

## It's time we set

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Dowlah also highlighted the diplomatic challenges posed by China.

"If Bangladesh moves closer to India and the West, China may retaliate with economic pressure or reduced investments. Conversely, aligning with Beijing could provoke adverse reactions from India and its Western allies," he explained.

Regarding relations with the United States, Dowlah said Bangladesh must carefully navigate its diplomatic stance.

"The US prioritises human rights, democracy, and free elections. Bangladesh must align with Western interests while ensuring that trade relations, market access, and preferential trade benefits remain intact," he said.

BNP central organising secretary Shama Obaid alleged that Hasina's India-centric policy had harmed Bangladesh's national interests.

Former ambassador Humayun Kabir, in his keynote speech, said Bangladesh's foreign policy in the post-Hasina era should reflect the aspirations of the new generation, particularly those who sacrificed their lives in the July uprising.

He stressed the importance of integrating Bangladesh into Asia's rapidly growing economy, projected to reach \$100 trillion in the near future.

Jahangirnagar University Vice-Chancellor Prof Kamrul Ahsan said, "India has always pursued a foreign policy based on its national interests. Bangladesh must do the same, ensuring its policies prioritise the country's strategic goals."

Academic Aminul Karim called for a well-defined foreign policy approach concerning the Bay of Bengal, the Indo-Pacific region, and the South China Sea to safeguard Bangladesh's strategic interests.

## 7 hurt as local teens attack shop, temple

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

At least seven people were injured, and five idols in a temple were vandalised in an attack by a group of local teens in Nazirpur upazila of Pirojpur on Friday night.

According to the victims, teenagers often gathered near the house and shop of Reboti Gayan in Samantogathi village to use his WiFi connection.

On Thursday night, an argument broke out between two youths at Reboti's shop. One of them was a neighbour of Reboti.

The following evening, around 30 people aged 15 to 20 attacked Reboti's shop, house, and neighbouring homes. A nearby temple was also vandalised, witnesses said.

Reboti filed a case against 14 named and four to five unnamed individuals, said Mahmud Al Farid, officer-in-charge of Nazirpur Police Station.

During a site visit, police found that several idols were damaged inside the temple, said the OC. "We have detained three suspects, and the rest are on the run. Efforts are ongoing to apprehend them," he added.

Meanwhile, locals said repairs to the temple and idols were underway under the supervision of the UP chairman.

Reboti could not be contacted for comments.

## SAINT MARTIN'S ISLAND 930kg plastic waste collected in clean-up drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A two-day cleaning drive has been conducted on Saint Martin's Island by the Department of Environment and Bangladesh Sustainable Alliance (BSA), collecting 930kg of plastic waste.

A nine-month ban on tourist movement is currently in effect on the country's only coral island.

During this period, a month-long cleaning programme is underway to improve the island's environment and ecosystem. Led by the environment ministry, the initiative is called the "Clean-Up Program," said Cox's Bazar DoE Deputy Director Zamir Uddin yesterday.

The two-day drive was conducted as part of the first phase of the project.



Pedestrians are forced to walk on the road as vendors have completely occupied the footpath along Clay Road at the Dakbandi intersection in Khulna. In many parts of the city, footpaths are being used for fruit stalls and grocery shops, creating constant inconvenience for people. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## JAMAL KHAN CANAL IN CTG

# Dredging work adds to waterlogging woes

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

After a nine-month hiatus, the dredging work of Jamal Khan Canal in Chattogram city resumed in the end of January.

The canal's excavation is crucial part of a mega project being implemented by the Chattogram Development Authority to mitigate the city's waterlogging woes.

However, resumption of the excavation work has brought immense sufferings to over a hundred families residing on Hem Sen Lane in the Jamal Khan area.

The locality has become waterlogged after an earthen dam was built within the canal, restricting its water flow, and thereby causing inundation in the adjacent areas.

The water could be drained out through large pipes under the dam

so that it does not accumulate and inundate adjacent areas, said Delwar Majumder, former president of Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh, Chattogram.

Farhana Akter, a resident, said, "Since February 5, we are being compelled to go through the filthy water every day."



Ali Akbar, another resident, said, "After the earth was piled up within the canal adjacent to our residences, water started accumulating and soon overflowed the canal to submerge the adjacent areas."

A similar situation prevailed in some other areas, including Sholoshahar, Bakalia and Bahaddarhat.

The CDA launched the Tk 5,617 crore project in July 2017 to tackle the persistent waterlogging. Initially slated for completion by June 2020, the project faced significant delays.

The project is now expected to be completed by June 2026, while the revised budget ballooned to Tk 8,626.62 crore.

Contacted, Lt Col Ferdous Ahmed, the project director, said, "The work procedure involved water diversion to be carried out by the local contractors. However, something has gone wrong. The contractors have yet to identify the shortfall. We are investigating the matter."

## Six months on

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than 5,000 rounds of ammunition are still missing.

Over the past five months, the district has witnessed a sharp increase in gun-related violence. Many residents, particularly business owners, have voiced concerns over the deteriorating security environment and have urged the government to take immediate action.

The jailbreak has exacerbated the law-and-order situation in Narsingdi, with reports of violent crimes involving the stolen weapons surfacing in recent weeks.

"If law and order are restored, business will recover as well. We are living in fear," said Fazlul Haque Bachu, a businessman from Baburhat Bazar under Narsingdi Sadar.

Several recent homicides in the district are suspected to be linked to the escaped inmates, further intensifying the atmosphere of insecurity.

Contacted, Jail Superintendent Md Shamim Iqbal said, "Those who have not surrendered yet are showing disregard for the law. Their immediate capture is a priority."

