2024-25 Construction of Single Storied Academic Building With 4 Storied Foundation Including Sanitary, Water Supply And Electrification Works at Dr. Monsuruddin Mohila College Under Kachua Upazila Chandpur District.(Re-Tender) OTM 1071733 19-Feb-2025 15:00 20-Feb-2025 13:00

02. 07/SHED- 2016/2020- 21/XEN/EED/Ch andpur/2024-25 Construction of Single Storied Academic Building With 4 Storied Foundation Including Sanitary, Water Supply And Electrification Works at Palgiri Begum Rabeya High School Under Kachua Upazila Chandpur District.(Re-Tender) OTM 1071734 19-Feb-2025 15:00 20-Feb-2025 13:00

This is an online Tender, Where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank branches as mentioned above. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

Monzurul Alam Sharif
(Monzurul Alam Sharif)
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Chandpur.



Illegal sand extraction from the Dharla river in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila is posing a threat to the foundations of Dharla Bridge, with the site of the extraction being only 100 metres away from the bridge.

PHOTO: STAR

'AL did it, so why not us?'

BNP leader justifies sand extraction from Dharla river

S DILIP ROY, *Salmonirhat*

Rampant illegal sand extraction from the Dharla river in the Char Sonaikaji and Char Jatin areas of Shimulbari union in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila is posing a threat to the foundations of Dharla Bridge.

Nazrul Islam, president of the Shimulbari union unit of BNP, has allegedly been running the illegal sand trade for the past three months in association with other local BNP members.

The site of sand extraction is barely 100 metres away from the bridge that connects the Salmonirhat-Phulbari road over the river.

Locals alleged that around 150-160 sand-laden tractors extract and transport sand from the site to other places daily as part of an illegal trade operated by local BNP leaders and activists.

Afif Islam, a local BNP activist, was observed counting sand-laden tractors with four other men and taking Tk 300 from each driver.

They collect Tk 45,000-48,000 daily from selling sand and share the money among local BNP members, alleged

locals.

Afif said Nazrul Islam coordinates the sand extraction from the river.

"Sand carried by each tractor is sold for Tk 1,200-1,300. The local BNP members take Tk 300 from each tractor driver. Some 15-20 tractors are engaged in sand extraction on the site daily," said a tractor driver.

Contacted, Nazrul Islam said, "I am not directly involved in sand extraction from the river. Some 20-25 people from our party are involved in it. I am only assisting them."

"Earlier, local Awami League members used to extract sand from the river and sell it. Now we are doing it. When you come to Phulbari, let's meet and have a cup of tea," he told this correspondent.

Mamunur Rahman, the upazila engineer in Phulbari, said rampant sand extraction from the river in the vicinity of the bridge may threaten its foundation by making it vulnerable and risky.

"Steps will be taken to stop the illegal sand lifting after talking to the upazila nicha officer," he added.

Phulbari UNO Rehema Tarannum said a drive will be launched against illegal sand extraction from the river soon.

Mustard cultivation expanding in Narail

PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY, *Bagerhat*

The cultivation of mustard has been expanding in Narail district in recent years, driven by a surge in demand for mustard oil in the market.

With the price of soybean oil soaring, consumers now consider mustard oil a more cost-effective alternative.

During visits to various areas in Kalia upazila, this correspondent observed mustard being grown not only in croplands but also along roadsides and in home yards.

Farmers reported that mustard seeds are currently fetching between Tk 3,500 and Tk 4,000 per maund in wholesale markets.

"Mustard is a short-duration crop, maturing in about two months. Farmers in this region have cultivated mustard for generations, but its cultivation has expanded in recent years due to the rising demand



for mustard oil amid soaring soybean oil prices," said Apurba Kumar, a farmer from Ghoshpara in Kalia municipality.

"This year, I planted mustard on one acre and 12 decimals of land, expecting a yield of 15-16 maunds. Since mustard requires minimal labour -- just a round of weeding, irrigation, and fertiliser -- it is often regarded as a 'bonus' crop. The oil from our harvest meets our household needs, and we sell the surplus mustard at a good price in the market," he added.

Monir Sheikh from Sarushuna village in Lohagara upazila echoed him.

Saumitra Sarkar, district training officer of the Department of Agricultural Extension in Narail, said mustard cultivation has expanded to 13,350 hectares of land this year, up from 12,888 hectares last year.

"The projected yield this season stands at 17,993 tonnes," he added.

BASIC BANK

Court orders further probe into 17 cases

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered for further investigation into 17 corruption cases filed over the BASIC Bank loan scams against its former chairman Sheikh Abdul Hye Bacchu and others.

Judge Abul Kashem of Dhaka Special Judge's Court-1 issued the order after identifying "flaws" in the investigation of the cases, said ACC Public Prosecutor Mir Ahmed Ali Salam.

The judge also said yesterday's order for further investigation would be effective on 41 other cases relating to BASIC Bank loan scams pending with the court for their disposal.

Meantime, ACC Deputy Director Mohammad Ibrahim, who pressed charges against former BASIC Bank Chairman Bacchu and 46 others in 17 cases, explained why he did not include names of board of directors of the bank.

On January 2, the same court summoned three investigation officers of 20 corruption cases filed over the loan scams, seeking explanations as to whether the board of directors of the bank were involved.

DHAKA TUESDAY FEBRUARY 4, 2025

MAGH 21, 1431 BS

The Daily Star

5

RMG workers block road over unpaid wages

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Over a thousand workers of Anowara Dress Makers staged a protest by blocking Bayazid Bostami Road in Chattogram yesterday, to demand their unpaid salaries.



The demonstration began around 8:30am, causing severe traffic congestion in the area.

Taslima Akter, an operator at the factory, said, "We held a meeting with the company owners, and they assured us that the dues would be paid by January 29. But we still haven't received our salaries, and we don't even know why."

"We will continue our demonstration until the owners pay us," she added.

Halal Hossain, a sub-inspector at Bayazid Police Station, said, "Police are trying to resolve the issue through discussions with both the workers and the owners."

Attempts to contact Anowara Dress Makers' authorities were unsuccessful.

The workers called off the protest around 6:30pm following assurances from the owners.

8 hurt, 30 houses vandalised as AL, BNP clash in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Faridpur*

At least eight people were injured and 30 houses vandalised in a clash between supporters of Awami League and BNP in Fushra village of Faridpur's Sadar upazila yesterday morning.

Of the injured, three were admitted to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

Belayet Hossain, former chairman of Kanaipur Union Parishad, said there had been a longstanding conflict between Akkas Matubbar, president of Ward 9 AL unit, and Hashem Khan, president of Ward 9 BNP unit, over establishing supremacy in the locality.

Tensions flared following an altercation

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

এসেন্সিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড

৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা,
ঢাকা-১২০৮।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইডিসিএল নিম্নোক্ত আইটেমগুলি প্রকৃত স্থানীয় প্রস্তুতকারী/ সরবরাহকারীদের (সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসার সাথে জড়িত) নিকট হতে সীলনোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবান করছে :-

ক্রমিক নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমাণ	আনেক মাসি	দরপত্র শিউটিউলের মূল্য (অফের পর্যাপ্ত)	দরপত্র হাইদের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র খেলার তারিখ ও সময়
০১।	ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/ দরপত্র/২০২৫/২৪ তারিখঃ ০৩/০২/২০২৫ ইং	১৫ (পেনেরো) প্রকার প্রিস্টেড এ্যালু বিস্কুর ফয়েল {15 (fifteen) Kinds of printed Alu blister Foil} (শিউটিউল মোতাবেক)	৯,৩০০.০ কেজি	২.৫%	টাকা ১,৬০০.০০ (টাকা এক হাজার হায়শত) মাত্র	১৭/০২/২০২৫ ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা	১৭/০২/২০২৫ ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা
০২।	ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/ দরপত্র/২০২৫/২৫ তারিখঃ ০৩/০২/২০২৫ ইং	printed Close Mouth Ampoule (শিউটিউল মোতাবেক)	২,০০,০০০ পিস	২.৫%	টাকা ৭৫০.০০ (টাকা সাত শত পঞ্চাশ) মাত্র	১৭/০২/২০২৫ ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা	১৭/০২/২০২৫ ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা
০৩।	ইডিসিএল/ক্রয়/স্থানীয়/ দরপত্র/২০২৫/২৬ তারিখঃ ০৩/০২/২০২৫ ইং	Different kinds of printed Close Mouth Ampoule (শিউটিউল মোতাবেক)	৫১,০০,০০০ পিস	২.৫%	টাকা ১,৮৫০.০০ (টাকা এক হাজার আট শত পঞ্চাশ) মাত্র	১৭/০২/২০২৫ ইং বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা	১৭/০২/২০২৫ ইং বেলা ১২-১৫ ঘটিকা

সকল কার্যদিবসে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হতে শৰ্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্র শিউটিউল অর্পণ করা যাবে। উক্তেখ্য যে, যাদের ভাটাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই তাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণ করার প্রয়োজন নাই। দরপত্র খেলার দিনে কোন দরপত্র শিউটিউল বিতরণ করা হবে না। কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

মহা-ব্যবস্থাপন, প্রকিউরেমেন্ট (চেলতি দায়িত্ব)
পক্ষে ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক।

GD-342



চট্টগ্রাম বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

চট্টগ্রাম।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর: ০১/২০২৫

নিম্নে বর্ণিত বেতন ক্ষেত্রে এবং স্থানীয় মোতাবেক দেয়া অন্যান্য ভাতাতে এবং বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নিম্নোক্ত পদে শিক্ষক নিয়োগের জন্য

১. সরকারী অধ্যাপক	ইস্লামের ইচ্ছিতাম ও সংস্কৃত বিভাগ	০২ (দুই) টি ছাত্রী;
২. অভ্যন্তর	ইস্লামের ইচ্ছিতাম ও সংস্কৃত বিভাগ	০২ (দুই) টি ছাত্রী;
৩. অভ্যন্তর (Art and Architecture বিষয়া)	ইস্লামের ইচ্ছিতাম ও সংস্কৃত বিভাগ	০১ (এক) টি ছাত্রী;
৪. অভ্যন্তর (Electrical Works, Pipe Line/water distribution Networks, etc)	নাটোরেজ বিভাগ	০৩ (তিনি)টি ছাত্রাদিত অঞ্চলীয়;
৫. অভ্যন্তর (সহকারী অধ্যাপক পদের বিষয়াতে)	ইস্লামের ইচ্ছিতাম ও সংস্কৃত বিভাগ	০৪ (চার) টি অঞ্চলীয়;
৬. অভ্যন্তর (ইইলেক্ট্রিক/ভায়া ও ভায়া বিজ্ঞান বিষয়া)	আশুলিনক ভায়া ইনসিসিটিউট	০১ (এক) টি অঞ্চলীয়;
৭. অভ্যন্তর (ইইলেক্ট্রিক/ভায়া ও ভায়া বিজ্ঞান বিষয়া)	আশুলিনক ভায়া ইনসিসিটিউট	০১ (এক) টি অঞ্চলীয়;</



Kendrick Lamar dominated Grammy awards with five trophies.



PHOTO: AFP Beyoncé receives the Best Country Album award from Taylor Swift.

PHOTO: REUTERS

GRAMMY 2025

Beyoncé makes history, Carpenter beats Taylor

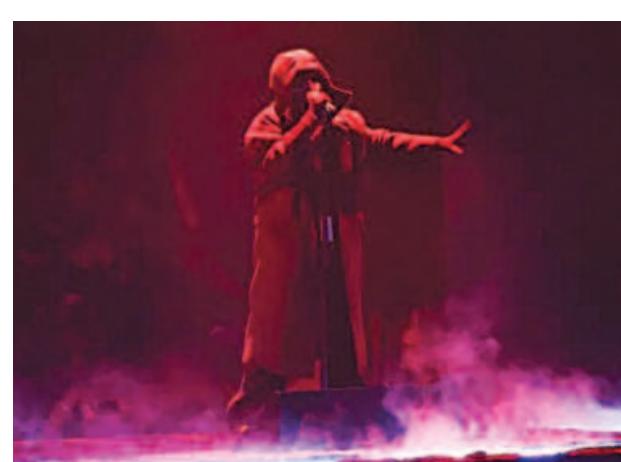
Kendrick Lamar emerged as the night's biggest winner, taking home five Grammys, including Record of the Year and Song of the Year for 'Not Like Us'.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The 2024 Grammy Awards delivered a night filled with unexpected turns, groundbreaking wins, and surprises. Beyoncé once again proved her dominance, making history as the first Black woman to win Best Country Album for *Cowboy Carter*. She also claimed the evening's most prestigious honour, Album of the Year, becoming the first Black woman in over two decades to secure the award.

For a moment, the global icon stood still, her face reflecting pure shock. As the audience erupted in applause, Beyoncé glanced around, seemingly trying to confirm what she had just heard. Her stunned reaction, captured on camera, quickly became one of the night's most memorable moments.

"Oh my God," she exclaimed, visibly overwhelmed, as Taylor Swift—who



The Weeknd performs at Grammys after boycotting it for four years.

PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER POLK



Shakira wins Best Latin Pop Album award.

PHOTO: AP

previously won the award in 2010 for *Fearless*—presented her with the trophy for her genre-blending country album, released in March 2024. Dressed in a shimmering gold paisley gown, Beyoncé spoke with deep emotion, expressing her immense gratitude for being able to continue pursuing her passion after so many years.

Kendrick Lamar emerged as the night's biggest winner, taking home five Grammys, including Record of the Year and Song of the Year for *Not Like Us*, his fiery diss track aimed at Drake that had already ignited conversations

across the music world. While some artists basked in glory, others faced disappointment. Taylor Swift, a Grammy favourite, left the ceremony without a single win. Meanwhile, The Weeknd—who had previously vowed to boycott the awards—marked a turning point in his stance, officially ending his protest against the Recording Academy. He delivered a powerful performance of *Cry for Me* alongside Playboy Carti, signaling a fresh chapter in his relationship with the Grammys.

However, perhaps the biggest shock of the night came when Sabrina Carpenter took over Taylor Swift to win Best Pop Vocal Album for *Short n' Sweet*, a decision that sent social media into a frenzy. The singer also won Best pop solo performance for *Espresso*. Swift, ever the gracious competitor, applauded Carpenter's victory, showing no signs of tension—at least in the public eye.

Many musicians used the Grammy platform to shine a spotlight on social issues. After winning Best Latin Pop Album for *Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran*, Shakira, who made a triumphant return to the Grammy stage after 15 years, dedicated her speech to

immigrants, passionately declaring, "You're loved and worth it, and I'll fight with you."

Meanwhile, Best Pop Duo Performance winners Lady Gaga and Bruno Mars took their moment to advocate for trans rights.

Former US President Jimmy Carter made history at 100 years old as the oldest Grammy winner ever, while The Beatles secured their first nominations since 1997, further cementing their lasting influence on music.

The ceremony also paid homage to the late Quincy Jones with a moving tribute. Will Smith, making his first major awards show appearance since his infamous Oscars 'slap' incident, introduced the segment, calling Jones "one of the most groundbreaking and influential figures of our time." The tribute featured stellar performances by Janelle Monáe, Herbie Hancock, Cynthia Erivo, and Stevie Wonder. Wonder closed the segment with an emotional rendition of *We Are the World*, accompanied by a choir wearing special LA sweaters in remembrance of schools lost to the fires.

Coldplay's Chris Martin led the In Memoriam segment, honouring the lives of late icons such as Liam Payne, Kris Kristofferson, Cissy Houston, Marianne Faithfull, Bob Newhart, Wayne Osmond, and Sergio Mendes.

Actors' Equity raises concerns over mob impositions on actresses



Actors' Equity Bangladesh has expressed deep concerns over increasing restrictions imposed on female artistes and performers.

The issue gained attention after prominent actors including Mehazabien Chowdhury, Pori Moni, and Apu Biswas encountered disruptions while attending events such as restaurant and showroom inaugurations in recent weeks.

During its third annual general meeting, held last Friday at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the guild issued the statement with unanimous approval from its members.

The guild claimed that similar obstructions have also affected actors during shooting schedules and overseas travel. "If any actor is involved in criminal activities, they should be prosecuted under the country's existing laws with proper evidence. However, unnecessary harassment must cease, as it will only hinder the free and fearless practice of art and culture," the statement said.

They have called upon the government and relevant authorities to address this matter urgently.

Abul Hayat's silver-screen return showcases harsh reality of old-age homes

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Ekushey Padak-winning actor, playwright, and director Abul Hayat is making a return to the silver screen after two years. The film, titled *Daymukti*, directed by Badiul Alam Khokon, is set to be released on February 7.

Daymukti tells the story of an old-age home. The veteran artiste spoke to The Daily Star regarding the project. "At this stage of life, roles like these appeal

to veteran artistes like us," shared the actor.

In the film, viewers will see me speaking out against old age homes. I want people to stay happily together in harmony, with families, because unity is a blessing. However, many elderly parents are sent to old age homes in their final years, which is not right."

Meanwhile, Abul Hayat has recently appeared in a new

advertisement and will soon begin shooting for a new drama.

He shared, "I have been selective with my work for quite some time, and I continue to be so. At this age, travelling long distances for shoots is not feasible, as my body would not support it. That is why I prefer locations nearby."

Alongside acting, Abul Hayat has been a renowned author for many years. His latest book, *Robi Poth*, was published this year and is available at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair. "It took me a long time to complete this book. It will make me happy if readers enjoy it. They can get their copies from the book fair."

'Squid Game' star Lee Joo-Sil passes away at 81

Lee Joo Sil, who portrayed Park Mal-soon, the mother of undercover detective Hwang Joon ho (played by Wi Ha-joon) and stepmother of Hwang In-ho (played by Lee Byung-hun) in the second season of Netflix's dystopian drama *Squid Game*, passed away at her family home in Uijeongbu, South Korea, on February 2. She was 81 years old and had been battling stomach cancer since November 2024.

Previously, Lee was diagnosed with stage-three breast cancer in her fifties, with doctors giving her less than a year to live. However, she was declared cancer-free 13 years later.

In *Squid Game*, Lee's character was beloved for her warm and



caring nature, often carrying the burden of guilt over the strained relationships within her family.

Lee Joo Sil's filmography includes notable roles in the 2016 horror film *Train to Busan* and the 2020 K-drama *The Uncanny Counter*.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?



CHHADER CHHOBI Morshum 2

After the successful conclusion of *Chhader Chobi: Morshum* – Season 1, its next chapter Season 2, is set to kick off with another immersive cinematic experience.

This season begins with *Perfumed Nightmare* by Kidlat Tahimik, a landmark film in Filipino early independent cinema, which emerged as a counterpoint to conventional mainstream filmmaking and colonial dominance. With its unique narrative techniques and unconventional storytelling, this film raises critical social and political questions. The Filipino independent cinema movement of the 1970s and 1980s, as recognised by global critics, continues to shape discourse on identity, colonialism, and cultural heritage.

DATE: TUESDAY | FEBRUARY 4

TIME: 6:30 PM

VENUE: RATHARHOOD INITIATIVES LIMITED ROOFTOP
101, INDIRA ROAD, FLOOR 8/A (LEFT GATE), SHER E BANGLA NAGAR, DHAKA-1215

INTERNATIONAL

End China's influence of canal or face US action

US top diplomat Rubio warns Panama

REUTERS, Panama City

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Sunday warned Panama's President Jose Raul Mulino that Washington will "take measures necessary" if Panama does not immediately take steps to end what President Donald Trump sees as China's influence and control over the Panama Canal.

Mulino, after the talks with the top US diplomat in Panama City, signalled he would review agreements involving China and Chinese businesses, and announced further cooperation with the US on migration, but reiterated that his country's sovereignty over the world's second busiest waterway is not up for discussion.

Rubio delivered a message from Trump that China's presence



- through a Hong Kong-based company operating two ports near the canal's entrances - was a threat to the waterway and a violation of the US-Panama treaty, US State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said in a statement.

"Secretary Rubio made clear that this status quo is unacceptable and that absent immediate changes, it would require the United States to take measures necessary to protect its rights under the Treaty," Bruce said.

Rubio did not spell out exactly what steps Panama must take or what US retaliation would look like.

Upon returning to office, Trump threatened to take control of the Panama Canal, built by the United States in the early 20th century and handed over to Panama in 1999, claiming the canal is being operated by Beijing.

He has refused to rule out use of military force over Panama, drawing criticism from Washington's Latin American friends and foes alike. On Sunday, Trump said that he did not think troops would be necessary, but that Panama had violated the agreement and the United States would take back the canal.

Language Movement

FROM PAGE 12

On February 21, 1952, despite the imposition of Section 144, a draconian measure aimed at suppressing demonstrations, students from Edward College flooded the streets, demanding Bangla as the state language.

Their cries, "Rashtrabhasha Bangla Chai!" reverberated through the town. The police attempted to quash the march, but the determined students broke through barricades and proceeded to the Collectorate building. Several protesters were arrested near Bani Cinema Hall.

That evening, devastating news arrived from Dhaka - students had been shot and killed for the same cause. People from all walks of life poured onto the streets in protest.

The following day, on February 22, a public meeting was held at Edward College to condemn the killings and demand exemplary punishment for the perpetrators.

EARLY DAYS
The district's involvement in the struggle for the recognition of Bangla began even before 1952.

In February 1948, when Dhirendranath Dutta, a member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, proposed Bangla as a working language at one of its sessions, only to be met with staunch opposition from Khwaja Nazimuddin, chief minister of East Bengal, students in Pabna burst into protests, as did their peers in Dhaka.

According to Dr Abdul Alim's book "Pabna e Bhasha Andolon", under the leadership of Dewan Lutfar Rahman, the convenor of the local Sangram Parishad, and active participation from progressive student leaders and political activists, the movement gained traction.

Despite attempts by the deputy commissioner to pacify the demonstrators through negotiations, the students remained unwavering. The imposition of Section 144 failed to quell the uprising.

Pabna witnessed a complete shutdown on February 29, 1948, with a general strike bringing the town to a halt. The arrest of student leader Mahbubur Rahman only served to fuel the fire, as activists prepared for a national day of action on March 11.



People march in support of immigrants in Houston, Texas, USA, on Sunday. Hundreds of Latinos in Texas protested against US President Donald Trump's push to deport migrants, urging him to 'leave the people alone.'

PHOTO: AFP

Ukraine strikes major oil, gas facilities in Russia

UN warns Russian forces killing more captured Ukrainian troops in recent months

AGENCIES

Ukraine struck energy facilities in southern Russia with dozens of drones launched yesterday, triggering fires at a major oil refinery and gas processing plant and disrupting flights from the Volga to the Caucasus Mountains, Russian and Ukrainian officials said.

Russia's defence ministry said that its air defence units intercepted and destroyed 70 Ukrainian drones over Russian territory overnight, including 25 over the Volgograd region, 27 over the Rostov region and seven over the Astrakhan region, reports Reuters.

The air defence forces of the defence ministry repelled a massive attack by aircraft-type drones on the territory of the Volgograd region, Volgograd Governor Andrei Bocharov said.

Falling drone debris sparked several fires at an oil refinery, he said, though he did not say which refinery was on fire.

Since Russia sent thousands of troops into Ukraine in 2022, Kyiv has tried

to fight back against its much bigger neighbour by striking deep into Russia with drones and missiles, and even killing a senior military commander in Moscow.

In Moscow, a pro-Russian paramilitary leader from eastern Ukraine, Armen Sarkisyan, was killed yesterday when a bomb tore through parts of a luxury

A pro-Russian paramilitary leader from eastern Ukraine was killed in a Moscow bomb blast.

apartment block, state news agency TASS and other Russian media reported.

Meanwhile, the United Nations yesterday warned that Russian forces have been killing more captured Ukrainian soldiers over recent months, echoing growing allegations from officials in Kyiv, reports AFP.

Both Moscow and Kyiv have accused the

other of committing war crimes, including killing prisoners of war, since Russia invaded Ukraine nearly three years ago.

The United Nations monitoring mission in Ukraine said that since the end of August last year it had "recorded 79 such executions in 24 separate incidents" by Russian forces.

"These incidents did not occur in a vacuum. Public figures in the Russian Federation have explicitly called for inhumane treatment, and even execution, of captured Ukrainian military personnel," said Danielle Bell, head of the mission.

Russian forces advanced 430 square kilometres into Ukrainian territory in January and are headed towards the logistics hub of Pokrovsk, according to an AFP analysis of data from the US-based Institute for the Study of War (ISW).

This marks a slight slowdown compared to previous months, after a record advance of 725 square kilometres in November and 476 square kilometres in December.



Pabna Shaheed Minar

Authorities, sensing the rising momentum, attempted to prevent the protests by arresting key figures like Amjad Hossain and Rawshan Chowdhury on March 10.

However, the people of Pabna retaliated with a spontaneous strike on March 11, and thousands of students, led by Abdul Matin and Md Sultan, student leaders from Dhaka, took to the streets, raising their voices for Bangla.

EDWARD COLLEGE

As per Ahmed Rafiq's book "Bhasha Andolon: Teknaf to Tetulia", by 1952, Pabna had become a significant force in the movement. Edward College played a central role in organising protests and rallies, with Abdul Momin Talukder leading the local All-Party State Language Action Committee alongside Azizul Haque.

A defining moment came on February 17, when Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, a towering political figure, addressed a mass gathering at Edward College.

His speech motivated the students, urging them to stand firm in their demand for their mother tongue.

As February 21 approached, the city was draped in posters proclaiming the call for Bangla as the state language.

On the night of February 20, an emergency meeting at Edward College resolved to defy Section 144.

According to the book "Pabna e Bhasha Andolon", the following day, a hartal (general strike) ensued, with thousands marching in defiance of state restrictions, leading to confrontations with police and arrests.

The fight for Bangla was not restricted to Pabna town alone; it spread to nearby areas like Sirajganj (now a separate district), Chatmohar, and Ishwardi.

Capacity

FROM PAGE 12

This disproportionately large share directed towards capacity payments raises concerns about the influence of vested interest groups within the sector.

Powerful business entities and political elites are benefitting from these contracts, often secured under non-competitive arrangements, the report said.

"Such practices not only burden public finances but also limit resources available for investing in sustainable energy solutions and infrastructure improvements."

Quoting the data of capacity payments released in the parliament in 2023, the report said 82 independent power plants and 32 rental power plants have received more than Tk 1 lakh crore in capacity charges over the previous 14 years. Of the amount, the top 10 plants had received one-third of the payments.

"Giving tenders to the same few companies over and over again has made the country dependent on them to the extent that the country has to accept their technical failures even during spans of high demand."

The problems and challenges in the power and energy sector include poor regulatory quality; lack of institutional capacity; and lack of strategies to address the PDB's growing revenue shortfall in the Integrated Energy and Power Master Plan 2023.

The government's monopoly market structure in power procurement, transmission and distribution systems; the lack of transparency and accountability; and the pricing and subsidy policies are the other problems and challenges for the sector.

Subsequently, the task force suggested that the interim government prepare a short-term strategy consisting of revising the master plan, adjusting the energy prices and subsidies, leveraging regional energy trade, ensuring transparency in the international contracts, eradicating tax mismatches for renewable energy adoption, strengthening the capacity of the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority.

The task force also emphasised ensuring uninterrupted energy supplies to export-oriented and export-supporting firms as the critical first step to maintaining operational efficiency and reducing production costs.

It may hinder independent

FROM PAGE 2

This criticised for suppressing freedom of expression. These laws were passed to replace a controversial section of the ICT Act.

Although framed as a more moderate alternative, the CSA retained several controversial provisions of the ICT Act and DSA. These include criminalising certain forms of free speech, granting arbitrary powers to law enforcement for arrest, search, and seizure, and empowering authorities to block or filter content with minimal oversight.

Now section 8 of the draft ordinance grants broad and unchecked authority to the executive to block or filter information it finds objectionable, said Article 19.

The establishment of a National Cybersecurity Council is proposed as per sections 12 and 13 of chapter IV.

This body would wield expansive and unchecked powers to develop inter-institutional policies, enact regulations, and effectively control 'cybersecurity infrastructural development', Article 19 mentioned in the statement.

The council would also oversee a national cybersecurity agency to be created under the same ordinance.

Referring to section 8 of the draft,

the rights body said the ordinance further grants significant authority to the director general of the cybersecurity agency. The director general could request the removal or blocking of any information deemed to pose "cybersecurity risks".

"Without judicial oversight, such powers carry a high risk of misuse," the rights group said.

The council will be chaired by the head of state and backed by a high-ranking contingent of government officials, including the ICT minister and director generals of various intelligence and defence agencies.

"This concentration and centralisation of authority raises serious concerns about accountability and the potential for government overreach with limited checks and balances," observed Article 19.

Section 26 criminalises the publication of information, in any form, that intends to spread hate. This provision is inconsistent with international standards on freedom of expression, as it seeks to protect religious values or feelings rather than an individual's right to freedom of religion, according to Article 19.

No radiotherapy at lone cancer hospital

FROM PAGE 12

functional two years ago.

A year ago, two cobalt machines - teletherapy machines used for treating localised solid tumours, such as cancers of the skin, tongue, larynx, brain, breast, or uterine cervix - broke down.

Since then, the two remaining LINACs were used beyond their capacities for approximately 220-230 patients every day, until they recently became nonfunctional.

One of the machines malfunctioned during a therapy session on December 21 last year.

The other stopped working the following day, halting all radiotherapy services at the state-run facility.

The hospital has been unable to provide radiotherapy services, forcing around 220-230 cancer patients to return home without the therapy every day, said NICRH Director Jahangir Kabir.

According to Dr Abdul Alim's book "Pabna e Bhasha Andolon", the following day, a hartal (general strike) ensued, with thousands marching in defiance of state restrictions, leading to confrontations with police and arrests.

The task force also emphasised ensuring uninterrupted energy supplies to export-oriented and export-supporting firms as the critical first step to maintaining operational efficiency and reducing production costs.

new machines.

"We hope that one new machine will start its operation today, and within the first week of March, we will start operating another new machine."

If four more machines can be made operational, NICRH will be able to provide therapy to an additional 600 cancer patients daily, Kabir said.

Noted cancer epidemiologist Md Habibullah Talukder Ruskin considered the shutdown of radiotherapy machines and their prolonged inoperability as a sign of extreme irresponsibility.

"Who will take responsibility for the patients who have been deprived of treatment for so long, those who had to pay more for radiotherapy in private facilities, or perhaps even those who may have died without us knowing?"

The radiotherapy machines at the NICRH were purchased between 2006 and 2008 and those typically have a lifespan of 10 years.

However, NICRH bought two brand-

new machines.

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However, NICRH bought two brand-

Enam Ahmed

FROM PAGE 12

Chowdhury left behind his wife, a son, and a daughter.

Born on June 29, 1937, in Barokot village of Golapganj, Sylhet, Chowdhury had a distinguished career in civil service and international organisations.

He completed his schooling in Shillong and Mymensingh before earning a bachelor's degree in International Relations and a Master's in Law from Dhaka University, securing first place.

He was active in student politics and played a role in the Language Movement, for which he was expelled from Dhaka College in 1952.

He joined the Civil Service of Pakistan in 1960 and served as deputy commissioner of Khulna and Jashore before 1971.

After independence, he held key positions, including the posts of joint secretary to the industries and commerce ministry and director general of the Export Promotion Bureau.

Between 1975 and 1981, he was the economic minister at Bangladesh's High Commission in London. He later worked as a UN official in Bangkok and served as secretary of the Economic Relations Division and shipping

ministry.

He was also elected president of the International Maritime Organization.

Chowdhury was a vice president of the Islamic Development Bank from 1993 to 1998. From 2001 to 2006, he served as chairman of the Privatization Commission under the BNP-led government, holding the rank of a state minister.

Enam Ahmed Chowdhury's father, Gias Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury, was a commissioner in Dhaka.

He had four brothers and two sisters.

His eldest brother late Faruq Ahmed Choudhury was a former foreign secretary. Another brother, former career diplomat Iftekhar Ahmed Choudhury, served as the foreign affairs adviser to the military-backed caretaker government of 2007-08.

Among his sisters, Nasim Hai is the widow of martyred freedom fighter Col Syed Abdul Hai. His youngest sister, Nina Ahmed, married Fakhrul Islam Ahmed, former ambassador to the 2007-08 caretaker government.

Frequent protests an ordeal for citizens

Demonstrators blocking Dhaka streets almost every day

Since the political changeover in Bangladesh nearly six months ago, Dhaka has become a hub of protests. Various groups have taken to the streets or laid siege to key state offices to voice their grievances and demand action. However, due to the city's unplanned development, overcrowding, and chaotic traffic system, even minor disruptions can lead to severe gridlocks. As a result, commuting has become quite an ordeal for the city residents.

On Sunday alone, three major protests were reported in Dhaka. In Mohakhali, students of Government Titumir College—demanding its upgrade to a university for weeks now—staged a hunger strike while blocking the street in front of their campus as well as the Gulshan 1 intersection. On Mirpur Road, some of the victims wounded during the July uprising protested the prolonged delay in receiving proper treatment and compensation. Meanwhile, a platform named Inquilab Mancha blocked Eidgah Road in front of Shikkha Bhaban, demanding the resignation of the home adviser for failing to prevent Awami League-linked leaders and officials from leaving the country. The result? Major parts of the city came to a standstill, with thousands, including those seeking critical services, stranded on the streets.

Given Dhaka's many overlapping problems, is it a surprise that even the slightest disruption leads to massive traffic congestions? Unfortunately, it's always ordinary citizens who are left to bear the brunt of this situation. On Sunday, for instance, an RMG worker and his wife had to walk 40 minutes carrying their two ill toddlers to a doctor's appointment, which they ultimately missed. Such stories of missed appointments, business opportunities, and personal emergencies are endless, leading to immeasurable suffering and a staggering economic cost.

We fully support the right to protest, but should it come at the expense of people's livelihoods and survival? If so, to what extent? These are questions that we must seriously consider. The notion that grievances cannot be addressed without blocking roads is a pre-uprising legacy that grew in response to the authoritarian nature of the Awami League government. Both protesters and authorities in new Bangladesh must find a way around this culture. The lack of public space within the city—as well as the lack of acceptance of alternative protest venues on the outskirts of it—is another issue that we must critically approach and address. Moreover, as the July uprising has shown, online platforms can be as powerful a medium to stage protests and trigger policy response as street mobilisation, something the protesters can consider.

All this is to say that there must be something we can do to address the endless public suffering caused by protests on the streets. Public sufferings cannot be used as a bargaining tool any longer. To change this scenario, authorities must take the first step and restore public confidence in the state's feedback mechanism, so that there are peaceful means of resolving grievances. The protesters also must give advocacy, online activism, and negotiation a chance before pouring out onto the streets. We also must find a way to accommodate protests in designated public spaces without disrupting major roads.

State must be able to protect our girls

Gang rape and murder of an eighth grader deeply disturbing

We are outraged by the gang rape and murder of an eighth grader in Dhaka. Reportedly, police recovered her body from Hatirjheel Lake on February 2, about 17 days after she went missing from the Dakshinkhan area. According to confessions from the two arrestees—Robin and Rabbi—the duo, along with three others, lured the girl to a house in Mohakhali, where they gang-raped her. When she became unconscious and later died, they disposed of her body in Hatirjheel. This horrific incident once again highlights the appalling state of women's safety in the country. Why is the state failing to protect them in public spaces? Why do rapes and other forms of violence against women continue with impunity?

According to an estimate by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, 205 women and girls were reported to endure violence in January alone. Among them, 67—including 42 girls—were raped. Of these, 20 were gang-raped, and two were murdered after being raped. While these figures do not capture the full extent of the crisis, they underscore the pervasiveness of gender-based violence in our society. Yet, law enforcement efforts to arrest and punish perpetrators remain questionable, while convictions remain rare. Patriarchal norms, flawed investigations, prolonged legal proceedings, and low conviction rates all contribute to causing insecurity for women.

Beyond physical violence, women are also facing rampant harassment online. According to the Police Cyber Support Center for Women, 9,117 cases of cyber harassment were reported in 2024. In this particular case, one of the rapists reportedly met the victim through Facebook—which shows how easily predators can exploit online platforms to target teenage girls. Unfortunately, efforts to address these evolving threats remain largely inadequate.

We, therefore, urge the authorities to take decisive action to ensure the safety of women and girls in all spheres of life. They must send a strong message that gender-based violence will not be tolerated. To achieve this, the entrenched culture of impunity must end. In case of the Mohakhali incident, we urge the government to arrest the remaining suspects, expedite the investigation, and bring all perpetrators to justice without delay. No more girls should have to suffer such brutal violence and death.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Facebook launched

On this day in 2004, Mark Zuckerberg launched Facebook, with membership initially restricted to students of Harvard College. It opened to everyone at least 13 years old in 2006.

EDITORIAL

Trump's tariff shockwaves and implications for Bangladesh

MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun
is executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and non-resident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council. Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KATUN

Trade policies play a crucial role in shaping global economic relations. The imposition of tariffs by US President Donald Trump is a departure from traditional free trade principles promoted by the World Trade Organization (WTO). On February 1, 2025, President Trump announced the imposition of new tariffs on three countries. As per the announcement, from February 4, imports from Canada and Mexico will face a 25 percent tariff while those from China will face a 10 percent tariff in the US. This policy shift has significant implications not only for economic growth and income distribution in these countries, but also for global trade and the US economy. Meanwhile, Canada and Mexico have promised to impose retaliatory tariffs on the import of US products to their respective countries. China, on the other hand, has announced to file a case against the US at the WTO.

As a trade partner of the US, there are apprehensions as to how Bangladesh may experience the impact of such trade measures. The impact of Trump's tariff imposition on certain countries could have ripple effects on others in various ways.

First, the introduction of these tariffs is poised to disrupt established trade flows. Canada and Mexico, being the US's immediate neighbours and key trading partners, are particularly vulnerable. In 2023, Canada's exports to the US made up 78 percent of its total exports, while Mexico's were 80 percent. The 25 percent tariff imposition could lead to a significant reduction in their export volumes. China will also be affected, but it may be less than that on Canada and Mexico since China may be able to mitigate the impact due to its diversified export markets. In 2023, Chinese exports to the US stood at 15 percent of total exports, while 85 percent was to the rest of the world. Besides, the share of trade in Chinese economy has reduced since the early 2000s, which now accounts for about 37 percent of its GDP compared to over 60 percent in the early 2000s.

Second, the tariffs are expected to have contractionary effects on Canada's and Mexico's economies. Since they rely heavily on the US market, the

increased costs of their goods may lead to reduced demand, factory closures, and job losses. Estimates indicate that Canada's economy could contract by 2.26 percent annually. As a result, over a million jobs could be at risk, particularly in the automotive and oil sectors.

In Mexico, the automotive and agricultural sectors are likely to be hit the hardest. The tariffs may lead to a reduction of economic growth by two percentage points. The automobile

and businesses may face higher prices for imported goods. Higher production costs would push businesses either to absorb the increased costs or pass them on to consumers, creating inflationary pressures. Consumers could face increased prices for a range of products, including automobiles, electronics, and agricultural products.

Industries that rely on imported components, such as automotive and electronics manufacturing, could see increased production costs, potentially leading to higher consumer prices and reduced competitiveness. It has been estimated that these tariffs could shrink US economic output by 0.4 percent and increase taxes by \$1.2 trillion between 2025 and 2034. The estimated job losses due to such tariffs on the three countries could be 344,000. Another estimate suggests that the new tariffs will lower the incomes of US citizens from all income groups—ranging from

challenges and opportunities as the US is a significant export destination, particularly for apparel products. The tariffs on China could make Bangladeshi goods more competitive in the US market, potentially leading to increased export orders. During the first tenure of the Trump administration, Bangladesh enjoyed a similar spillover effect of the tariff imposed on China. Therefore, it is critical to review the implications for Bangladesh's trade with the US, though Bangladesh is not directly targeted by the new tariffs. As US importers seek alternatives to higher-cost goods due to the recent tariff hike, Bangladesh may find opportunities to increase its exports to the US, particularly in the textile and apparel sectors.

However, there will be competition from other countries that are also aiming to fill the gap left by Canada, Mexico, and China. On the other hand, any global economic slowdown



On February 1, 2025, President Donald Trump announced the imposition of new tariffs on China, Canada and Mexico.

industry of Mexico is a large source of employment where more than one million people are employed. The tariff could lead to factory shutdowns and significant layoffs. The reduction in export revenue may also strain public finances and affect social programmes and income distribution.

Third, the US tariff imposition on these countries could also impact its own economy. While higher tariff is imposed to protect domestic industries, reduce trade deficits, increase tax revenue and protect jobs, consumers

about four percent income reduction for the poorest fifth (poorest 20 percent) to about two percent reduction for the wealthiest fifth (richest 20 percent). Businesses that rely on imported raw materials and components may see increased production costs, which could lead to reduced profit margins, layoffs or relocation of production facilities. The uncertainty surrounding trade policies may also deter investment and disrupt supply chains.

For countries like Bangladesh, these developments present both

resulting from the tariffs could reduce the overall demand for Bangladeshi exports. To benefit from any possible trade opportunities and sustain growth, Bangladesh needs to strengthen its trade policies, enhance production efficiency, and diversify its export base in an evolving global trade landscape. Therefore, policymakers must work to mitigate potential risks associated with shifting global trade dynamics and seize the evolved opportunities from changes in the tariff regimes of important global trade players.

WORLD CANCER DAY

We need a national cancer registry



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JAVED IQBAL

Cancer poses an increasing and damaging public health challenge in Bangladesh, necessitating improved methods for understanding and combating the disease. Although there are several existing hospital-based registries, including the one at the National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital (NICRH), Bangladesh lacks a centralised or national cancer registry.

Broadly, registries are of two types: hospital-based and centralised or national registries. A hospital-based cancer registry (HBCR) collects cancer data from a specific hospital or network of hospitals. Ideally, it focuses on detailed clinical information about patients treated there, aiming to improve care and support local research. However, the data does not represent the broader population, and maintaining the registry can require significant resources.

In contrast, a national cancer registry (NCR) gathers cancer data from multiple healthcare facilities across the country. This registry provides a comprehensive view of cancer trends and helps in public health planning. Although it may lack the detailed clinical data found in HBCRs, it offers insights into national patterns. However, both registries serve important but different roles in cancer management and research.

The NICRH started a hospital

based registry in 2015. According to its report, patients with late-stage diagnoses are the majority, with 77 percent untreated before reaching the institute. The report highlights regional disparities in access to cancer care. However, lack of a comprehensive population-based cancer registry limits expansive national insights. This significantly hampers our ability to identify cancer incidence, prevalent types, and mortality rates across the country. A national registry would enable healthcare professionals and policymakers to gather critical data on patient demographics, cancer diagnoses, treatment details, and geographic distribution. This information is vital for planning effective prevention strategies, early detection initiatives, and tailored treatment options. Understanding cancer trends would also help identify high-risk populations and regions that require targeted interventions.

However, there are challenges to implementing an NCR. Financial constraints and inadequate healthcare infrastructure can hinder both the establishment and maintenance of an effective registry. Besides, variability in reporting methods across healthcare facilities and a lack of trained personnel can lead to inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the data. Also, since access to healthcare services varies significantly between urban and rural

areas, it may result in underreporting of cases in less accessible regions. Cultural stigma associated with cancer, along with limited awareness about the importance of cancer registration, may also deter individuals from participating in the registry. Thus, it is critical to ensure the confidentiality and security of sensitive health information and build public trust in the system.

We can take lessons from Sri Lanka's National Cancer Registry (NCR), established in 1985. It is considered one of the most successful cancer registries among developing countries. Besides, Sri Lanka faces challenges similar to Bangladesh's, such as limited resources, inadequate healthcare infrastructure, and cultural stigma associated with cancer, as well as a high burden of cancer with a significant proportion of cases being diagnosed at an advanced stage.

Key differences between the two countries include Sri Lanka's strong government commitment to cancer control, high data quality and standardisation, strong partnerships with international organisations, public awareness and education initiatives, and long-term sustainability of measures. Bangladesh can learn from Sri Lanka's example by prioritising cancer control, allocating sufficient resources to the registry, improving data quality, establishing partnerships, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of programmes.

Securing strong government support and establishing a clear policy framework are essential first steps. Building partnerships with NGOs and international organisations can provide both technical assistance and funding, while utilising technology for data collection can streamline processes and enhance

accuracy. Additionally, implementing training programmes for healthcare professionals and conducting public awareness campaigns can promote the registry's importance and encouraging participation.

Since establishing and maintaining a national cancer registry requires significant funding, Bangladesh can explore several funding models to ensure the long-term viability of the registry. These models can ensure a sustainable and robust NCR that supports cancer control and patient outcomes in the country. First, government funding through allocating a dedicated budget for the NCR can ensure a stable funding source for the registry's operations and development. Second, collaboration with international organisations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), to secure funding and technical assistance can be explored. Third, applying for research grants from local and international funding agencies can be an option to support specific projects and initiatives within the registry. Lastly, a cost-recovery model can be implemented, such as charging for data analysis and research services, to generate revenue and support the registry's operations.

Establishing a national cancer registry is crucial for advancing cancer control in Bangladesh. While challenges are considerable, the potential benefits for public health are significant. By investing in this system, Bangladesh can improve its understanding of cancer incidence, enhance treatment outcomes, remove the vast disparity in cancer management, and ultimately save numerous lives. A well-implemented registry will not only contribute to better cancer care but also foster a healthier future for the nation.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Facebook launched

On this day in 2004, Mark Zuckerberg launched Facebook, with membership initially restricted to students of Harvard College. It opened to everyone at least 13 years old in 2006.

To solve the Rohingya crisis, we must address its root causes



Dr Mohammad Zaman is a development and resettlement specialist. He is editor, with co editors Robert Anderson and Kawser Ahmed, of *'The Rohingya Stories: History and Geopolitics in a Multipolar World'* (forthcoming, Springer, 2025).

MOHAMMAD ZAMAN

The Rohingya crisis continues to mystify everyone with its uncertainties. In 2017, close to a million Rohingya people took refuge in Bangladesh over a period of only one month after a most brutal genocide and violent exodus in recent history. The influx of refugees continued in October-December 2024 due to the rise in armed conflicts between various armed groups and the military junta, as well as the impacts of the long-running brutal civil war inside Myanmar. Amid this, the Rohingya in Cox's Bazar refugee camps still hope to return to their homes in northern Rakhine—their old heartland in Myanmar.

The renewed violence has worsened the already precarious situation in Cox's Bazar camps. Last year alone, according to one source, armed groups such as the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), the Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO), and the Arakan Army (AA) recruited an estimated 5,000 men from the camps in Cox's Bazar to fight against the Myanmar military. The radicalisation inside the camps, the increase in criminal gang activities, the targeted killing of camp leaders by opposing militant groups, and the continued cycle of violence have led to a significant deterioration of safety among the Rohingya refugees. To add to this, the renewed fighting between these armed rebel groups and the Myanmar junta has further pushed back any potential repatriation plan due to the lack of peace and stability inside Myanmar.

Given this situation, can we ever find a viable solution to the Rohingya crisis? Is there any pathway to resolve the crisis with accountability and justice for all? And who will find it?

To do this, we need to look back and understand Rohingya history. The armed struggles inside Myanmar and the demand

for Rohingya autonomy and rights clearly establish that the crisis is not just a current humanitarian issue but also a political one, long rooted in Arakan's history. In recent weeks, the AA has taken full control of 14 out of 17 townships, including Maungdaw near Teknaf, from the Myanmar military junta. Armed fighting still continues to capture the remaining government-held territories in Rakhine. In the process, many coerced Rohingya conscripts to the Myanmar Army have been killed or captured, further entangling the displaced people in a war they did not initiate. Any resolution of the crisis must understand and address both the political and humanitarian aspects.

Many people tend to think that the Rohingya crisis is a 21st century issue. On the contrary, it encapsulates centuries of historical marginalisation, ethnic conflict, and geopolitical intricacies. The Rohingya have a 200-year history, starting from the violent occupation of the Arakan dynasty in 1784, which gradually evolved during the pre- and post-colonial periods in Burma. Their identity has been under sustained attack by the military and the Buddhist civilian majority through genocidal campaigns aimed at erasing their shared history and culture over the years. The 1974 constitution and the census that preceded it marked the clearest breaking point when "Rohingya" was replaced with "Indian or Pakistani" and later by "Bengali" among "non-indigenous or foreign races." This was followed by the adoption of the discriminatory Citizenship Act of 1982. The decades of brutal oppression that followed forced many Rohingya to flee the country over the past 40 years. Today, four out of every five Rohingya live as refugees in countries across the region and around the world. Those still inside Myanmar are

in camps in Buthidaung and Maungdaw or under military surveillance.

The magnitude and duration of this crisis require a comprehensive understanding of the underlying causes, an assessment of humanitarian interventions, and an examination of avenues for justice and reconciliation. Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the regional and international communities must address the root causes of the Myanmar crisis,

undermines the rule of law and the rights of the people recognised by international bodies and conventions for refugee populations. International sanctions and other measures by Canada, the US, the EU, and others against the Myanmar military junta have failed to deliver the intended outcomes.

Many international rights groups, including Amnesty International, have long demanded that the top generals in the

meeting held in Bangkok in December 2024, attended by foreign ministers and senior officials from Bangladesh, Myanmar, India, China, Laos, and Cambodia to review the current situation in Myanmar, leading to a global conference on the Rohingya later this year. As evident from occasional dialogues and visits by army officials, Bangladesh's interim government is focused on repatriation as the primary solution, including creating a "safe zone" for the Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine state under UN supervision. This approach will be doomed without due attention to the absence of rights, including citizenship rights and the need for return with dignity and honor. The Bangladesh government is also trying to maintain informal contacts with the AA for potential support and resolution of the crisis, which should be encouraged and quietly expanded.

While the repatriation of refugees is urgently needed to reduce the long-endured burden on Bangladesh, the government should work more closely with countries having significant influence on Myanmar—for instance, India, China, Korea, Singapore, and Japan—to apply pressure to ensure accountability and to provide local autonomy for the Rohingya in the Rakhine state, aimed at creating conditions for their return with dignity and rights. The US government should also support efforts to hold Myanmar's military leaders accountable through the ICC. The second Trump administration has an opportunity to reflect on its past policies and take bold steps towards a more just and lasting solution. The Rohingya crisis and displacement should be of concern due to the strategic security interests of the US in the Southeast Asia region.

What is required now is to keep the global focus alive on the Rohingya crisis to find a durable solution. The international community must also increase humanitarian aid and assistance to support the refugees and improve living conditions and rights in the refugee camps in Bangladesh. The Rohingya people have been waiting and watching the indifference and inaction of the world for years. They are hoping for an early, safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation.



The world seems to have forgotten the Rohingya people and their persistent suffering in Myanmar.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

including the long-standing discrimination and statelessness faced by the Rohingya. Any measures short of that would not be sufficient to resolve the crisis and facilitate the return of the Rohingya to their homeland.

The world seems to have forgotten the Rohingya people and their crisis. The terrible genocide and ethnic cleansing happened in 2017, coincidentally the year US President Donald Trump took office for the first time. It is now the ninth year of this conflict, resulting from long-running battles between the Myanmar military and the anti-regime AA and other armed groups. The Myanmar military's continued violence grossly

Myanmar army be investigated for their roles in the genocides committed against the Rohingya and the people of Myanmar. The recent International Criminal Court (ICC) ruling for an arrest warrant for General Min Aung Hlaing, based on the historic case brought by The Gambia, seems to have had no traction at all. If the international community, including the US, is serious about resolving the Rohingya crisis, it should move beyond statements and sanctions. Myanmar generals must be held accountable for the Rohingya genocide, but who will make that call?

The regional implications of the crisis are already evident from the recent emergency

Can pluralism replace secularism in Bangladesh?



Md Abbas is a journalist at The Daily Star. He can be reached at md.abbas@thedadlystar.net.

MD ABBAS

The proposal to replace secularism with pluralism in Bangladesh's constitution has sparked significant debate, touching on issues of governance, social harmony, and the state's commitment to equality. While pluralism as a concept offers a promising framework for fostering inclusivity and mutual respect in a diverse society, the practical implications of this shift warrant careful scrutiny. Without clear and enforceable measures, such a transition could jeopardise the country's religious harmony and undermine the principles of equality that have long been embedded in its constitutional framework.

Pluralism, by definition, emphasises the recognition and celebration of diversity, promoting coexistence among different religious, cultural and ethnic communities. In a country like Bangladesh, where multiple religions and cultures coexist, the adoption of pluralism could theoretically enhance social cohesion and inclusivity. It acknowledges the diversity of the nation and seeks to create a society where all groups feel respected and represented. Unlike secularism, which often connotes a strict separation of religion and state functions, pluralism actively embraces the presence of diverse beliefs and traditions within the public sphere. This could pave the way for policies and practices that reflect the multicultural realities of Bangladesh, strengthening the social fabric and fostering a sense of belonging among all citizens.

However, this vision of pluralism faces significant challenges in the context of Bangladesh. One issue is the constitutional recognition of Islam as the state religion. While this provision reflects the demographic reality of Bangladesh, where the majority of the population identifies as Muslim, it creates an inherent contradiction with the principles of pluralism. Pluralism requires

equal respect and treatment for all religions, yet the designation of a state religion can be perceived as privileging one faith over others. This tension risks alienating religious minorities and undermining the very inclusivity that pluralism seeks to promote.

Bangladesh's historical context further complicates the matter. The principle of secularism was enshrined in the country's constitution in the aftermath of the Liberation War, reflecting a commitment to religious equality

safeguards and robust enforcement mechanisms, pluralism could become a vague idea rather than a practical reality. Ambiguity might allow the majority group to dominate the narrative, marginalising minorities under the guise of promoting diversity. For instance, policies or practices that ostensibly celebrate cultural diversity could end up favouring the majority religion or culture, perpetuating existing inequalities. Such outcomes would not only undermine the principles of pluralism, but also exacerbate social tensions and distrust among different communities.

Education and awareness are crucial to addressing these challenges. Schools and educational institutions should play a central role in promoting pluralistic values, challenging prejudices, and fostering empathy among students from an early age. By emphasising the importance of coexistence and

including independent institutions to investigate and address grievances. Moreover, the judiciary and law enforcement agencies must be trained to uphold these principles impartially, ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their background, can access justice and feel protected by the state.

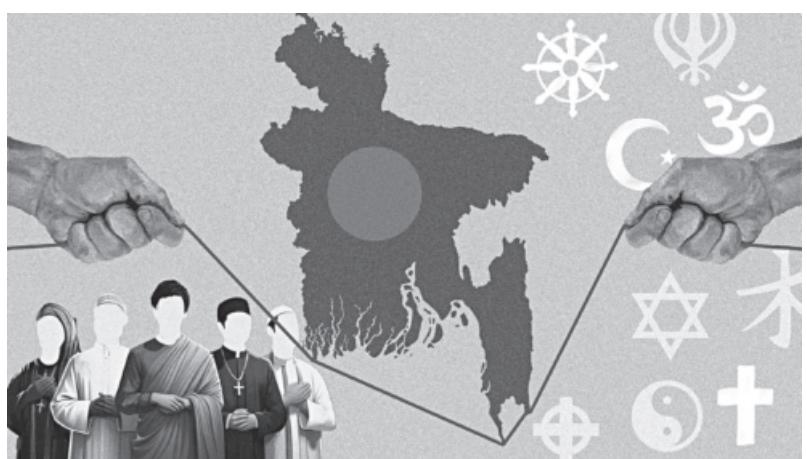
Equitable representation is another critical aspect of pluralism. To truly reflect the diversity of Bangladesh, minorities must be adequately represented in political institutions, public services, and decision-making processes. This includes not only ensuring their presence but also creating an environment where their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed. Such representation can help bridge divides, foster trust, and promote policies that benefit all communities. However, achieving this requires a sustained commitment to affirmative action and other measures

that address structural inequalities. Pluralism requires equal respect and treatment for all religions, yet the designation of a state religion can be perceived as privileging one faith over others. This tension risks alienating religious minorities and undermining the very inclusivity that pluralism seeks to promote.

The success of pluralism also hinges on the protection of religious freedom, which entails not only the right to practise and propagate one's religion but also the freedom

to celebrate cultural traditions and beliefs without fear of discrimination or persecution. Bangladesh's commitment to international human rights standards provides a framework for upholding these principles, but their implementation requires political will and societal support. Public awareness campaigns, community dialogues, and other initiatives can help build consensus around the importance of religious freedom and its role in fostering a harmonious society.

Despite its potential benefits, replacing secularism with pluralism poses significant risks if not accompanied by clear and enforceable measures. Having a state religion, in particular, presents a paradox. Without addressing this issue, the transition risks becoming a symbolic gesture, rather than a transformative change.



and freedom. This ethos was seen as a rejection of the communalism that had plagued the region during the Partition. Over the years, secularism has been regarded by many as a cornerstone of Bangladesh's national identity, symbolising the aspiration to rise above religious divisions and ensure equal rights for all citizens. Replacing secularism with pluralism could therefore be perceived as a departure from this foundational principle, potentially alienating segments of society who view secularism as integral to the nation's identity.

A strong legal framework is also essential for ensuring that pluralism translates into tangible protection for all citizens. Anti-discrimination laws must be strengthened to address inequalities and prevent hate speech, violence or other forms of bias based on religion, ethnicity or culture. These laws must be complemented by mechanisms for their effective enforcement,

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e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders are invited through the national e-GP portal for the following procurement of works/goods.

e-Tender ID	Name of Works	Closing & Opening Date & Time	Procuring Entity/ Contact Persons
1067265	Supply of Desktop Computer and Other Accessories for Different Grid S/S and office under Grid North-1 and Grid North-2, DPDC.	17-Feb-2025 12:00 Noon	(Engr. Md. Mominul Islam) Superintending Engineer Grid O&M Circle (North), DPDC. 3, Sonargaon Road, Dhaka-1000 Phone: +880258616335 Email: segn@dpdc.gov.bd
1068249	Supply of Uniforms & Liveries for Technical Staff under Grid North-1, DPDC.	17-Feb-2025 12:00 Noon	
1068893	Procurement of Uniforms & Liveries for Technical staff under Grid North-2, DPDC.	18-Feb-2025 12:00 Noon	
1069711	Repair and Maintenance of Cooling Fan Motor and breaker Charging Motor at Different Sub-Stations under Grid North-1, DPDC.	18-Feb-2025 12:00 Noon	

The interested persons/firms/organizations may visit website (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) to get the details.

DGM (HR) Public Relations, DPDC

Are You Taking the Right Steps TO PREVENT CANCER?

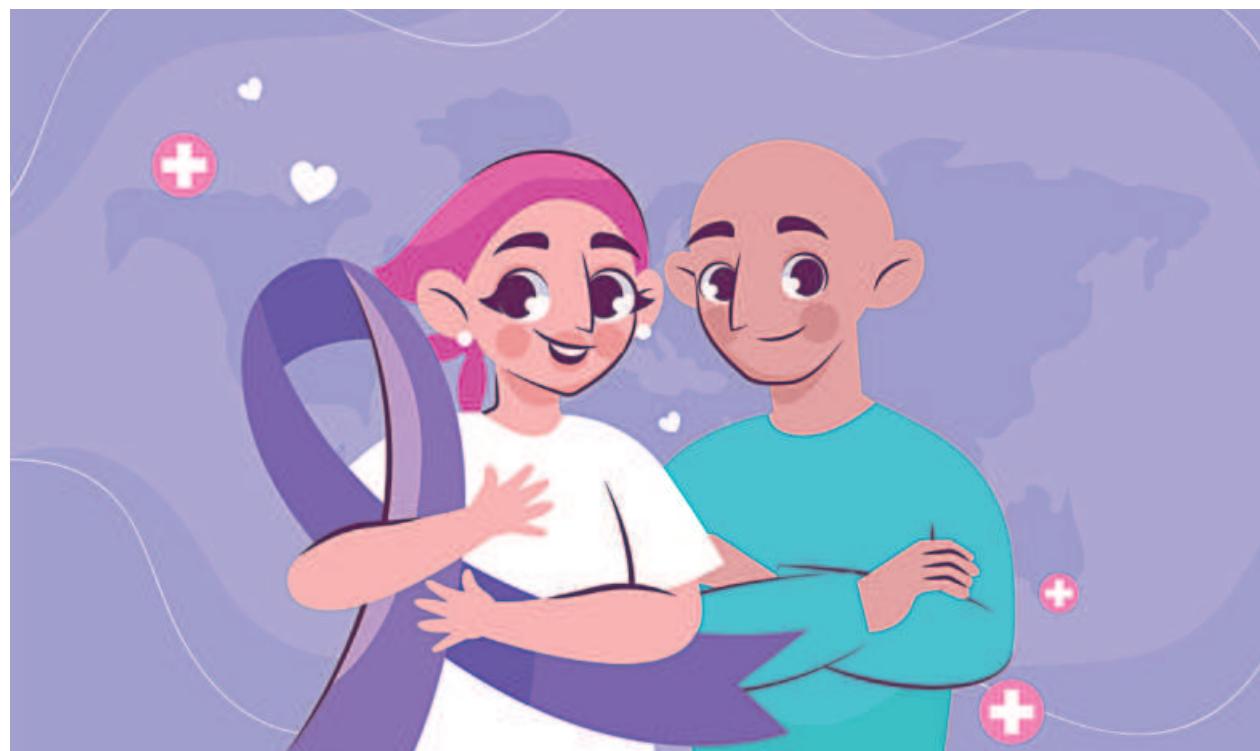
Cancer prevention begins with awareness and action. However, for those already battling cancer, timely diagnosis, treatment, and emotional support are just as crucial.

SAMIA HUDA

Cancer is a growing health concern in Bangladesh, with rising cases of various types such as lung, breast, cervical, and oral cancers. While genetic factors and environmental exposures play a role, lifestyle choices significantly influence cancer risk. On World Cancer Day, it is crucial to raise awareness about how simple changes in daily habits can help prevent cancer and improve overall health. Here are some practical steps Bangladeshis can take to reduce their risk of cancer.

Quit Tobacco Use

Tobacco is one of the leading causes of cancer worldwide, responsible for lung, oral, throat, and other cancers. In Bangladesh, the use of cigarettes, bidis, and smokeless tobacco like zarda and gul is widespread. Quitting tobacco is the single most effective way to reduce cancer risk. If you or someone you know uses tobacco, seek support from healthcare providers, counselling services, or cessation programmes. Avoiding second-hand smoke is equally important.



**World
Cancer Day
4 February**

Adopt a Healthy Diet

A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can significantly lower cancer risk. Processed and red meats, on the other hand, are linked to colorectal and stomach cancers. Traditional Bangladeshi diets, which often include rice, fish, lentils, and vegetables, are already a good foundation. However, reducing the consumption of fried foods, sugary snacks, and processed

items is essential. Incorporate more colourful fruits and vegetables like carrots, spinach, tomatoes, and oranges, as they are packed with antioxidants that protect cells from damage.

Maintain a Healthy Weight

Obesity is a risk factor for several cancers, including breast, colorectal, and pancreatic cancers. In Bangladesh, urbanisation and changing dietary habits have led to an increase in obesity rates. Regular physical activity, such as walking, cycling, or playing sports, can help maintain a healthy weight. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise daily. Even small changes, like taking the stairs instead of the lift, can make a difference.

Avoid Alcohol Consumption

Alcohol is a known carcinogen linked to cancers of the liver, mouth, throat, and breast. While alcohol consumption is

relatively low in Bangladesh compared to other countries, it is still important to limit intake or avoid it altogether.

Protect Yourself from Infections

Certain infections, such as human papillomavirus (HPV) and hepatitis B and C, can increase cancer risk. Vaccines are available to protect against these infections. For example, the HPV vaccine can prevent cervical cancer, while the hepatitis B vaccine reduces the risk of liver cancer. Ensure that you and your family are up-to-date on vaccinations and practice safe hygiene to avoid infections.

Practice Safe Sun Exposure

Skin cancer, though less common in Bangladesh, can still occur due to prolonged exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays. When spending time outdoors, especially during peak sunlight hours, use sunscreen with an SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of at least 30, wear

protective clothing, and seek shade whenever possible.

Properly Washing Fruits and Vegetables

In Bangladesh, fruits and vegetables are often treated with insecticides and preservatives, making proper cleaning essential. Washing them under running water helps remove surface residues, but additional methods can enhance safety. One effective technique is soaking produce in a vinegar-water solution (one teaspoon of white vinegar per bowl of water) for 20 minutes before rinsing thoroughly. Alternatively, scrubbing with baking soda or using salt water can help remove chemicals. Peeling certain fruits and vegetables also reduces exposure. Adopting these simple practices ensures cleaner, safer food, reducing the risk of consuming harmful residues while maintaining nutritional benefits.

Reduce Exposure to Environmental Carcinogens

Air pollution, contaminated water, and exposure to industrial chemicals are significant concerns in Bangladesh. While individual control over environmental factors may be limited, small steps can help. Use water filters to ensure safe drinking water, avoid burning waste, and advocate for cleaner industrial practices. Supporting policies that reduce pollution can also have a long-term impact on public health.

Regular Health Check-ups and Screenings

Early detection saves lives. Regular health check-ups and cancer screenings can identify precancerous conditions or cancer at an early stage when treatment is most effective. Women should undergo regular Pap smears for cervical cancer and mammograms for breast cancer, while men should be aware of prostate cancer risks. Consult your healthcare provider to determine the appropriate screening schedule based on your age and family history.

Promote Mental and Emotional Well-being

Chronic stress and poor mental health can weaken the immune system, potentially increasing cancer risk. Practice stress management techniques such as prayer, meditation, yoga, or spending time with loved ones. Building a strong support system and seeking professional help when needed can improve overall well-being.

Cancer prevention begins with awareness and action. However, for those already battling cancer, timely diagnosis, treatment, and emotional support are just as crucial. The new World Cancer Day theme 2025-2027, "United by Unique," places people at the centre of care and their stories at the heart of the conversation. This reminds us that cancer prevention and treatment must be approached with both science and empathy. Together, through awareness and collective action, we can create a healthier, cancer-free future.

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Rangpur defeat highlights plight of franchise T20 cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

In less than 24 hours, West Indies all-rounder Andre Russell played two matches for two different teams in two different leagues, underperformed and lost both games and saw his team get eliminated from both leagues.

Russell was plying his trade for Abu Dhabi Knight Riders in Dubai's ILT20 till Sunday night before he hopped on a flight and joined the Rangpur Riders in Dhaka mere hours before their crucial eliminator match against Khulna Tigers in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) yesterday.

Rangpur had also drafted in Australia's Tim David and England's James Vince, who were playing for Gulf Warriorz in the ILT20, alongside Russell for the knockout fixture.

But these last-minute inclusions did not work out for Rangpur as Russell, who was out for a first-ball duck the previous night in Dubai, could make just four off nine balls in Dhaka while David (eight) and Vince (one) also did not fare any better.

The three new recruits could not cope with the spin challenge served up by Khulna through captain Mehedi Hasan Miraz, Nasum Ahmed and Pakistan's Mohammad Nawaz and Rangpur lost the match by nine wickets.

At first glance, it seems that failure to acclimatise with the condition was the primary reason behind the trio's poor scores. However, Rangpur's assistant coach Mohammad Ashraful did not concur.



In less than 24 hours, West Indies all-rounder Andre Russell played two matches for two different teams in two different leagues, underperformed and lost both games and saw his team get eliminated from both leagues.

PHOTO: STAR

"They arrived in business class so there shouldn't be a problem with that and the weather too is not very different from Dubai. But they [only Russell] had played last night, that might

have been an issue. But they are professional cricketers. I don't think it [acclimatisation] was a big issue," Ashraful said.

Teams flying in marquee overseas players for the knockout

stage is nothing new in BPL. In fact, Rangpur's opponents Khulna did the same thing as they also brought in the West Indian duo of Jason Holder and Shimron Hetmyer, also

from the ILT20, right before the eliminator.

All of Rangpur and Khulna's newest recruits arrived after their respective sides got ousted in the ILT20. Players hopping from one league to another like this has become the norm in the current landscape of franchise cricket. The mushrooming of franchise leagues is offering opportunities to players to represent different teams in different leagues in a matter of days and in Russell's case, it was less than a day.

Because of this, franchises, especially in BPL, have to always be on the look out for replacements, plan ahead of time about who they can bring in at what point. Meanwhile, fans struggle to form a connection with the players who are here one day and gone the next.

According to Ashraful, losing a settled overseas star like Pakistan's Khushdil Shah, who left the side for national duty, and not finding his ideal replacement cost them against Khulna. The former Bangladesh captain also suggested that drafting in players only for the playoffs is not ideal.

"In England, you need to play three league-stage matches to be permitted to play knockout matches. We don't have any such rule in the BPL. Players can arrive on the day of the match and play. It is not ideal... When you don't spend two-three days with the team, it's difficult to even recognise your teammates."

Rajshahi start settling dues after owner interrogated

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Premier League (BPL)'s newest franchise Durbar Rajshahi has started to clear the remaining payments of their local players, as promised by their owner, Md Shafiq Rahman, following his interrogation by law enforcement agencies.

According to a Rajshahi official, 14 of their local players received 25 percent of their payment in cash yesterday, bringing their total payments for this edition of the BPL to 50 percent. They had previously received 25 percent during the Chattogram phase of the tournament.

However, the official also confirmed to The Daily Star that Rajshahi's support staff did not receive any payment yesterday and were told they would be paid 50 percent of their promised amount on February 7 and 10 through a banking channel.

When a few Rajshahi players were contacted to verify the payments, they confirmed the matter.

Earlier in the day, the Ministry of Youth and Sports issued a press release stating that Rajshahi owner Shafiq was taken into custody and interrogated by law enforcement agencies in the early hours of Monday.

According to the release, the Rajshahi owner had previously discussed the issue with sports adviser Asif Mahmud, during which he assured that 50 percent of the payments would be completed by February 2.

However, after failing to honour his commitment and with rumours circulating that Shafiq might flee, the government intervened, leading to his interrogation.

"He [Shafiq] accepted his fault and promised to clear all dues [by February 10]... Otherwise, necessary legal actions will be taken against him," stated the press release.

On the field, Rajshahi narrowly missed out on a playoff place, finishing fifth in the points table after the league phase.

Mamun named national hockey coach

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) yesterday appointed Mamun Ur Rashid as head coach of national team for April's AHF Cup in Indonesia.

A former national player, Mamun previously coached the team in the 2015 World Hockey League's second round in Singapore, and has also worked with the U-21 and U-23 teams.

Mamun aims to guide Bangladesh to another AHF Cup title, a tournament they have traditionally won.

Meanwhile, Moshirul Rahman Biplob has been named assistant coach, and Alamgir Islam will serve as trainer. The preparation camp begins after a fitness test on February 20, with over 50 players participating.

Arsenal still in title mix after thumping City



AGENCIES

Arsenal blew Manchester City away with a 5-1 thrashing at home on Sunday to send a statement to Liverpool that the Premier League title race is still far from over.

The win over the reigning champions, courtesy of goals from Martin Ødegaard, Thomas Partey, Kai Havertz, Myles Lewis Skelly and Ethan Nwaneri, cut down their deficit with league-leaders Liverpool to six points. Arsenal are now 14 games unbeaten in the league and have 50 points from 24 games, while Manchester City, whose six-game unbeaten run ended, are a distant fourth with 41.

It was a day to savour for Arsenal against the side that has denied them the title in each of the past two seasons as it was lit up by goals from academy graduates Lewis Skelly and Nwaneri.

The teenagers became the youngest players to score in the Premier League against the reigning champions since Wayne Rooney announced his arrival for Everton against Arsenal in 2003.

Lewis Skelly would have been banned had his controversial red card against Wolves last weekend not been rescinded.

The left-back made the most of that reprieve with a barnstorming performance that was capped by his first goal for the club. He rounded it off with a coksure celebration as he mimicked City striker Erling Haaland's trademark meditation pose.

Nwaneri completed the rout with his seventh goal of the season and is thriving in the extra minutes offered by Bukayo Saka's injury layoff.

"It is a great day for us, especially with the necessity that we had to win

After going 15 Premier League games against City without a win, Arsenal are now unbeaten in their last four against the Citizens (W2, D2).

City have suffered their heaviest defeat in a Premier League away game since losing 4-0 to Everton in January 2017, while Arsenal have recorded their biggest-ever win in the competition against the reigning champions.

City have conceded 4+ goals in a game for the fourth time this season, which is now the most times in a single campaign in Pep Guardiola's managerial career. The Citizens have conceded 53 goals in 36 games in all competitions so far this season, only one fewer than in 59 matches last season (54).

Pep Guardiola's side have committed eight errors leading to goals in the Premier League this season, their outright most in a campaign under the Spaniard.

the game. The manner that we have done it I am really pleased," Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta said after the match.

"Overall, we scored some beautiful goals and the team showed a high competitive level."

WOMEN BOOTERS' BOYCOTT

BKSP director stresses 'discipline'

SPORTS REPORTER

Amid an ongoing player-coach dispute, Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protishtan (BKSP) director Brigadier General Md Munirul Islam visited Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday to meet members of the national women's team.

His visit came as 18 footballers continued their protest against head coach Peter Butler, demanding the Englishman's removal. Of the 30 players in camp, eight are current BKSP students – three of whom are boycotting training.

"I have been seeing in the media that members of the national women's team are raising some issues. We have many players in this squad, including former BKSP students, so I felt the need to come here and understand their concerns as their BKSP guardian," Islam said after meeting players at the BFF dormitory.

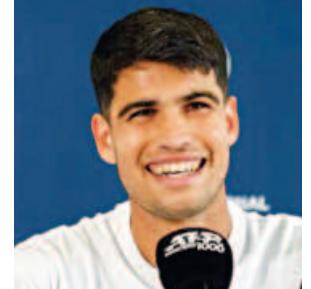
"I just expressed my feelings, not recommendations, because the BFF will take care of the matter. The players have their own perspectives, but they also want to perform well in the UAE matches [in February-March]. I learned from them and guided them because discipline is the foremost requirement in any sport," he added.

Meanwhile, a seven-member BFF Special Committee continued its efforts to achieve a resolution in the matter yesterday, interviewing the remaining 11 of the 18 boycotting footballers.

A Special Committee member, requesting anonymity, told The Daily Star, "Those [boycotting] players have another worry – losing their central contracts with the BFF; which although had ended in October [last year]."

"Jannik [Sinner] is the best right now. He has lost only four or five matches in the past year, so it's crazy. I know people say who's better out of us. They say Jannik is better or some say me. It's all discussion. But for me, I think for a tennis player, we have to face Jannik and he's winning everything."

CARLOS ALCARAZ



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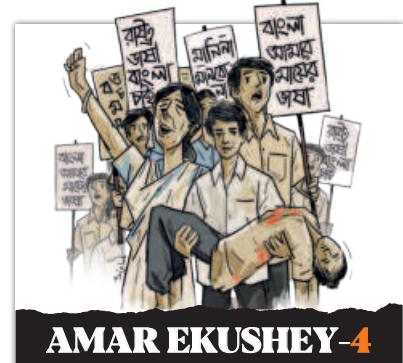
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Language Movement in Pabna

AHMAD ISTIAK

During the 1948 1952 Language Movement, the people of Pabna defied the authority's oppressive measures and fought to recognise their mother tongue.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1



Enam Ahmed Chowdhury passes away

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Sylhet

Former chairman of the Privatization Commission and retired secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury passed away at his residence in Dhaka yesterday afternoon. He was 88.

He was suffering from old age complications and suddenly fell sick, said his son Nadeem Chowdhury.

Critically ill, he was rushed to a nearby hospital around 4:30pm where the doctors declared him dead," he said.

Chowdhury's namaz-e-janaza will be held after his daughter reaches Bangladesh from abroad on February 5.

He will be laid to rest at Azimpur Graveyard, Nadeem added.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5



Devotees gather to perform religious rituals and visit the pandals around the playground of Dhaka University's Jagannath Hall, where the most decorative and gorgeous celebration of Saraswati Puja is usually held. Saraswati Puja, the worship of the goddess of knowledge, music, art, and culture, was celebrated across the country yesterday amid festivity and religious fervour.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

No radiotherapy at lone cancer hospital for 44 days

A new machine likely to be put into operation today

AHMED DEEPTO

All six radiotherapy machines of the National Institute of Cancer Research & Hospital (NICRH) have been out of order for the last 44 days, depriving more than 10,000 cancer patients of their scheduled therapy.

Amid this sorry state of radiotherapy at the country's lone full-fledged cancer treatment facility, Bangladesh is set to observe World Cancer Day today.

The exact number of people suffering from cancer in Bangladesh is hard to get as there is no official data.

However, according to the population-based cancer registry by the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU)'s Department of Public Health and Informatics, the prevalence of cancer in Bangladesh is 106 cases per 100,000 population.

A recent study by the BSMMU revealed that 53 new cases are reported per 100,000 people every year and cancer is responsible for 11.9 percent of all deaths in Bangladesh annually.

During a visit to the NICRH yesterday morning, cleaners and staff were seen cleaning floors and doing paint touch-ups ahead of the cancer day event.

A notice was seen in the radiotherapy department announcing that the machines were out of order. There was no mention of when they might be operational and patients were told they would be contacted later when the machines start working again.

Of the six, two medical Linear Accelerators (LINACs), the device most commonly used for external beam radiation treatments for cancer patients, became non-

**WORLD
CANCER DAY
FEBRUARY 04**

SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

ZYMA ISLAM

As the Bangladeshi embassy in Libya struggles to identify the bodies of the 23 migrants who have washed ashore in the northern part of the country, families back home are desperately searching for their missing loved ones.

Some of the families have identified the bodies from photos that have been circulating among Libya-based migrant worker support groups.

For example, Palash Miah's body was identified by his family from a photo that was posted. The man from Narshingdi's Shibpur was about 20 years old.

SM Robin Islam, a family friend of Palash, spoke to The Daily Star by phone to describe the last few minutes before the boat capsized last week.

Robin and Palash's brothers are both migrants living in Saudi Arabia, and both have been following the events closely.

"There were three survivors aboard the boat. One of them spoke to my roommate [Palash's brother] when he was searching for Palash. He said that when the boat was sinking, the boatman urged them all to jump into the sea. Most of the migrants stayed back on the boat while three jumped and began swimming towards the shore," said Robin.

Two of the men got ahead of the other and made it to shore. They swam for about eight hours. They are now in hiding and waiting to be smuggled from Libya into Europe via the Mediterranean Sea, he said.

"To our knowledge, there were 22 Bangladeshi nationals on board and some other nationalities."

-An NGO spokesperson

The families also said two boats left the shores of northern Libya at the same time in the early hours of January 25. One capsized, and the bodies of 23 of those on board have washed ashore, while the rest remain missing.

Some of the families said that the other boat reached Europe.

The other boat, presumably, was rescued off the coast of Malta by the NGO Alarm Phone on January 29, according to posts made on X (formerly Twitter) by the NGO.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Barishal bully Chittagong, Khulna knock out Rangpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defending champions Fortune Barishal upstaged Chittagong Kings by nine wickets in the first qualifier in Mirpur yesterday to ensure their berth in the final of Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

Shamim Hossain's valiant 47-ball 82 went in vain as Chittagong could not put the finishing touch after asked to bat at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, losing wickets in a flurry and managing 38 runs in the last six overs.

Mohammad Ali then bagged four in the 19th over as Chittagong were restricted to 149-9.

In reply, Tamim Iqbal and Hridoy looked for stability as they put together a 55 run stand to calm the nerves. But with the required rate going up, Tamim departed for

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Fortune Barishal opener Towhid Hridoy's first half-century in the ongoing edition of the Bangladesh Premier League helped his side to a nine-wicket win over Chittagong Kings in Qualifier 1 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. The right-handed batter started slow but picked up the pace deeper into the innings as Barishal made light work of the 149-run target, courtesy of Hridoy's 56-ball 82, to cement their spot in the final.

PHOTO: STAR

Distributors of AL leaflets will be arrested

Says CA's press secy; 'communal violence not behind deaths cited by minority rights group'

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam has warned that anyone found distributing Awami League's leaflets will be arrested.

"The cohorts of the fallen fascist regime are trying to create issues and distributing leaflets. Our firm message to those who will distribute leaflets is that they will be arrested," he said at a press briefing yesterday.

They will face action because the leaflets contain text that is supposed to put law and order at risk, according to him.

Shafiqul said the AL activists were also spreading disinformation online, and they too would be brought to justice.

Quoting Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, he said extortion must stop so that the prices of essentials remain stable during the upcoming Ramadan and none can

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

LIBYA BOAT CAPSIZE Families search for bodies of loved ones

ZYMA ISLAM

"The one who fell behind was rescued and is hospitalised," said Robin.

The Bangladeshi embassy in Libya said two men are in hospital.

Almost all of the family members The Daily Star spoke to said there were 43 migrants on the boat, but the Bangladeshi embassy in Libya said in a statement yesterday that there were 56 people onboard.

"The current capacity payment structures incentivise inefficiency and impose unnecessary costs on the government," said the task force report on re-strategising the economy and mobilising resources for equitable and sustainable development.

Revising the terms will align payments with actual energy production, ensuring better value for public spending, it said.

Over the years, maximum power generation has consistently fallen short of installed capacity.

Surplus capacity reached 11,680 megawatts (MW) in fiscal 2023-24. Nearly 43.5 percent of the power plants' capacity remained underutilised last fiscal year compared to the installed capacity of 26,844 MW.

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Capacity payment terms must be renegotiated

Proposes task force on power sector

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The interim government must suspend the inefficient and costly power plants and renegotiate the capacity payment terms with the private power producers as the structure incentivises inefficiency, according to the report of the task force.

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As a result of capacity payments, irregularities and various inefficiencies, the Bangladesh Power Development Board's operating losses surged to Tk 44,291 crore last fiscal year. In fiscal 2017-18, PDB's losses stood at Tk 6,208 crore.

This fiscal year, capacity charges would take up about 80 percent of the Tk 40,000 crore subsidy allocation for the power sector, the report said.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 3

Ethnic cleansing going on in West Bank

Says Palestinian presidency, urges US to intervene

AFP, Ramallah

The office of Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas denounced an Israeli operation in the occupied West Bank as ethnic cleansing yesterday, urging the United States to intervene.

In a statement, spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh said the presidency "condemned the occupation authorities' expansion of their comprehensive war on our Palestinian people in the West Bank to implement their plans aimed at displacing citizens and ethnic cleansing".

Iran also condemned US President Donald Trump's proposal to relocate Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, warning it would amount to "ethnic cleansing".

Foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said yesterday the international community should help Palestinians "secure their right to self-determination... rather than pushing for other ideas that would be tantamount to ethnic cleansing".

The Israeli military said Sunday that it had killed "at least 50 militants" during more than two weeks of operations in the occupied West Bank, earlier levelling buildings in Jenin refugee camp in the territory.

"As part of the operation to thwart terrorism... the IDF (military) recently destroyed several buildings in Jenin," the military said in a statement, adding that they "were used as terrorist infrastructure".

The Palestinian health ministry, however, said yesterday that Israeli forces had killed 70 people in the occupied West Bank since the start of 2025.

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was due to begin talks on a second phase of the ceasefire with Hamas as he visits the new Trump administration in Washington.