He said critical documents were destroyed in the arson attack, complicating the ongoing investigation.

Md Abdul Hannan, superintendent of police in Narsingdi, said, "We have already recaptured several fugitives and recovered some weapons. However, a large cache of firearms and ammunition remains unaccounted for. Our operations are ongoing, and we are confident that the situation will soon be brought under control."

"We are doing everything possible to bring all escapees to justice and recover the remaining weapons," he added.

## 986 more held in last State forces, AL perpetrated

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Analysing reports from some districts, this newspaper found that the arrestees are mostly members of the Awami League and its associate bodies. Many are accused in cases filed after the fall of the Hasina-led government on August 5.

Law enforcement agencies yesterday detained 10 people from various upazilas in Rajshahi district

as part of the ongoing drive, said Rajshahi's Additional Superintendent of Police Rafiqul Alam. Most of the arrestees are leaders of the local Awami League, Juba League and Krishak League.

In Sylhet, 13 people including leaders and activists of the AL and its affiliated organisations, were detained in the city as part of the special operation, reports UNB.

During block raids, while the majority of those arrested were men, law enforcement began detaining women from July 23 onwards after many men had fled their areas fearing arrest.

### AFTERMATH OF THE PROTESTS

After AL fell, the report highlights cases of revenge violence, including sexual assaults, against women from minority religious and indigenous communities.

In one documented case, a woman who supported the previous government was intercepted by two men who insulted her with sexual remarks, grabbed her dress, slapped her, and punched her chest.

It also recommends that sexual and gender-based violence be a particular focus of further inquiries.

A few days later, the same woman was encircled by attackers, who ripped her clothes, groped, and ultimately raped her.

She was later denied healthcare at a hospital due to her political affiliation.

The OHCHR states that the true scale of sexual and gender-based violence during the uprising is likely far greater than what could be documented.

It further notes that while women's formal participation in political decision-making has improved, they continue to face significant gender stereotyping and discrimination in public life.

The report calls for in-depth, gender-sensitive investigations to uncover the full scope of these violations and to provide victims with necessary support.

"To end this cycle, we must move away from this revenge-driven political culture," she added.

## Siblings shot

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several local men over the issue involving Sohag.

During the argument, Shahidul allegedly opened fire, injuring Jasim. When Shahinur rushed out to intervene, the attackers shot her too before fleeing.

Jasim suffered gunshot wounds below both knees, while Shahinur was shot in her right leg below the knee, said doctors.

Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Pallabi Police Station, said they are looking into the incident.

Sohag could not be contacted for comments.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Department of Environment  
Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh  
8th Floor, Room: 903, Poribesh Bhaban  
E/16 Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207  
www.doe.gov.bd

### Request for Expression of Interest (EoI) for Selection of Individual Consultants (National)

1.	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
2.	Agency	:	Department of Environment (DoE)
3.	Procuring Entity Name	:	Project Director
4.	Procuring Entity District	:	Dhaka
5.	Expression of Interest for selection of	:	Individual Consultant (National)
6.	EoI Ref No.	:	22.02.0000.045.14.001.25.20
7.	Date	:	16 February 2025
Key Information			
8.	Procuring Method	:	Selection of Individual Consultant (SIC)
Funding Information			
9.	Budget and Source of Funds	:	GEF through UNDP
10.	Development Partners	:	UNDP
Particular Information			
11.	Project Code	:	223053500
12.	Project Name	:	Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh
13.	EoI Closing Date and Time	:	05 March 2025, 02:00 pm
Information for Applicants:			
Package No.	Name of Positions	Number of Positions	Duration
SD-1	Project Manager	1 (One)	60 months
Minimum Masters in the disciplines of Environmental Science, Natural Resources Management or related subjects.			
SD-2	Project Admin and Finance Consultant	1 (One)	60 months
MBA/Master's degree in accounting/finance and technical expertise in financial management/accounting.			
Procuring Entity Details			
14.	Name of Official Inviting EoI	:	Farhana Mustari
15.	Designation of Official Inviting EoI	:	Project Director, Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh
16.	Address of Official Inviting EoI	:	Department of Environment 8th Floor, Room: 903, Poribesh Bhaba E/16 Agargaon Administrative Area Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
17.	Contact details of Official Inviting EoI	:	Phone: +880-2222218305, Email: fmumuni@yahoo.com
18.	Place of submission of EoI	:	Project Director, Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh 8th Floor, Room: 903, Poribesh Bhaba E/16 Agargaon Administrative Area Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
19.	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EoIs.		

The Department of Environment (DoE) is implementing a project titled "Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh". The project objective is to apply an ecosystem-based framework for managing Morjat Baor Ecologically Critical Areas (ECAs) in Jhenaidah and proposed Biodiversity Heritage Haldia river in Chittagong in Bangladesh to enhance the conservation of globally significant biodiversity and support local livelihoods.

The Project period is from July 2024 to June 2029. Project Director of the Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh invites eligible applicants to express their interest in providing the services. Applicants are advised to provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services in completed Curriculum Vitae (CV) and proven documents with a cover letter. Request for Application Form with detailed Terms of References (ToR) are available in the website of the Department of Environment (www.doe.gov.bd).

One original and two copies of EoI must be submitted in the Project office on or before 05 March 2025, 02:00 pm in sealed envelope and be clearly marked the position for Expression of Interest.

The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any/all EoI. Persons who are in service should submit EoI through the proper channel, otherwise EoI will be rejected.

*Farhana Mustari*  
Project Director  
Email: fmumuni@yahoo.com

PRAYER TIMING	
FEBRUARY 16	
Faz	Zohr
12-45	4-30
5-57	7-15
AZAN	
6-00	
1-15	4-45
6-01	7-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION	