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across Gaza
kill 65

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through the
eyes of ordinary
people

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on the brink,
Brazil stand
in their way

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OPERATION SEARCHLIGHT

The massacre at Ctg cantonment

Pakistan army killed hundreds of soldiers, cadets on Mar 25 night

AHMAD ISTIAK

On March 24, 1971, the day before the Pakistani army unleashed the infamous "Operation Searchlight," its top brass flew to Chattogram Cantonment from Dhaka.

By then, a quiet but growing spirit of rebellion was taking shape among the Bangladeshi soldiers stationed at the East Bengal Regimental Centre (EBRC), an infantry training facility in the port city.

The delegation included high-ranking figures such as Chief of Army Staff Gen Hamid Khan, Maj Gen Khadem Hussain Raja, Maj Gen Mitha Khan, and Brig Ansari. These officials convened secret meetings, deliberately excluding EBRC Commandant Brig Mahmudur Rahman Majumdar, the senior-most Bangladeshi officer there at the time, according to Bangladeshi Swadhinota Juddho: Dolil Potro (Volume 9).

Earlier, Brig Majumdar had defied direct orders to unload weapons shipped from West Pakistan to Chattogram Port in



Tomb of the soldiers martyred in the East Bengal Regimental Centre massacre at Chattogram cantonment.

late February, signalling his resistance.

The tension escalated further when the West Pakistan military leaders took Brig Majumdar back to Dhaka, pretending they needed to discuss some urgent matters with him there.

The very next night, the unthinkable tragedy unfolded.

The Pakistan army had picked the EBRC as one of the primary targets for its brutal massacre codenamed "Operation Searchlight".

On the night of March 25, 1971, the Pakistani military killed more than 1,000 Bangladeshi officers, soldiers, and cadets at the EBRC, writes Maj (retd) Rafiq-ul Islam, Bir Uttam, in his book "Lokhno Praner Binimoye".

In the official EBRC records, 550-600 Bangladeshi officers, soldiers, and cadets are listed as martyrs of that massacre.

Bangladeshi Swadhinota Juddho: Dolil Potro (Volume 9), Ameen Ahmed Chowdhury's 1971 Ebong Amar Samorik Jibon", Subid Ali Bhuiyan's "Muktijuddhe Noy Mash" are some of the books that documented this carnage.

According to these books, the EBRC had over 1,500 Bangladeshi soldiers under training in March 1971.

Besides, the 20th Baloch Regiment, which had arrived from West Pakistan in early January 1971, was stationed there.

Lt Col Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury was the chief instructor at the EBRC.

Soon after the sunset on March 25, Pakistan forces began disarming the Bangladeshi soldiers.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

UN seeks nearly \$1b for Rohingyas

AFP, Geneva

The UN said yesterday it and partners were seeking nearly \$1 billion to provide life-saving aid this year for some 1.5 million Rohingya refugees and their hosts in Bangladesh.

The United Nations said that it and more than 100 partners were launching a 2025-26 Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya crisis, amid "dwindling financial resources and competing global crises".

The appeal, it said in a statement, "seeks \$934.5 million in its first year to reach some 1.48 million people including Rohingya refugees and host communities".

Around a million members of the persecuted and mostly Muslim minority live in squalid relief camps in Bangladesh, most of whom arrived after fleeing the 2017 military crackdown in neighbouring Myanmar.

"In its eighth year, the Rohingya humanitarian crisis remains largely out of the international spotlight, but needs remain urgent," the statement said.

It stressed that "any funding shortfalls in critical areas, including reductions to food assistance, cooking fuel or basic shelter, will have dire consequences for this highly vulnerable population".

It could, it added, "force many to resort to desperate measures, such as embarking on dangerous boat journeys to seek safety".

The UN said that more than half of the refugee population in the camps are women and girls, "who face a higher risk of gender-based violence and exploitation".

And it highlighted that a third of the refugees are aged between 10 and 24.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



A DREAM COMES TRUE: The ferry Kapotakha transports a BRTC bus and passengers from Sitakunda's Banshbaria to Sandwip, the island upazila of Chattogram yesterday. This marks the opening of direct ferry services connecting Sandwip with Chattogram. Story on page 3.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Three children and their mother wave to the father, not in frame, at Kamalapur Railway Station as they leave Dhaka on a train to celebrate Eid in their village home in Netrakona yesterday. The father, a businessman, plans to join them a day before Eid. Many families leave for their holidays separately to avoid the late rush.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



SPORTS REPORTER

Tamim Iqbal fell ill during the Dhaka Premier League match between Mohammedan and Shirepukur Cricket Club at BKSP and suffered a serious heart attack, sending shockwaves through the nation yesterday. The former Bangladesh captain was hospitalized, and following a successful stenting procedure, Tamim was shifted to CCU and has been kept under 48-hour observation.

Things became chaotic in the morning when

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Northerners may hit snags on roads this Eid holiday

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

People have started leaving Dhaka to celebrate Eid with their loved ones and their journeys have mostly been hassle-free.

Transport owners and railway officials suggested that this year's Eid holiday travel will likely be smoother due to the extended holiday period.

However, as the rush of homebound travellers gains momentum, particularly on March 27 and 29, northbound passengers may experience traffic congestion unless proper traffic management measures are ensured.

Ongoing construction work on the Dhaka-Ashulia Elevated Expressway, and the expansion of the Dhaka-Rangpur and Dhaka-Sylhet highways may lead to further congestion if adequate police presence is not ensured.

Additionally, any potential road

blockades by groups, particularly garment workers, could worsen the situation during the Eid rush, said transport leaders.

The nine-day public holiday for Eid-ul-Fitr will start from Friday. More than 1 crore people are likely to leave the capital and surrounding areas to celebrate the festival at their homes.

After the opening of the Padma Bridge and the widening of three major bridges on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway, people did not face major traffic congestion in the last few Eids.

But lengthy expansion of the Dhaka-Rangpur highway from Elenga of Tangail and pressure of passengers at Savar, Ashulia and Gazipur industrial belts often cause traffic congestion, resulting in suffering to the home-goers.

The work of the Dhaka-Rangpur highway saw 82 percent progress and the project authority said they managed

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

CONSENSUS COMMISSION Parties criticise 'yes-no' format in spreadsheet

Call it insufficient to convey views

MD ABBAS

The BNP and several left-leaning parties have expressed concerns over the spreadsheet format of the recommendations sent by the National Consensus Commission (NCC) to the political parties.

The spreadsheet offered options such as "Yes", "No", "Agree", and "Disagree".

They believe this approach could lead to misunderstandings, arguing that a simple binary choice is insufficient to fully convey their views on the reform proposals that the NCC has collated from various reform commissions.

Most proposals, they said, require thorough explanations, reasoning, and counterarguments, stressing the need for meaningful dialogue on the proposals.

Apart from the BNP, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Biplobi Workers Party, and Socialist Party of Bangladesh have shared similar views on the spreadsheets.

On March 6, the consensus commission sent a letter to the BNP and 37 other parties, seeking their feedback on a spreadsheet containing 166 key reform proposals related to the constitution, electoral system, public administration, the Anti-Corruption Commission, and the judiciary. The parties were asked to submit their feedback by March 13. So far, 21 parties, including the BNP, have submitted their responses.

At a press conference at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office on March 22, the party's Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Vested groups out to put wedge between army and people Says Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman said some sections are trying to create a confrontation between the army and the people.

"Right now, we can see there is an attempt to make the army controversial. [A group is] trying to bring the army face to face with the people. Just as reform and elections were placed in opposite directions some days ago, a similar attempt is now being made to have a face-off between the army and the people. You as a journalist and I as a political activist, we both understand that certain vested quarters are behind this," Tarique said at an iftar event yesterday.

He made these remarks virtually at an iftar event hosted by the BNP Media Cell in honour of journalists at a city hotel.

"If all patriotic citizens remain aware and vigilant, we will surely be able to counter this conspiracy. We must

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Court orders confiscation of Shakib Al Hasan's assets

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the authorities concerned to confiscate properties of cricketer and former Awami League MP Shakib Al Hasan in a cheque dishonour case.

Dhaka's Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Ziaudur Rahman passed the order following an application submitted by the plaintiff, Atiqur Rahman, bench assistant of the court, told The Daily Star.

In December last year, a summon was issued asking Shakib to appear before the court on January 19 this year, following a case filed by Shahibur Rahman, a relationship officer at IFIC Bank.

On January 19, the court issued an arrest warrant against Shakib after he failed to appear before the court as per its direction.



An excavator, deployed by the Akhaura Upazila Administration and Water Development Board, demolishes an illegal embankment on the Titas river in Bongoj area of Dharkhar union yesterday. The action was taken following a March 23 report by The Daily Star highlighting illegal soil lifting and river grabbing in the region.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOV

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Northerners may hit snags on roads

FROM PAGE 1
to open four lanes on the entire corridor with service lanes and bridges.

But, two points remain vulnerable to road congestion: one on the Jamuna Bridge and Gobindaganj in Gaibandha, said the project's Director Walifur Rahman.

The Jamuna Bridge is a narrow four-lane bridge and if a vehicle breaks down there, it creates huge congestion until the vehicle is salvaged.

Besides, the construction of a flyover is going on at Gobindaganj, which may create congestion, he said.

On the other hand, the construction of the Dhaka-Ashulia Elevated Expressway is now going on and that may create congestion on Abdullahpur-Ashulia-Baipail road.

Besides, the construction of a flyover at Baipail under the project may cause traffic congestion on the Savar-Chandra highway, which often witnesses congestion during the Eid rush.

Because of the construction work of the expressway, most of the vehicles will not use Abdullahpur-Ashulia-Baipail road, Ashok Kumar Pal, Gazipur Metropolitan Police's additional deputy police commissioner (Traffic), told our Gazipur Correspondent.

They will use the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway to the northern region via Gazipur, which may create a huge pressure on the highway, he said.

"However, we will have 500 more traffic policemen to ensure that there is no traffic jam on the Gazipur territory

on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway," he said.

Meanwhile, an official of the Dhaka-Sylhet highway expansion project said that currently they were working on the main road at two points: Hatkhola and Velanagar in Narsingdi.

But, the roads in these areas are four-lane ones, so there is unlikely to be congestion if traffic management can be ensured, he said, wishing not to be named.

Meanwhile, many people left Dhaka by bus yesterday, but their number was not big.

Many of them, including those who collected advance tickets, complained of overcharging.

One such passenger is Abu Talha, a private service holder. When he went to buy a ticket from SI Paribahan to travel to Sirajganj on March 26, he was charged Tk 150 more than the actual fare of Tk 350.

"They did not even mention the fare on the ticket – the bus operator charged Tk 350 on March 21 when I sent my family home."

When he inquired about the overcharging, the counterman did not provide any explanation.

The number of passengers leaving Dhaka was very thin yesterday, said Mosharrif Hossain, general manager of Hanif Paribahan, adding that he expects the passenger flow to pick up from Thursday.

Most trains left Kamalapur Railway Station on time amid tight security and ticket checking.

As of 1:00pm, 18 intercity trains left the station and two of them were late.

Burimari Express left the station one and a half hours late while Egara Sindhu Express left one hour late, said Station Master Anwar Hossain.

A total of 68 trains, including 43 intercity trains, were supposed to leave Dhaka yesterday.

removed," the hospital's media director Dr Rajib Hasan told the media at a press briefing.

"He [Tamim] fell ill at around 9:00-9:30 am at BKSP. He was then brought here and his treatment began," the physician added.

The initial plan had been to bring Tamim to Dhaka for better treatment but once he felt a bit better following initial treatment, Tamim went back to BKSP. But his condition became critical all of a sudden as was then taken back to the hospital where angiogram showed that there was a block in a major artery.

Following the surgery, Tamim regained consciousness and spoke to family members.

"His condition was critical. Even after the stenting, he is under observation and is still in a critical condition. It will

take some time. All of us are trying heart and soul. Everyone please pray for Tamim bhai," the physician told the media.

There was a downpour of concern after news of Tamim's heart attack broke. The BCB directors were slated to sit for a board meeting but the directors and other officials rushed to Savar with the meeting cancelled.

BKB president Faruque Ahmed expressed his gratitude to the medical teams at BKSP and KPI Specialised Hospital for their timely and expert intervention. In a statement, he said: "We are very thankful to all the medics and specialists for their swift actions in this critical situation. The outpouring of concern for Tamim reflects how much he is loved and appreciated by the

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Π



Steps taken
to declare
Sandwip as
seaport: CA

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday said initiatives have been taken to declare Sandwip as a seaport and open the Kumira-Guptachara ghat.

Yunus said this at a public gathering arranged on the occasion of the launch of ferry service on Chattogram Sandwip route.

He joined the event virtually from the state guest house Jamuna here.

He said once these initiatives are implemented, the long standing suffering of the Sandwip dwellers will minimise.

**Sarjis stages
showdown in
Panchagarh
Motorcade, rallies
mark his visit**

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Thakurgaon

Sarjis Alam, chief
organiser (north) of
National
Citizen
Party, yesterday visited his
hometown in Panchagarh for the first time since he took on the leadership role in the newly formed party last month.

His journey began with a flight from Dhaka to Saidpur, after which he travelled the remaining 100 kilometres by road, half of which he was accompanied by a motorcade of over a 100 vehicles.

The homecoming turned into a political spectacle as Sarjis

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



PHOTO: STAR

When survival becomes an UPHILL STRUGGLE

Waiting for hours, many return empty-handed as TCB queues get longer

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Samata Begum, 55, stood by the roadside, tears streaming down her weathered face.

After waiting in a queue for over four and a half hours, she had failed to get her much-needed supplies from the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) truck.

It was already 3:30pm, yet the queue remained dauntingly long. Her hopes were fading with each passing minute.

"I am a heart patient. I cannot stand in one place for too long. I had a ticket in my hand, but I lost it in the crowd. Now, I do not know if I will get my share," she said. This correspondent later learned that she had gone home empty-handed that day.

Samata lives in Mohammadpur's Jahuri Moholla area with her husband, a private car driver, and their two sons. Her husband's monthly income of Tk 18,000 barely covers their expenses, and Tk 7,000 going towards rent alone.

"We don't have much left after our

monthly expenditures. That is why I joined the long queue -- to save some money."

Six months ago, she underwent a uterus operation, leaving her physically weak. Yet, she had no choice but to endure the exhausting wait. Last month, she had also failed to obtain

TCB's distributor points across the capital. However, many leave empty-handed.

In the same queue was Rafiqul Islam, a security guard at a nearby building. At 1:30pm, he took a two-hour break, hoping to secure his share. By 3:30pm, he was still standing.

"We can sell products to 400 people a day, but at least 800 to 900 gather here," he said.

To manage the crowd, they distribute 400 tokens first.

"But many stand without tokens, hoping to get lucky. That's when things turn chaotic."

TCB trucks, numbering around 410 nationwide, including 50 in the capital, distribute essential items daily. Each person is entitled to 2 litres of oil, 2kg of lentils, 1kg of chickpeas, 1kg of sugar, and half a kilogramme of dates -- all at Tk 590, about Tk 400 cheaper than market rates. From yesterday, the allocation of dates was increased by 1kg, confirmed TCB spokesperson Humayun Kabir.

Yet, the struggle remains unchanged.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

the subsidised goods.

"It has become impossible to reach the selling point now as the queue keeps getting longer," she said.

Her struggle is shared by thousands. Low-income individuals, desperate for affordable essentials, flock to

"It looks like I will need more time to reach the truck," he said, shifting uncomfortably on his aching feet.

Later that evening, he called this correspondent.

His voice was laced with exhaustion. "I reached the truck at around 7:45pm. My entire shift



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KILLING OF NINE PEOPLE ICT sends 3 former top cops to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday sent three former top police officials to jail in a case filed over the killing of nine people in Kalyanpur in 2016.

The three -- former IGP AKM Shahidul Haque, DMP commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia and deputy commissioner of DMP's Mirpur division Jasim Uddin Mollah -- were earlier arrested on different charges.

The three-member tribunal, led by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, set May 7 for the next hearing.

According to Chief Prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam, the accused

officers staged militant operations to create a climate of fear, allegedly to maintain the authority of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

During a press briefing after the proceedings, Tajul said on July 25, 2016, SWAT and the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit killed nine youths after confining them to a house "Jahajbari" in Kalyanpur. Later, they labelled that the deceased are militants.

Tajul also said the tribunal's investigation agency has learned that these nine young men were arrested a long time ago. Some of them were kept in DB custody for two to three months. From there, they were taken to that house at night.

Sarjis stages showdown in Panchagarh

FROM PAGE 3
toured all five upazilas of Panchagarh, making his presence known with a showdown.

Sarjis, who hails from Atwary upazila of the district, arrived at Saidpur Airport at around 11:30am, where his close associates were waiting for him with several vehicles. After speaking to journalists at the airport, he set off for Panchagarh.

By noon, he reached the Farmgate area of Debiganj upazila, where NCP leaders and activists from all five upazilas of the district welcomed him with a motorcade.

From there, Sarjis made his way to Bijoy Chattar in Debiganj, where he addressed a rally. After that, he visited Boda, Tetulia, and Panchagarh Sadar upazilas. The programme concluded with an iftar party at his home upazila, Atwary.

While crossing the Fourth Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge over

the Karatoa River near Debiganj, Sarjis paid a toll of Tk 5,000 for his motorcade.

Babu, toll collector of the bridge, told Bangla daily Prothom Alo, "We were informed that there were 135 vehicles in total. Altogether, they paid us Tk 5,000 in tolls."

Mohammad Asif, a microbus driver from Atwari upazila, said, "I can't confirm the exact number of vehicles, but it could be over 150. Each of the vehicles was hired for Tk 7,000."

Before leaving the airport for Panchagarh, Sarjis said a vested group is spreading rumours to rehabilitate Awami League, but people must remain vigilant and counter these falsehoods.

"Not only the army; no one should attempt to impose any version of Awami League's narrative on this country anymore," he said.

"We expect that the army will uphold the

respect it commands as an institution. We never want to see its involvement in the country's internal politics," he added.

During the rally at

Debiganj, he said, "We (NCP) do not want to present ourselves before you by making promises. We want to show our work, and for this, we seek the opportunity to do so."

"We believe that in the

upcoming Bangladesh,

people will not cast a vote

based on the party name or

any symbol. They will vote

by observing the character

of a person, what they are

doing, and how well their

actions align with their

symbol."

"You will vote for us if we can work and keep our promises," he said.

When survival

FROM PAGE 3

At other selling points in Azimpur Staff Quarters and Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, the scenes were just as dire. Desperate faces, endless queues, and dwindling supplies painted a grim picture of survival.

Taslima Begum, a homemaker from Mohammadpur's Geneva Camp, likened her experience to a battle. "I waited for more than three and a half hours just to get these products," she said. "It feels like I have won a war."

For thousands like her, this is the new reality -- endless waiting, uncertain outcomes, and the painful realisation that even survival is becoming an uphill struggle.



Bangladesh Power Development Board

Directorate of Purchase

WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka

Phone No. 02-223383081

e-Tender Notice

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

SL No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Reference No.	Description of goods/works	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time	Opening date and time
01	1090638	EE-GRL-26 Lot-1 (FY:24-25)	27.11.0000.304.25.219.25 Date: 20/03/2025	Supply of 33KV, XLPE Power Cable- 1x800m, (CSD, Tongi, Gazipur)	28-Apr-2025, 17:00	29-Apr-2025, 14:00	29-Apr-2025, 14:00
02	1090730	EE-GRL-26 Lot-2 (FY:24-25)	27.11.0000.304.25.220.25 Date: 20/03/2025	Supply of 33KV, XLPE Power Cable- 1x800m, (CSD, Fauzderhat, Chattogram)	28-Apr-2025, 17:00	29-Apr-2025, 14:00	29-Apr-2025, 14:00

These are 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.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

For more details please contact to the PE's Support Desk (01768015538).

Md. Nannu Miah
ID No. 1-01304
Director
Directorate of Purchase
BPDB, Dhaka

GD-764



Padma Oil Company Limited

(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation)

Strand Road, Sadarghat, Chattogram

International Tender for Supply of 2 Units of MOSRU (Mobile Oil Spill Recovery Unit) for Chattogram to Dhaka Pipeline (CDPL) Project, Narayanganj, Bangladesh

1	Ministry/Division	Energy and Mineral Resources Division
2	Agency	Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC)
3	Procuring entity name	Padma Oil Company Limited
4	Procuring entity code	Not used at present
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka
6	Invitation for	Tender
7	Invitation Ref No.	E&P/CDPL/F-58/P-12-24-25
8	Date	23/03/2025
9	KEY INFORMATION	
10	Procurement method	ICT
11	Budget and source of funds	Own fund of BPC
12	Development partner (if applicable)	N/A
13	Project name	N/A
14	Tender Package No.	N/A
15	Tender package name	Supply of 2 Units of MOSRU (Mobile Oil Spill Recovery Unit) for Chattogram to Dhaka Pipeline (CDPL) Project, Narayanganj, Bangladesh.
16	Invitation for Tender Ref No.	E&P/CDPL/F-58/P-12-24-25
17	Tender publication date	24/03/2025
18	Tender last selling date	12/05/2025 upto 1200 Hrs
19	Tender closing date and time	Date (dd/mm/yyyy) Time
20	Tender opening date and time	13/05/2025 02:00pm
21	Name & address of the office(s)	Address(s)
22	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)	Place Date Time

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

23	Eligibility of tenderer	(a) The maximum 01 (one) number of arbitration against the Tenderer over a period 05 (five) years. (b) The tender shall have a minimum of 10 years of overall experience in the supply of MOSRU or Special vehicle and related services. (c) The minimum specific experience as Supplier in supply of similar Goods/Special type Vehicle of at least 01 One) contracts successfully completed within the last 07 (Seven) years, each with a value of at least BDT 10 Million or US Dollars 0.08 million or equivalent; years counting backward from the date of publication of IFT in the newspaper. (d) The minimum supply and/or production capacity of MOSRU is/are: 3 (three). (e) The minimum amount of liquid asset or working capital or credit facility is Tk. Bangladeshi Taka 40 Million or US Dollars 0.32 Million or equivalent.
24	Brief description of goods	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Mobile Oil Spill Recovery Unit at Godamali Receiving of CDPL Terminal, Narayanganj, Bangladesh.
25	Brief description of related services	N/A
26	Tender document price	US \$ 100 or BDT 12500 Per Tender Schedule (non-refundable)
27	Location and estimated date of completion of works	Receiving Terminal of CDPL, Narayanganj, Bangladesh & October, 2025
28	Type of payment for tender price	Cash on payment
29	Type of payment for security amount	As per Tender Schedule
30	LOT INFORMATION	
31	Lot No.	Identification of lot
32	Location	Tender security amount in Taka
33	Completion time in weeks/months	
34	Godanali Receiving Terminal, Narayanganj, Bangladesh	The amount of the Tender Security shall be: US\$ 8000 (Eight Thousand) or Bangladeshi Taka 10,00,000 (Ten Lac) only.
35	GD-764	
36	PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS	
37	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Faruk Hossain Mahmud
38	Designation of official inviting tender	Assistant General Manager [E&P]
39	Address of official inviting tender	Strand Road, Sadarghat, Chattogram, Bangladesh.
40	Contact details of official inviting tender	Telephone: +88 0233340430, Fax: 88031618312, e-mail: farukmahmud0@gmail.com
41	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.	

STATUTORY NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH

HIGH COURT DIVISION

(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

COMPANY MATTER NO. 492 of 2025

IN THE MATTER OF:

Md. Homayun Kabir Petitioner

Atlas Cosmetic Ltd. and another Respondent

Take Notice that an application u/s 8(1) and 8(3) of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above-named Petitioner for condonation of delay in holding the AGM for the Calender year 2021 to 2024 of Atlas Cosmetic Ltd. Upon hearing of the application on 18.03.2025 Hon'ble Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel has been pleased to admit said application. In the said hearing the Petitioner has been directed to file the necessary documents in the newspaper, and submit an affidavit in-compliance. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an Advocate. Copy of the said application may be obtained from the under mentioned Advocate on payment of fees.

Asifur Rahaman Sourav

Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh

SS Bhabu (Ground Floor), 70-D Green Road, Dhaka-1205, Phone: 0191739260

Date: 20/03/2025

VERSUS

The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka.

....Respondent

This is an application under Section 8(1) read with Section 8(3) of the Companies Act 1994 for condonation of delay in holding A.G.M for the year of 2024. Upon hearing the said application the Honourable Company Bench of the High Court Division was pleased to admit the application vide Order dated 05.03.2025 along with a direction to file affidavit in Compliance within three (03) weeks. If any person or body of persons has got any interest on the matter may appear before the court on the date so fixed for hearing. A copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of prescribed fees.

Barrister M. Tasnid Anwar

Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh

(High Court and Appellate Division) 01715-049201

Date: 20/03/2025

GD-764

GD-765

GD-766

ACC sues ex-chief whip Noor-e-Alam and wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has filed two separate cases against former chief whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury Liton and his wife Jinnat Parveen Chowdhury for illegally acquiring assets worth Tk 71.30 crore.

ACC Director General Akhtar Hossain confirmed the information at the commission's headquarters in Segunbagicha, Dhaka yesterday.

Noor-e-Alam was accused of acquiring illegal wealth worth Tk 57.49 crore.

Additionally, he allegedly conducted suspicious transactions worth Tk 232.11 crore in eight bank accounts under his name.

Jinnat was accused of acquiring wealth worth Tk 13.81 crore illegally.

Teen detained over rape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Police yesterday detained a teenager for allegedly raping an eight-year-old girl in Mymensingh's Nandail upazila.

The girl's mother alleged that her daughter was raped by a neighbour on Friday night. As the girl fell sick, she was admitted to a hospital on Sunday.

Quoting doctors, Md Anwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Nandail Police Station, said the girl was sexually assaulted. "Her condition is improving," the OC said.

Police were interrogating the accused at the police station. No case was filed till yesterday evening.



Sheikh Motaleb sells a variety of local and foreign perfumes and attar at Chawk Bazar in Barishal city. With Eid approaching, demand is high, enabling the 77-year-old to sell products worth Tk 2,500-3,000 daily, earning a profit of around Tk 700. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

BARISHAL UNIVERSITY

Teacher shortage disrupts academic activities

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

An acute shortage of teachers has left Barishal University struggling to conduct academic activities smoothly, exacerbating students' woes with prolonged session jams.

Since its inception in 2011 with 480 students across six departments, the university has expanded to 25 departments under six faculties, with student enrolment now exceeding 10,000. However, the number of teachers has not increased proportionally, creating a vacuum that continues to disrupt academic activities.

According to university sources, session jams ranging from six to 18 months persist across various departments. As per international

standards, there should be one teacher for every 20 students, but BU currently has a teacher-student ratio of 1:64. Some departments have been forced to curtail syllabi



by half in an attempt to mitigate session jams, raising concerns about the quality of education.

At present, the university employs 210 teachers, of whom 54 are on study leave, leaving just 156 actively

teaching. While the approved faculty strength stands at 266, the university's organogram suggests that the actual requirement is 493. Despite recruitment announcements in March and June 2024, administrative delays have stalled the process.

"Teachers are struggling with excessive workloads, often taking five to eight classes daily alongside administrative duties," said Associate Professor Sanjay Kumar Sarker of the Bangla Department.

Professor ATM Rafiqul Islam of the Botany Department said the crisis is compromising the quality of education.

Students expressed frustration, stating that the shortage of teachers

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

SC gets two new judges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two High Court judges were elevated to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday.

With their appointments, the number of judges at the Appellate Division now stands at seven.

The judges are Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice Farah Mahbub.

President Mohammad Shahabuddin appointed the judges under article 95(f) of the Constitution, according to a gazette notification by the law ministry.

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed will administer the oath of office to them at the Supreme Court Judges' Lounge around 10:30am today.

The two judges were appointed as judges of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court during the tenure of the BNP-led four-party alliance government.

DHAKA TUESDAY MARCH 25, 2025

CHAITRA 11, 1431 BS

The Daily Star

5

Robbery on moving bus in Savar
Driver, helper, conductor taken into custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A robbery took place on a moving passenger bus on the Dhaka-Aricha highway in Savar last night.

The alleged robbers, armed with locally made weapons, took passengers hostage and looted valuables, including cash and mobile phones.

Following the incident, the bus driver, helper, and conductor were taken into police custody for questioning.

The robbery occurred on a Manikganj-bound Suvojatra Paribahan bus while it was travelling from Savar's Radio Colony area to the C&B area around 8:00pm.

According to passengers, four to five robbers disguised as passengers boarded the bus at Radio Colony. They then held the passengers at knifepoint, looted their belongings, and escaped from the moving bus near the C&B stand.

When the bus reached the main gate of Jahangirnagar University, passengers forced it to stop and detained the driver, helper, and conductor, suspecting their involvement.

Later with the help of JU students, they were handed over to Ashulia police. Passengers claimed that the bus staffers were involved in the robbery.

JU Proctor Prof AKM Rashidul Alam said robberies have been occurring from time to time in the Jahangirnagar, C&B, and Radio Colony areas on the Dhaka-Aricha highway.

Saugatul Alam, officer-in-charge of Savar Highway Police Station, said three people have been taken into custody for questioning.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Brahmanbaria
Phone-0851-59632
cebra@rhd.gov.bd

Date- 23/03/2025

e-Tender Amendment/Corrigendum Notice -01(One)/2024-2025

Due to avoid unusual circumstances Corrigendum 1 given. Corrigendum-1 given for Tender Notice, TDS and PCC. For more details please visit on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

S.L.No	Package No.	Tender ID
1.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/ BABNSR and SNL/ WP-01/2024-2025	1075805
2.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/ BABNSR and SNL/ WP-02/2024-2025	1076512
3.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/ BABNSR and SNL/ WP-03/2024-2025	1076513
4.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/ BABNSR and SNL/ WP-04/2024-2025	1076514
5.	e-GP/BRD/ADP/ BABNSR and SNL/ WP-05/2024-2025	1076515

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

(Mir Nizam Uddin Ahmed)
ID No. 602156
Executive Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Brahmanbaria

GD-753



GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
HEADQUARTERS BORDER GUARD BANGLADESH
COMMUNICATIONS BRANCH, PEELKHANA, DHAKA

Dated : 25 March 2025

e-Tender Notice (Re-Tender)

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

Package No.	Name of Work	Tender ID
15/2024-25/BGB/CB	Walkie Talkie Set Complete - DMR VHF	1092032
46/2024-25/BGB/CB	Supply of Spares for Multimedia Projector	1092033

1. 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.
2. To submit e-tender, registration in the national e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
3. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
4. The Tender Notice will be available on the website: www.bgb.gov.bd

MD MAHSUBUR RAHMAN
Lieutenant Colonel
Director (Comm)
For Director General
dircomm@bgb.gov.bd

GD-760



Why stop
LEARNING
on weekends?
IBA-JU

Earn an MBA from IBA-JU
Weekend MBA Program, Summer 2025

PROGRAM FEATURES

- Classes are held only on Friday and Saturday
- Program length is two to six years in a trimester system
- 60 (sixty) credit hours MBA program
- Transport facility from Dhaka to campus and campus to Dhaka.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- 4-Year Bachelor's Degree or equivalent (3-Year Bachelor's Degree + 1-Year/2-Year Master's Degree) in any discipline with at least CGPA of 2.50 on 4.00 Scale (or 2nd Class/Division)
- With at least GPA 3.00 on 5.00 Scale (or 2nd Division) in both SSC and HSC Examinations

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

- Application opens: February 28, 2025, Friday (12:01 AM)
- Last date of application and admit card download: April 7, 2025, Monday (11:59 PM)
- Written test: April 11, 2025 (Friday); 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM
- Viva-voce: April 18 & 19 (Friday & Saturday)
- Class starts: 16 May, 2025

Scan the QR Code
to Apply

For further details & application process please visit:
www.iba-ju.edu.bd/postgraduate_admission

Contact: IBA-JU Office, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka-1342
Website: www.iba-ju.edu.bd | Email: wmba.iba-ju@juniv.edu | Cell: +8801730641073

ACC sues ex-chief whip Noor-e-Alam and wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has filed two separate cases against former chief whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury Liton and his wife Jinnat Parveen Chowdhury for illegally acquiring assets worth Tk 71.30 crore.

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Jinnat was accused of acquiring wealth worth Tk 13.81 crore illegally.

Teen detained over rape

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

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The girl's mother alleged that her daughter was raped by a neighbour on Friday night. As the girl fell sick, she was admitted to a hospital on Sunday.

Quoting doctors, Md Anwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Nandail Police Station, said the girl was sexually assaulted. "Her condition is improving," the OC said.

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Mamunur Rashid's 'Tumba O Protibeshi' to stage this Eid



Theatre legend Mamunur Rashid is set to stage his play *Tumba O Protibeshi* at Riddhi Gallery, Mirpur-II, during Eid. The production, written, directed, and performed by Rashid himself, will be held on Eid day and the following two days. Speaking to Prothom Alo yesterday, Mamunur Rashid shared, "There aren't many cultural activities in the Mirpur area. I want to connect with the audience here, which is why we're staging the play in Mirpur."

Produced by Bangla Theatre, the story revolves around Rahat Chowdhury, a retired man in his sixties, whose unexpected bond with a neighbour's dog, Tumba, leads to emotional upheaval and solitude. Rashid noted the lack of cultural activities in Mirpur as a key reason for choosing the venue. The play's assistant director is Shamima Shawkat, with stage design by Hashim Masud, lighting design by Thandu Raihan, and music direction by Muktaneel. The sound projection is handled by Sourav Roy, costume design by Salma Khan, and voice narration by Arif Hossain, while the publication design is by Apu Mehdi. The venue is easily accessible, located near the Mirpur-II Metro Station.

SHAKIB KHAN's two films lined up for Eid release

Superstar Shakib Khan is likely to have two of his films—*Borbaad* and *Antaratra*—hit theatres this upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr.

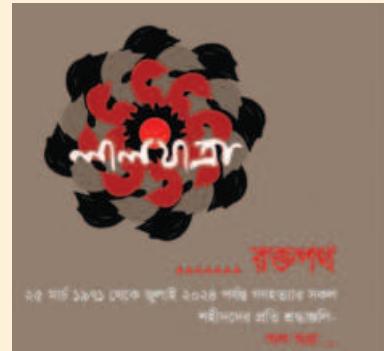
After much delay, *Borbaad* has finally been submitted to the Bangladesh Film Certification Board for approval, confirmed producer Shahreen Akter Sumi.

Meanwhile, *Antaratra*, directed by Wajed Ali Sumon and produced by Sohani Hossain under Taranga Entertainment, has already received censor clearance.

Starring Shakib Khan opposite Darshana Banik, *Antaratra* was initially slated for release in 2021 but got shelved for unknown reasons.

Directed by Mehdi Hassan Hridoy, *Borbaad* features a star-studded cast including Idhika Paul, Jishnu Sengupta, Misha Sawdagar, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Intekhab Dinar, and Mamunur Rashid, among others.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?



'Lal Jatra'

Pioneering theatre troupe Prachyanat's annual *Lal Jatra* procession will begin from Shoparjito Shadhinota intersection and end at Fuller Road's Smriti Chirontont Chittar. Led by theatre artists and professionals, the procession commemorates the martyrs of March 25, 1971, and protests against genocides worldwide, including in Palestine.

Date: Today (Tuesday) | March 25, 2025

Time: 4pm onwards

Venue: University of Dhaka

Ed Sheeran urges UK government to invest in music education

Singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran has penned an open letter to the UK government, urging a €250 million investment in music education to counter years of underfunding.

The letter, addressed to Labour leader Keir Starmer, was co-signed by major music icons including Elton John, Coldplay, Central Cee, Harry Styles, Stormzy, and Robert Plant, urging authorities to prioritise the future of British music.

Launched in January, the Ed Sheeran Foundation outlined five key areas requiring government support—school music funding, teacher training, grassroots venue support, music apprenticeships, and a more inclusive curriculum.

Endorsed by hundreds of music industry professionals, the letter also called for a cross-departmental task force to prevent music education from being sidelined, especially in disadvantaged areas.

Sheeran previously criticised the Conservative government for cutting arts funding in schools.



NEWS

Hannan Masud

FROM PAGE 2
chased the NCP supporters on the road.

This led to a clash during which brick chunks were thrown. Hannan was hurt along with four others.

Lutfullah Majid Nishan, joint general secretary of Hatiya unit BNP, alleged that Krishak Dal convener Abdur Rob was assaulted earlier in the evening, prompting their protest rally. He claimed that the confrontation was "not intentional".

Despite repeated attempts, Hannan could not be reached for comments.

OC Azmal said it was the weekly bazaar yesterday. The incident disrupted traffic and trade at Jahajmara Bazar.

"At one point, locals asked them to get out of the way. When Hannan and his supporters did not move, BNP leaders and activists gathered people and attacked them..." he said

Five cops held

FROM PAGE 12
of Police Zedan Al Musa, and Mainul Islam, deputy commissioner (DB) of the RMP.

The arrestees were taken to a Bogura court around 5:30pm and subsequently taken to jail, according to Md Saidul Islam, officer-in-charge of Dhunat police, and Court Inspector Mosaddek Hossain.

According to the law enforcers, the five RMP DB personnel used an unauthorised rented microbus to abduct two men – Rabbi Sheikh and Jahangir – from Dighalkandi village in Dhunat upazila on Sunday night. They took the victims to the Mirzapur area of Sherpur upazila, accusing them of gambling, before demanding a ransom of Tk 12 lakh from the

Hamza adds spice

FROM PAGE 12

Chhetri from retirement. With six goals in his last five games against Bangladesh, Chhetri's return signals just how seriously India are taking this encounter.

At the pre-match press conference, both head coaches acknowledged their opponent's key player while remaining confident in their own squad's abilities.

"I think it is more exciting having Hamza and having Sunil, but it's really going to be a competitive match, and it's not only about them," said Bangladesh coach Javier Cabrera, determined to make things difficult for their higher-ranked opponents.

India coach Manolo Marquez also weighed in: "I think Hamza is a good player. He played in the Premier League, though he is now playing in the Championship, and his team was promoted. Obviously, he is a good

victims' families.

The families paid Tk 2 lakh in cash and an additional Tk 1.30 lakh through mobile banking apps before the victims were released early yesterday.

Inspector Monowaruzzaman, in charge of Kundarhat Police Station, told The Daily Star, "The victims' families chased after the microbus on motorcycles and informed a patrol team from the Kundarhat Police Outpost in Nandigram upazila. The team

intercepted the accused in the Birgram area of Shajahanpur upazila. During the arrest, Tk 2 lakh in ransom money, a walkie talkie, several sets of DB police jackets, mobile phones, handcuffs, and the microbus were seized."

Contacted, RMP's Deputy Commissioner Mainul Islam said, "SI Shahin Mohammad Anu and the

footballer, and it is good for Asian football."

However, Marquez admitted he was unsure of the impact Hamza would have on the game. At 27, Hamza has played as both a defensive midfielder and right-back for Leicester City and Sheffield United, but Cabrera has kept his exact role for tonight's match under wraps. This tactical mystery only adds to the anticipation.

Bangladesh captain Jamal Bhuiyan is also relishing the challenge, believing his team can go toe-to-toe with India.

"Honestly, we are not thinking about India's ranking. Our focus is to win the match. The coach mentioned that this has been the best squad so far. The inclusion of Hamza is a big boost for us, and our target is to secure three points," said Jamal, adding that the team's mentality has shifted – they now approach games with a renewed level of belief.

four constables were present at the office at 8:00pm last night [Sunday], although they had no scheduled duty. They were supposed to be on duty this morning, but they were absent. I later learned of the incident from Bogura's police superintendent.

"One of the constables, Bashir Ali, was not even assigned to the RMP's Detective Branch. He had been transferred to the Rajshahi University Police Outpost on the 19th of this month."

Asked why they travelled to Bogura from Rajshahi to commit the crimes, he said, "As far as I know, a DB constable from Dhunat upazila, named Wahab, was working with our DB police. They went to Dhunat based on information he provided. Constable Wahab is currently in our custody."

Fasibaad er Oboshan" (Harmony of the New Year, End of Fascism).

Talking to the media, Farooki said, "This year, the festival will be celebrated over two days nationally, including Chaitra Sangkranti with the Mangal Shobhajatra on Pahela Baishakh."

Many cultural organisations representing different ethnicities will participate in the fest, Farooki said, adding, "This time, it will be bigger, better, and more vibrant."

Helmeted

FROM PAGE 12

Several cases, including for murder, have been filed against them in Chattogram following the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

Of them, Firoz, Farid, Helal, and Fazle Karim have already been arrested. But none of the arms used in the attacks could be recovered. Photos show that the arms used include AK-22 rifle, pistols, and shotguns.

An investigator said they found that when AL cadres went on a shooting spree, police abetted them from behind to cover their actions.

He said that they recorded accounts of witnesses. "We visited the sites and found important evidence that will support the trial," he told The Daily Star, wishing anonymity.

This newspaper reported on July 16 that AL leaders Helal led the armed cadres during a clash in the city's Muradpur area. On his instructions, at least five people started shooting on demonstrators, killing three people, including a Chhatra Dal leader. Chhatra League leader Nurulwas also seen alongside him.

On July 18, AL leaders and activists were also seen carrying firearms in the port city's Bahaddarhat area during clashes that killed four people, including a Chittagong University student.

During the violence, police used sound grenades, shotguns, and teargas canisters. As the violence escalated in the afternoon, BGB personnel joined.

In the evening, when a traffic police box in Bahaddarhat was set on fire, live ammunition was used on protesters, resulting in several more deaths. It could not be ascertained whether the casualties were from police firing or the BGB, said the ICT investigators.

Contacted, police claimed they only fired shots from shotguns at that time and denied responsibility for the killings.

On August 4, AL men carried out repeated armed attacks on protesters in the Chattogram's city New Market area.

Saibal Das Suman, then Jamal Khan ward councillor, was seen leading a group of cadres in a show of force at Kazir Dewri. The entire New Market area turned into a battleground that day. Another then councillor Abdus Sabur Liton was seen wielding a shotgun, according to the ICT investigators.

Contacted, police claimed they only

UK MPs suspect

FROM PAGE 12

could be hindered by an apparent smear campaign against the BB governor, including articles published on a website called International Policy Digest by individuals with no verifiable journalistic background.

The Guardian found that the authors' images were stock photos.

The emails, sent to the 47 strong APPG, by a sender claiming to be a journalist, sent links to a website International Policy Digest, featuring articles about apparent displays of wealth by Mansur's daughter and questioning why she was not being investigated.

Mansur, who previously lived and worked in Washington, said he believed that people under investigation for money laundering were trying to "diminish my reputation and target me in various ways", reported The Guardian.

Mansur dismissed the claims, stating that his daughter, a US citizen, had little connection to Bangladesh, the report said.

One APPG member Rupa Huq received an email from a UK public relations firm, Palatine Communications, also linking to International Policy Digest, it said.

The message suggested that if Mansur was willing to "impugn the integrity of Tulip Siddiqi," he and his family should also be scrutinised.

Mansur said he had never made any comments about Siddiqi.

He is a key figure in the transitional government led by Muhammad Yunus, whose ACC accused Siddiqi, along with her family members, amid an investigation into a 2013 deal with Russia that allegedly overinflated the

price of a nuclear power plant, the report said.

Rupa described the email as "highly unusual" and compared it to previous attempts to intimidate MPs speaking about Bangladesh in parliament. She said both instances appeared to be efforts to "interfere with parliament and MPs' normal work".

APPG members have reportedly referred the emails to parliamentary cyber security advisers and the parliamentary foreign affairs committee.

"If it is the case that this communication is an attempt to mislead UK politicians when it comes to a very serious corruption scandal, then I think we should be very concerned," said APPG member Phil Brickell.

I urge the relevant parliamentary authorities to investigate thoroughly – we must get to the bottom of who paid for this, and why, in order to understand how we can best protect ourselves."

A spokesperson for Palatine Communications said, "Our client instructions are confidential. In sending the email in question, we acted on our own initiative. We have nothing to do with, and know nothing of, the authorship of this article, but nor did we ever claim it represented the gospel truth."

Like numerous articles from many media outlets, it raises legitimate concerns about the current situation in Bangladesh that we believe are worthy of MPs' consideration."

A spokesperson for International Policy Digest said the person who had actually written the articles had "wished to remain anonymous", adding that they were confident that the content was "fairly accurate".

Declare AL a 'criminal organisation'

FROM PAGE 12

women, youth, minorities, and marginalised communities lead from the front".

Addressing the diplomats, he said, "We believe that South Asia needs relationships built on dignity, justice, mutual respect, and protection of national interests – where no country feels dominated and every nation's sovereignty is respected."

He also said that justice remains a central demand of the party because thousands were killed or permanently maimed by the Sheikh Hasina regime.

Addressing another iftar event in

Narayanganj virtually, Nahid demanded that the Awami League be declared a "criminal organisation" and its registration be cancelled for being responsible for "the killings during the July uprising".

If the trial of Awami fascism is not ensured, there is no guarantee that we will not witness another dictatorship or fascism. We demand a visible trial before the elections."

He also said a conspiracy is underway to rehabilitate AL. "We are seeing various political parties supporting the old arrangements and showing reluctance towards reforms."

Ethnic groups to feature

FROM PAGE 12

there has been no change in the timing of the Mangal Shobhajatra procession compared to previous years.

"There was no discussion during the meeting about changing the name of the Mangal Shobhajatra," he stated.

DU Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed said, "There will be one central committee for the celebration of Pahela Baishakh. There will also four sub-committees within this central

committee."

DU Pro-VC Sayema Haque Bidisha has been appointed as the convener of this central committee, while Faculty of Fine Arts Dean Azharul Islam Sheikh will serve as the member secretary of the committee, according to Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed.

Bangladesh's national women football team will also join the procession.

This year's theme of Mangal Shobhajatra is "Noboborshor Oikyatan,



Palestinians gather at the site of an Israeli strike on a house in Gaza City, yesterday. EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas, during a visit to Jerusalem, warned that Israeli strikes on Syria and Lebanon could threaten to worsen the situation.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Sri Lanka to host India PM next month

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka will host Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi next week, an official said yesterday, as Colombo grapples with the competing interests of its powerful northern neighbour and China, its largest lender.

A member of leftist President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's office said Modi will be the first foreign head of government to visit the island nation under the new administration.

"It must be recalled that President Dissanayake's first foreign visit after his election in September was to New Delhi in December," the official told AFP.

Israeli strikes in Gaza kill 65 Palestinians

Say health officials; Egypt makes new truce offer

REUTERS, Jerusalem

Egypt has put forward a new proposal aimed at restoring the Gaza ceasefire deal, security sources told Reuters yesterday, as Palestinian health authorities said Israeli strikes have killed at least 65 people in the enclave in the past 24 hours.

The proposal, made last

week, follows an escalation in violence after Israel resumed air and ground operations against Hamas last Tuesday, effectively ending a two-month period of relative calm.

Health officials said Israel has killed nearly 700 Palestinians since it resumed

its attacks, including at least 400 women and children.

The Egyptian plan calls for Hamas to release five Israeli hostages each week, with Israel implementing the second phase of the ceasefire after the first week.

Hamas is still holding 59 hostages, with 24 of them thought to be still alive.

Both US and Hamas agreed to the proposal, the security sources said, but Israel has not yet responded. A Hamas official didn't confirm the proposed offer, but said that "several proposals are being discussed with the mediators.



REUTERS, Yangon

A Myanmar junta airstrike

on a remote village medical clinic killed 11 people

including a doctor and his wife, locals told AFP.

Locals said the Saturday morning airstrike hit the village of Hnan Khar in the western region of Magway, in a zone currently held by anti-coup forces. A spokesman for Myanmar's military could not be reached for comment.

US, Russia discuss Ukraine war in KSA

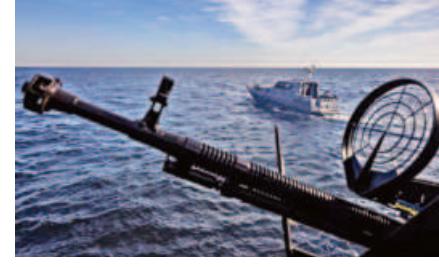
Eye a Black Sea ceasefire; Russia's air attack on Kyiv wounds one, damages houses

REUTERS, Riyadh

US and Russian officials yesterday began talks in Saudi Arabia aimed at making progress towards a broad ceasefire in Ukraine with Washington eyeing a separate Black Sea maritime ceasefire deal before securing a wider agreement.

The talks, which followed US negotiations with Ukraine in Saudi Arabia on Sunday, come as US President Donald Trump intensifies his drive to end the three-year-old conflict after he last week spoke to both Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

A source briefed on the planning for the talks said the US side was being led by Andrew Peek, a senior director at the White House National Security Council, and Michael Anton, a senior State Department official.



The White House says the aim of the talks is to reach a maritime ceasefire in the Black Sea, allowing the free flow of shipping, though the area has not been the location of intense military operations in recent months.

Meanwhile, Russia launched its third consecutive overnight air attack on Kyiv, wounding one person and damaging several houses in the region, a Kyiv's regional governor said yesterday.

Turkey detains 1,100 since Erdogan rival's arrest

AFP, Istanbul

Turkish police have detained more than 1,100 people, including journalists, since the arrest of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's main rival sparked the country's worst unrest in years, a minister said yesterday.

The demonstrations began in Istanbul after Ekrem Imamoglu's arrest last week and have since spread to more than 55 of 81 provinces, sparking clashes with riot police and drawing international condemnation.

The popular 53-year-old has been widely seen as the only politician who could defeat Turkey's leader Erdogan at the ballot box.

SOUTH KOREA POLITICAL CRISIS

Court reinstates impeached PM as acting president

REUTERS, Seoul

"I believe the people are making it very clear, in one voice, that the extreme confrontation in politics must stop," said Han, who thanked the court for its "wise decision" and the cabinet for their hard work while he was suspended.

"As acting president, I will do my best to maintain stable state administration and devote all wisdom and capabilities to safeguard national interests in the trade war," Han said in televised comments.

South Korea, one of the world's top exporters, has been bracing for the potential impact of a range of threatened tariffs under US President Donald Trump.

Eastern Bank PLC.

REGISTERED ADDRESS: 100 GULSHAN AVENUE, GULSHAN,
DHAKA-1212, BANGLADESH

INFORMATION SENSITIVE TO SHARE PRICE

Recommendation for Cash Dividend & Stock Dividend for the year 2024

This is to notify for information of all concerned that the **Board of Directors of Eastern Bank PLC. (EBL)** in the Board Meeting held on **Monday, March 24, 2025** between 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM approved the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2024 and recommended for dividends to the shareholders for the same year as noted below:

- a) Cash Dividend @ 17.50% (Seventeen Point Five Zero Percent)
- b) Stock Dividend @ 17.50% (Seventeen Point Five Zero Percent)

1. The Board also disclosed the following information from the Audited Financial Statements for the year 2024 with the corresponding figures of 2023:

Key Financial Indicators	Solo		Consolidated	
	2024	2023 (Restated)	2024	2023 (Restated)
Net Asset Value (NAV) in Crore BDT	4,306.36	3,748.43	4,295.81	3,824.28
Net Asset Value Per Share in BDT	31.71	27.60	31.63	28.16
Earnings Per Share (EPS) in BDT	5.53	4.50	4.86	4.51
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS) in BDT	18.31	6.99	17.74	6.95

Disclosure after recommendation of stock dividend in compliance with BSEC Notification (Ref: BSEC/CMRRC/2009-193/46/Admin/138, Dated: October 03, 2022).

- a. Stock dividend has been recommended to strengthen the capital base of the Bank (EBL) in order to support projected business growth and to improve certain regulatory ratios.
- b. Stock Dividend is recommended out of accumulated profit; and
- c. Stock Dividend is not recommended from capital reserve or revaluation reserve or any unrealized gain or out of profit earned prior to incorporation of EBL or through reducing paid-up capital or through doing anything so that the post dividend retained earnings become negative or a debit balance.

2. The Board also decided to hold the 33rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Company (EBL) as per following schedule:

Day & Date	: Wednesday, May 21, 2025
Time	: 11.00 AM (Bangladesh Standard Time)
Record Date	: Wednesday, April 23, 2025 (In lieu of Book Closure)
Venue & Mode	: Virtual Meeting through online/ Digital Platform (Link to be communicated in due course)

3. **Dividend Entitlement:** The Shareholders whose names would appear in the Register of Members of the Company (EBL) and/or in the Depository Register on the 'Record Date' (April 23, 2025) will be eligible to join the 33rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) and to receive the Dividends.

By order of the Board of Directors

Sd-

Md. Abdullah Al Mamun FCS
Company Secretary

Dated: March 24, 2025
Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Note:

- All Hon'ble Shareholders of EBL are requested to update their respective BO Accounts [Mailing Address, Electronic Mail (e-Mail), Bank Account details, Taxpayer's Identification Number (e-TIN), Contact Number etc.] through Depository Participant (DP) latest by **April 22, 2025 (Before Record Date)**.
- As per Income Tax Act, 2023, for the shareholders having no e-TIN, Tax will be deducted @ 15% (Fifteen Percent) instead of @ 10% (Ten Percent) from Cash Dividend payable.
- The concerned Depository Participants (DP) are requested to provide us detailed information (both soft & hard copies) of their margin loan holders (if any) within May 15, 2025 who hold shares of the Bank as on 'Record Date' (April 23, 2025) to the Share Department or through email at sharedepartment@ebi-bd.com
- The Annual Report for the year 2024 of the Bank (EBL) will be accessible on the Bank's website, www.ebl.com.bd within the specified timeframe. Additionally, it will be distributed to Shareholders via email addresses available to us as on the Record Date (April 23, 2025).

Checks and balances key to reform success

Some thoughts on political appraisals of reform proposals

With over 15 political parties submitting written feedback on state reform proposals so far, the second phase of the reform drive can be said to be reaching a definitive point. Some of the parties have been vocal about various aspects of the drive in recent months, but this marks their first official response, which in time will be used as a basis for agreement on implementable reforms by the National Consensus Commission. Among the parties, BNP and the National Citizen Party (NCP) submitted their feedback on Sunday, while Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami submitted theirs on Thursday—with their appraisals initially covering key proposals by five reform commissions. We value their respective stances which we hope will leave room for compromise so that the desired consensus can be reached.

That said, certain aspects of these political appraisals, especially those relating to constitutional amendments and electoral system, deserve scrutiny given their potential impact. In particular, a preliminary reading of BNP's feedback shows that while the party leaves the door open for some radical changes—including a bicameral legislature with a 400-seat lower house and a 105-seat upper house—it appears less accommodating of other changes that may institute better checks and balances or limit exploitation of power using parliamentary majority. For instance, BNP does not deem it necessary to form a National Constitutional Council to handle appointments to the Anti-Corruption Commission and Election Commission. It also rejects the idea of holding the EC accountable to a parliamentary standing committee. Regarding the prime minister's tenure, it does not support the proposal that an individual cannot be PM more than twice, seemingly contradicting its own stance in its 31-point charter. It also disagrees with the proposal that one cannot be PM, leader of house, and chief of a political party at the same time. "Imposing constitutional restrictions on political parties is contrary to the core essence of parliamentary democracy," it says.

The message we get from these positions is that BNP remains hesitant to embrace institutional mechanisms that would prevent the excessive centralisation of power. But a key lesson from the history of past elected governments is that no party can be entrusted with absolute parliamentary authority, which, if unchecked, can lead to parliamentary dictatorship. Any reluctance to subject constitutional bodies to stronger oversight or to limit the authority of those in power is thus concerning. While BNP supports certain aspects of constitutional reform, its insistence that these matters be decided by elected MPs again reflects a preference for parliamentary majoritarianism. It may be good in theory, but not so in practical experience.

We think a key question moving forward is whether political parties can rise above their immediate strategic calculations and prioritise long-term national stability. Faith in parliamentary democracy is not granted automatically; it is earned through responsible governance. The overwhelming public support for structural changes after the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government is a testament to their demand for a more accountable system. Politicians must not squander this opportunity.

Fortify mechanisms to tackle TB

Govt must prioritise raising awareness, ensuring diagnosis of this disease

We are deeply concerned about Bangladesh's less-than-impressive performance in tackling tuberculosis (TB) over the last 10 years. According to a report in this daily, the country, which signed on to meet the World Health Organization's (WHO) End TB Strategy in 2015, is struggling to bring down the TB incidence rate to meet the 2025 targets. Bangladesh remains one of seven countries with high incidence rates of both ordinary and drug-resistant TB.

Per the WHO targets, by 2025, Bangladesh is supposed to reduce the TB incidence rate by 50 percent and the number of TB deaths by 75 percent from the 2015 levels. However, the incidence rate has hardly changed over the past decade (225 per 100,000 people in 2015 to 221 per 100,000 in 2023). The number of deaths has been reduced by around 60 percent during the same period. According to the National Tuberculosis Control Programme (NTP), the number of TB diagnoses has risen: 3.13 lakh people were detected with TB in 2024, compared to 3.01 lakh in 2023.

Then there is the matter of "missing" cases—the number of undetected patients. According to the WHO, Bangladesh had around 78,000 missing cases in 2023. A public health expert has warned that curbing the incidence rate will be difficult unless these missing cases are addressed. This makes raising awareness and intensifying efforts to detect them crucial, as undiagnosed patients can unknowingly spread the disease.

Compounding this crisis, national efforts have reportedly hit a snag following the US government's abrupt decision to suspend its USAID programme, which funded several TB initiatives in Bangladesh. For example, a project run by icddr,b—focused on increasing TB detection among children, drug-resistant patients, and high-risk groups—is now on hold due to the funding cut. USAID's suspension is also posing a major challenge for the NTP, which relied on these funds to accelerate its work.

Government officials claim that it won't cause much trouble, but given the situation, we remain unconvinced. What we need is a nationwide mechanism supported by local funds. The government must seek alternative funding sources to ensure that TB projects—both government and non-government—can continue uninterrupted, preventing a rise in cases and deaths. Additionally, rigorous efforts are needed to raise awareness about TB among the general populace, including disadvantaged, vulnerable, and marginalised communities, to detect and address missing cases. The health authorities must employ and strengthen all necessary measures to contain this deadly disease.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

British abolish slave trade

On this day in 1807, the British Parliament abolished slave trade in the British West Indies.



EDITORIAL

AL's crimes: What should be its punishment?

THE STREET VIEW

Mohammad Al Masum Molla
is a journalist at The Daily Star. He can be reached at masumjm@gmail.com.

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The recent statement by National Citizen Party (NCP) leader Hasnat Abdullah has stirred a significant political debate in Bangladesh, adding a new layer of complexity to the country's already volatile political landscape. Hasnat's claim that an effort is underway to create a "refined Awami League" as part of a broader "Awami League must come back" strategy, allegedly backed by India and the military, has caught many by surprise. It is not just his statement that has raised eyebrows, but also the manner in which it has been delivered. His remarks have not only exposed deeper political tensions but also raised critical questions about the future of democratic politics in Bangladesh.

The demand to ban a major political party raises fundamental questions about the limits of democratic competition and the long-term consequences of political exclusion.

To understand the weight of Hasnat's comments, it is essential to reflect on the origins of the current political turmoil. The mass movement in July-August last year, which forced Sheikh Hasina out of power, was driven by public frustration with the government's autocratic tendencies and corruption. The movement was built on four key demands: annulment of the quota system in public service; resignation of Sheikh Hasina; restoration of democratic norms; and establishment of political balance within the government. The protests were marked by intense public mobilisation and sacrifice, as protesters faced violence and government-sponsored repression in their push for political reform.

However, it is important to note that at no point during the July mass movement was there a call to ban the Awami League altogether. The essence of the movement was to restore political balance and ensure accountability, not to dismantle political pluralism. The movement's broad support base reflected a shared commitment to democratic principles rather than a call for political vengeance. This raises an important question: would the movement have attracted the same level of public support if the goal had been to eliminate the Awami League as a political force? The movement sought political reform, not political elimination.

Despite the fall of Sheikh Hasina's government and the departure of several high-ranking Awami League leaders, the party still has some support in Bangladesh. In every



competitive election—not the ones held under Sheikh Hasina—the party has consistently secured at least 35 percent of popular vote. This is a significant figure; it reflects the party's historical, social and political roots. Political support for the Awami League extends beyond individual leaders; it is embedded in the party's historical legacy, particularly its role in Bangladesh's liberation struggle. It is true that Hasina destroyed the party hierarchy, but it still remains a potent force.

Can such a deeply rooted political entity be banned out of existence? Even if the government were to outlaw the Awami League, its political base would not disappear overnight. Political bans have historically fuelled underground movements and radicalisation, rather than eliminating political influence. Furthermore, not all Awami League leaders have been implicated in corruption or human rights violations. Is it justifiable—or even constitutional—to deny them political participation solely because of their party affiliation? Political accountability should target individual wrongdoing—they can be tried and punished—rather than dismantling entire political structures.

History offers valuable lessons on the consequences of political bans. After the 2013 military coup in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood was declared illegal and banned from political participation. Far from restoring stability, the ban triggered new waves of political violence

and radicalisation. The political vacuum left by the Brotherhood's dissolution led to greater instability and state repression. Bangladesh faces a similar risk. Banning the Awami League could push its supporters to align with extremist groups or form underground movements, thereby fuelling unrest and long-term political volatility. Political bans tend to create martyrs rather

faction is struggling to consolidate power, targeting the Awami League could serve as a unifying strategy to rally support. However, this strategy risks alienating moderate voters who supported the July uprising's call for political accountability—not political revenge.

If banning the Awami League is not the solution, then what is? The

answer lies in political accountability rather than political purges. Awami League leaders involved in corruption, human rights abuses, and political violence should be prosecuted through the judicial system. Financial crimes, including bank fraud and smuggling, must be investigated and punished under existing legal frameworks. Democratic reforms aimed at strengthening political transparency and accountability should be prioritised. Political elimination rarely leads to long-term stability. Accountability, not erasure, is the foundation of democratic governance. Political competition and ideological diversity are essential for maintaining a democratic balance.

From a legal standpoint, banning the Awami League would directly contradict both domestic and international democratic principles. Bangladesh is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which guarantees the right to political association. Outlawing a major political party would violate these commitments and draw sharp criticism from the international community. Domestically, the right to political association is protected under the constitution—specifically under Articles 37, 38, and 39. Any attempt to ban the Awami League would face serious constitutional challenges and undermine the legitimacy of the interim government. It would also contradict the principles of democratic pluralism that the July movement sought to restore.

The call to ban the Awami League also raises questions about the political motivations behind such a dramatic statement. The July uprising united a broad coalition of political and social forces, but that unity appears to be unravelling. Hasnat's statement could be an attempt to regain political relevance by appealing to anti-Awami League sentiment. Alternatively, the proposal could reflect internal divisions within the NCP itself. If Hasnat's

While Jamaat-e-Islami was not banned for most of Sheikh Hasina's tenure, the Awami League for long used the idea of banning Jamaat as a political tool. Eventually, when it did move to ban Jamaat, the political outcome was not what the party had anticipated. Hasnat's call to ban the Awami League holds the same risk. If the Awami League is banned, it could emerge stronger as a political martyr. Public sympathy could shift towards the party, and the political vacuum created by its dissolution could destabilise Bangladesh further. Banning the Awami League would not erase its deep political roots; instead, it would likely drive its supporters towards greater political mobilisation. Political accountability—not political elimination—remains the key to resolving the country's political crisis.

A vision for Dhaka's Aminbazar Waste-to-Energy project

Dr Sultan Ahmed
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is research associate at BIGM. She can be reached at fatema.tuzhra@bigm.edu.bd.

SULTAN AHMED and FATEMA TUZ ZUHRA

Dhaka, a city of nearly 20 million people, is struggling under the weight of an escalating waste crisis. Every day the two city corporations generate approximately 6,500 metric tonnes of solid waste, which is projected to reach 6.6 million tonnes annually by 2050.

Most of this waste ends up in landfills, streets, and natural habitats, creating severe health hazards and degrading the urban ecosystem. The uncollected waste clogs the drainage system, pollutes water bodies, and releases methane—a potent greenhouse gas. This mismanagement degrades the urban habitat and creates breeding grounds for diseases underscoring the urgent need for efficient waste removal and recycling processes. It is critical to address this issue to create a sustainable and livable environment for the city.

What is Waste-to-Energy (WtE)?
Waste-to-Energy (WtE) is a process that converts municipal solid waste through incineration. With this technique, garbage is burned at high temperatures to create steam, which drives turbines

to generate electricity. WtE recovers valuable energy from waste and reduces reliance on landfills. Some key materials that are essential for WtE are high-calorific value waste, such as plastics, paper, textiles, dry organic matter, and non-recyclable waste. Furthermore, the process works better when wastes are adequately separated to prevent non-combustible or hazardous materials from interfering with energy creation.

Advanced incineration plants are equipped with pollution control mechanisms to minimise harmful emissions.

The Aminbazar WtE project
Dhaka consumes 46 percent of the country's total electricity. While WtE may not revolutionise power generation, it offers a modest yet meaningful contribution to the city's power supply. More importantly, its primary benefit lies in tackling Dhaka's overwhelming waste problem. The under-construction Aminbazar WtE project, the first of its kind in Bangladesh, is designed to process thousands of tonnes of municipal solid waste from landfills daily. The facility will consist of four incineration lines, two sets of 35-megawatt turbo-generator systems, and a six-kilometre transmission line connecting to the Savar substation.

What stands out is that the project aligns with European Union's pollutant emission standards. According to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, it will implement Best Available Technology to ensure environmentally responsible operations. Equipped with advanced filtration and scrubbing systems, the plant will effectively eliminate hazardous pollutants and make it a sustainable waste management solution.

To guarantee long-term viability, the initiative is backed by several key agreements: an Implementation Agreement with the Government of Bangladesh to establish regulatory frameworks, a Power Purchase Agreement with the Bangladesh Power Development Board to secure electricity sales, a Waste Supply Agreement with Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) to ensure a steady supply of municipal solid waste and a Land Use Agreement with DNCC for plant construction and operation. These agreements create a strong foundation for collaboration between government bodies and private sector stakeholders.

No scarcity of waste
There won't be a shortage of waste in Dhaka for the WtE plant operations. People are already eager for cleaner roads and a healthier environment. If they are made aware that their waste is being transformed into energy for their own use, they will be motivated to separate trash, especially materials with higher calorific value. Moreover, unlike many other cities where waste remains exposed to the environment

for long periods, Dhaka's waste is frequently collected during which much of the moisture is already separated, leaving behind drier, more energy-rich waste. This makes the waste arriving at the WtE plant more suitable for incineration, requiring less pre-treatment and increasing overall efficiency. By utilising this advantage, the city can enhance the effectiveness of its WtE initiatives which will make projects like the Aminbazar more viable and productive.

Call for urgent action

The Aminbazar WtE project must begin operations without further delays by addressing existing obstacles. Dhaka can learn valuable lessons from other cities in the world that have successfully implemented WtE initiatives. For example, Shanghai has integrated WtE into its circular economy strategy, improving efficiency and profitability by extracting recyclables before incineration. Singapore's Tuas Nexus Plant combines waste-to-energy with water treatment, maximising resource recovery and reducing emissions. New Delhi, despite initial setbacks, secured both government backing and private sector involvement to successfully operate the Ghazipur plant.

With strategic investments in waste segregation, clear policy frameworks, and public-private partnerships, Dhaka can avoid missing out on the potential of WtE.

March 25 through the eyes of ordinary people

March 25, 1971 marks the darkest yet most significant moment in the independence struggle of Bangladesh. It began with the Pakistan government launching Operation Searchlight, abducting and killing thousands of people in a single night in the first episode of what went on to be a ruthless genocide. It also sparked an armed resistance that led to the birth of this country. Here are three personal accounts about the victims of this dark night.

'I'll be back, pray for me'

Nazma Majid
is wife of the martyred Shah Abdul Majid who was an educationist and the superintendent of Rajshahi police.

NAZMA MAJID

In 1971, my husband was the chief of police in Rajshahi. On March 31, the Pakistan Army's Captain Salman Mahmud took him away from our drawing room. Since then, he has been missing. One can easily guess what fate befell him. Leaving behind his wife and four children in despair, he became a martyr.

Born in 1935 in Rangpur, Shah Abdul Majid was the son of Shah Yunus Ali and Mosammam Meher Afzun. He was brilliant from an early age. He always ranked first and received scholarships, so my father-in-law never had to worry about his educational expenses throughout his secondary and higher secondary education. After completing his master's degree in Political Science from the University of Dhaka in 1956, he taught at the then Jagannath College from 1957 to 1961. During this period, he passed the Central Superior Services (CSS) examination and became a member of the then Pakistan Police Service. The results of his CSS exam were published on the day our first son was born in 1961.

I had seen how calm, soft spoken, and principled my husband was. He repeatedly asked me whether he should take the job, as he was unsure whether he could be as strict as the police service often required. While teaching for three years, he earned a reputation as a beloved educator among his students. Nevertheless, he eventually accepted the position in the police department.

After completing his training at the Sarda Police Academy in 1962, he joined as an assistant superintendent of police (ASP) in Chittagong in 1963. In 1964, he joined the Special Branch of police, and from 1965 to 1968, he served as the additional superintendent of police in Dhaka district.

At that time, Abdul Majid's voice often calmed and disciplined the agitated students protesting in Dhaka. Though he held a position of authority in the police, he still carried the firmness and affectionate discipline of a teacher. Later, he served as the superintendent of police (SP) in the districts of Bogura and Faridpur, as well as the vice-principal of the Sarda Police Academy. In September 1970, he assumed the role of SP of Rajshahi district.

During the tenure of Monem Khan, when he was posted in Dhaka, the student movement erupted. There were countless days and nights when he would go without meals, he would remain awake and restless, concerned about his duty and the safety of the students.

He would tell me, "Since fate made you a police officer's wife, you must stay strong. Remember, my life is like water on a lotus leaf, it can slip away at any moment." He believed that if he stood before the students, they would calm down. Then, he took charge as the SP of Rajshahi. From the very beginning, an inexplicable sense of fear lingered in me. It felt as though I was destined to lose something there.

Then came March. The non-cooperation movement left him deeply worried. He would say, "Who knows what's coming." He was anxious.

The dreadful night of the 25th arrived. That night, members of the military swarmed our area. My husband knew that he could be arrested at any moment. I told him to leave, but he responded that it was unbecoming of a police officer's wife to say such things. He angrily asked, "If I leave, who will lead my police force?"

He tried to convince the staff at police lines to disperse and resist the enemy. The Pakistani soldiers had blockaded the area. But my husband was determined to prevent the police force from perishing unprepared and surrounded by the enemy.

When the bloodthirsty Pakistani officer Captain Salman Mahmud arrested my husband on March 31, 1971, I was told he was being taken for questioning and would return shortly.

Before leaving, he said to me, "I'll be back—pray for me." Yet, the patriotic Shah Abdul Majid never returned to the warm, loving life he shared with his wife, sons, and daughters.



VISUAL: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

'Let me open the door, they won't harm us'

Abdul Hannan Thakur
is cousin of the martyred Dr Fazlur Rahman Khan, an assistant professor in the Department of Soil Science at the University of Dhaka.

ABDUL HANNAN THAKUR

Fazlur bhai was my paternal cousin. We used to call him Chhotobhai. He was born on March 2, 1939. As a student, he was exceptionally brilliant—always ranking first in every school examination. Despite his restless nature, Fazlur bhai was deeply devoted to his father. Perhaps in his father, he found the warmth and affection of his lost mother. Since her death, he shared a soulful connection with his father—whether it was anger or affection, it was always directed towards him.

He completed MSc from the University of Dhaka (DU) in 1962. On August 1, 1963, he joined the Department of Soil Science at Dhaka University as a lecturer. From childhood, Fazlur bhai had dreamed of becoming a university teacher. That calling became his life's purpose. He immersed himself in research, books and study.

Fazlur bhai earned a scholarship and went to the University of London for higher studies. On July 25, 1968, he received his PhD and rejoined DU the same year. On August 15, 1968, he was promoted to senior lecturer. In 1970, he married Farida Khanam Shirin. Farida bhabi was also a student at DU. She earned her MSc in Physics

with first class and later joined there as a faculty.

It was March, 1971. Teachers and students were united in the spirit of independence. Fazlur bhai also declared his solidarity with the Liberation War. He lived in the university staff quarters near Nilkhel. After his wife left for London, he felt increasingly lonely. When he mentioned this to our eldest sister in Azimpur, she sent her son, Ali Ahsan Khan Kanchan, to stay with him. At that time, Kanchan was a second year science student at Dhaka College.

Then arrived the dreadful night of March 25. Fazlur bhai went to Azimpur. Our eldest sister earnestly insisted he stayed for dinner. But he declined, saying he would eat later with Kanchan, and hurried back home. The same night, Kanchan visited his aunt Renu's house on Mitali Road, saying the same thing—"I'll have dinner with uncle." A young boy Joban, a relative of Farida bhabi, prepared their dinner at home that night.

Shortly after 10pm, the brutal Pakistani Army took over Dhaka. At exactly 12:20am, they pounded violently on Fazlur bhai's door with their rifles, nearly breaking it down. Inside were Fazlur bhai, Kanchan, and Joban. Following the relentless pounding, Kanchan said, "Uncle, I've had UOTC training. Let me open the door with the gesture of surrender—they won't harm us." Fazlur bhai tried to stop him but failed. The moment the door

opened, the soldiers unleashed a barrage of bullets, riddling Kanchan's chest. Overwhelmed by horror, Fazlur bhai shouted in anguish. Instantly, their guns roared again—his chest was also torn apart. They then desecrated his body further by carving an 'X' on his chest with a bayonet. Just like that, two vibrant lives were silenced forever. The horrific scene was witnessed by Joban, who was hiding in the adjacent bathroom. He too had been shot in the leg but somehow managed to survive.

On March 27, when the curfew was temporarily lifted, people went to retrieve the bodies of Fazlur bhai and Kanchan. The scene was beyond description. The house and veranda were soaked in blood—nothing but blood. Congealed, darkened blood. Kanchan's lifeless body lay near the door. One of Fazlur bhai's lifeless hands rested on the steel cabinet beside him as if he were trying to protect something precious. Later, we learned that it contained some belongings of Farida bhabi. Both Chhotobhai and Kanchan were hurriedly buried side by side in coffins at the Azimpur graveyard on March 27. After that, none of us returned home. We fled into the unknown, driven by the fear of the ruthless attackers.

The three accounts are abridged versions of memoirs taken from 'Smriti: 1971', edited by Rashid Haider.

Henry Kissinger's role in 1971



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KOLLOL KIBRIA

Henry Kissinger, one of the most influential yet controversial political figures of the 20th century, passed away in 2023, leaving behind a legacy that continues to spark heated debates. Praised by some as a master of diplomacy and realpolitik, he remains, in the eyes of others, a war criminal who should have been held accountable for his actions. In The Trial of Henry Kissinger, Christopher Hitchens meticulously builds a case against Kissinger, arguing that his policies and decisions—from his role in extending the Vietnam War to his backing of right-wing coups, complicity in genocide, and orchestration of covert operations—led to mass suffering across the globe. The Bangladesh chapter of the book is particularly damning, exposing the cold indifference and realpolitik

calculations that led to one of the most horrifying atrocities of the 20th century.

In December 1970, the people of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) overwhelmingly voted for self-rule under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Awami League. However, instead of honouring the democratic mandate, the Pakistani military, led by General Yahya Khan, launched Operation Searchlight on March 25, 1971. What followed was an unrelenting campaign of mass killings, systematic sexual violence, and forced displacement. Conservative estimates place the death toll at 300,000, though many argue the real number was closer to three million.

As reports of massacres spread, one of the earliest and most powerful condemnations came from Archer Kent Blood, the US

Consul General in Dhaka. Blood and his team sent a series of telegrams to Washington detailing the atrocities being committed by the Pakistani military. In the telegrams, they pleaded the US to take a stand against the Pakistani government. The message read:

"Our government has failed to denounce the suppression of democracy. Our government has failed to denounce atrocities...Our government has evidenced what many will consider moral bankruptcy..."

This was signed by dozens of diplomats, making it the strongest internal protest ever recorded within the US State Department. Yet, Nixon and Kissinger dismissed it outright. Kissinger, obsessed with using Pakistan as a backchannel to China, saw Yahya Khan as an indispensable ally. Instead of acting against genocide, Kissinger chose silence and complicity. In fact, the US government, under Kissinger's guidance, actively supported the Pakistani military by supplying them with weapons.

Kissinger also made a callous remark in a private conversation, referring to Bangladesh as a "basket case," illustrating his dismissive attitude toward the country's plight and people. Between March and December 1971, the Pakistani military

conducted some of the most gruesome acts of ethnic and political cleansing of the 20th century. Bangalees were specifically targeted and executed, Hindu minorities were slaughtered, and millions of women were subjected to rape as a weapon of war. While the world condemned the atrocities, Nixon and Kissinger continued to stand by Pakistan.

His secret conversations with Nixon reveal racist and derogatory remarks about Bangalees and Indians, showing his complete disregard for human lives. Even when the then US Ambassador Kenneth Keating urged the administration to publicly condemn Pakistan's brutality, Nixon said to Kissinger that Keating had been "taken over by the Indians." Kissinger, for his part, at the height of the genocide in late April sent Yahya a message praising him for "delicacy and tact."

As the crisis deepened, India, overwhelmed by millions of Bangalee refugees, prepared to intervene militarily. On December 3, 1971, India officially entered the war to assist the Mukti Bahini. In response, Kissinger orchestrated a dangerous and reckless move. He deployed the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise into the Bay of Bengal. This was meant to intimidate India and deter its intervention, but it failed.

Mukti Bahini with help from India swiftly defeated Pakistan, leading to the creation of an independent Bangladesh on December 16, 1971. But Kissinger's hostility toward Bangladesh did not end there.

When Mujib sought international recognition and aid for the war-ravaged country, the US remained distant. Kissinger saw Mujib's government as an embarrassment, resenting the exposure of US complicity in genocide. In November 1974, Kissinger made a brief eight-hour visit to Dhaka, where he refused to acknowledge the role of the US in Pakistan's actions.

Hitchens' book meticulously builds a case against Kissinger, arguing that his actions in Bangladesh, Chile, Vietnam, and East Timor amount to war crimes. Kissinger's secret involvement in overthrowing democratically elected leaders, his orchestration of military coups, and his support for genocidal regimes paint the picture of a man who viewed human lives as collateral damage in his grand strategy. As Bangladesh continues to push for global recognition of the 1971 genocide, the question remains: will history hold Kissinger accountable, or will his crimes fade into the shadows of realpolitik?



I think it's going to be an exciting game. We are very much motivated. The team has been training and working hard for 24 days already. We have prepared well, we are confident and we expect a very tight game and hopefully we will make things very difficult for India.

Bangladesh coach JAVIER CABRERA

When you play against big brother, you always want to win. So, we want to win against India. There is pressure but we are focused on the match because you all know what happened over the last one year. We feel pressure but we are cool.

Bangladesh captain JAMAL BHUIYAN

Hamza's inclusion in the Bangladesh national team is a positive step, not just for Bangladesh but for Asian football as a whole....His impact on the pitch remains to be seen, but overall, this is a great addition for Bangladesh.

India coach MANOLO MARQUEZ

One thing we know is that whenever India play Bangladesh, we expect a match full of high intensity, passion and adrenaline, be it in football or any sport. We are focused on getting a result.

India defender SANDESH JHINGAN

Hamza-spurred Bangladesh vie to conquer India

SPORTS REPORTER

Even though there is a big gulf in ranking as well as performances between Bangladesh and India, the matches involving the two neighbours have over the years produced some thrilling contests. Viewed only statistically, India are clear favourites going into today's AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers fixture against Bangladesh in Shillong, with a 59-position gap in FIFA rankings and having enjoyed a 13-2 win record out of 31 contests between the two nations. However, the recent results have been quite close, with four of the last five contests producing draws, with India winning the other one 2-0. The inclusion of Hamza Choudhury will



definitely bolster Bangladesh's confidence as well as their performance on the pitch, but India, too, have their own talisman in the form of Sunil Chhetri. The 40-year-old Bengaluru FC forward, who returned from retirement earlier this month, has been a thorn in Bangladesh's side, scoring five out

of India's six most recent goals against the men in red and green. Preparation wise, the two teams are at the opposite extremes. While Chhetri's return helped India end a long winless run in international football in a 3-0 win against Maldives last week, Bangladesh did not play any practice match, except for one against an academy side, during their 12-day preparation camp in Saudi Arabia. The results from 2024 are not too positive either following an uptick in results in the previous year. But the Bangladesh team and their fans are hoping Hamza's inclusion will start a new resurgence in football, starting with a positive result in Shillong.



Fixture: 2027 Asian Cup Qualifiers Third round, Group C
Venue: Shillong
Kick-off: 7:30 pm
Telecast: T Sports, Star Sports 3
Matchday: 1
Other teams in group: Hong Kong, Singapore
Bangladesh
Ranking: 185
Coach: Javier Cabrera
Captain: Jamal Bhuiyan

BANGLADESH VS INDIA

Asian Cup appearance: 1 (1980)

India

Ranking: 126

Coach: Manolo Marquez

Captain: Sunil Chhetri

Asian Cup appearance: 5 (1964, 1984, 2011, 2019, 2023)

Head-to-head Record:

Matches: 31

Bangladesh won: 2

India won: 13

Drawn: 16

Results of last five matches:

2021 SAFF Championship: India 1 – 1 Bangladesh

2021 Asian Cup Qualifiers: India 2 – 0 Bangladesh

2019 World Cup Qualifier: India 1 – 1 Bangladesh

2014 FIFA friendly: India 2 – 2 Bangladesh

2013 SAFF Championship: India 1 – 1 Bangladesh



TAMIM'S HEART ATTACK and a decision that saved his life

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Yesterday was supposed to be just another day at the office for Tamim Iqbal, who was at the BKSP, captaining the star-studded Mohammadian Sporting Club against bottom-placed Shinepukur Cricket Club in an eighth round fixture of the Dhaka Premier League (DPL).

While Tamim went out for the toss, back at the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) headquarters in Mirpur, the officials were preparing for a board of directors meeting set to begin at 12:00 pm.

But in a matter of hours, Tamim was not in the field vying for victory but lying in a hospital bed in Savar fighting for his life after suffering a major heart attack during the match, board officials had cancelled the meeting and were rushing to Savar while millions around the world were refreshing their Facebook feed, trying to find the latest update of their beloved Tamim.

The news of Tamim's heart

attack spread like wildfire, people were in disbelief and fearing the worst and only could breathe easy a few hours into the incident when doctors at the KPJ Specialised Hospital in Savar, where Tamim is being treated, officially announced that the 36 year-old has regained consciousness. However, the match in Mohammadian did not stop as Tamim's Mohammadian teammates

which included Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah and Mehedi Hasan Miraz, played the match with a heavy heart, won the contest by seven wickets and then took no time to visit their captain at the hospital.

Meanwhile, Tamim's treatment procedure was followed by a series of wise decisions taken by a group of individuals which potentially saved his life.

The entire ordeal began

innocently enough, with Tamim initially complaining of gastro liver problems, was taken to KPJ Specialised Hospital – three kilometres away from BKSP – and underwent some initial treatment before returning to the venue once again.

Soon, a helicopter was flown into BKSP to take Tamim to Dhaka for treatment at a hospital in the capital but by the time he was near the helicopter, his medical condition had deteriorated drastically.

"Tamim was not even conscious. Dalim [team trainer] was pressing on his chest, foam was coming out of his mouth, there was no pulse," match referee Debabrata Paul, who witnessed the entire episode, told The Daily Star yesterday.

"I think our quick decision [to take Tamim to KPJ Hospital instead of boarding the helicopter] was very important. Later the doctors also acknowledged it and appreciated the decision as it played a key role in Tamim's wellbeing," said Debabrata, who also expressed his satisfaction with the treatment received at the

hospital.

"As I was the match referee, I talked to the CEO [Nizamuddin Chowdhury] and told him to contact to the hospital so that we can get treatment as soon as we arrive there.

"By the grace of the Almighty, everything was coordinated very well. We came here and found a team of the doctors ready. Tamim was taken to the emergency room and his treatment got underway... The doctors did everything in the shortest possible time and also in a proper way," he added.

Tamim is currently under observation for 48 hours at the hospital's Coronary Care Unit (CCU) after a successful stenting surgery. An Angiogram had shown major artery blockage with one of his arteries blocked a 100 percent and another partially.

Tamim's next course of treatment will be known soon enough but yesterday's quick decision making and swift actions at the hospital played the most significant part in potentially saving the cricketer's life.



Argentina on the brink, Brazil stand in their way

AGENCIES

Argentina will aim to secure their official spot at the 2026 FIFA World Cup in a highly anticipated clash against Brazil on Wednesday (6am, Bangladesh time) at the Buenos Aires' Estadio Mas Monumental.

Lionel Scaloni's side top the South American qualifiers with 28 points, while Brazil trail in third place with 21 points. Despite Lionel Messi's absence due to injury, La Albiceleste delivered a gritty 1-0 victory over Uruguay, courtesy of Thiago Almada's second-half wonder strike.

With this, Argentina ended their three-game winless away run and extended their dominance atop the table.

Argentina's remarkable home form bolsters their confidence: seven wins in their last eight home

qualifiers, including 11 clean sheets in 12. They also hold a four-match unbeaten streak against Brazil, highlighted by a 1-0 win in Rio de Janeiro last year, thanks to Nicolas Otamendi.

Brazil, on the other hand, have shown resurgence after a slow start to the campaign. The Selecao are on a five-game unbeaten run, capped by Vinicius Junior's thrilling 99th-minute winner against Colombia last week. However, Brazil's recent away struggles, with just one win in their last five qualifiers, add to their challenge.

This iconic rivalry promises high stakes and drama as Brazil seek their first win over Argentina since 2019, while the reigning world champions looks to cement their path to the World Cup in front of a roaring home crowd.



Epic comebacks set stage for Nations League semifinals

Epic comebacks set the stage for the UEFA Nations League semifinals, with Portugal, Germany, Spain, and France advancing. In Lisbon, Cristiano Ronaldo scored once and missed a penalty before Francisco Trincao's extra-time brace led Portugal past Denmark 5-3 on aggregate. Ronaldo, subbed off, passionately supported from the sidelines. Germany survived Italy's late surge to win 5-4 on aggregate after a dominant first half in Munich. Spain edged the Netherlands on penalties, while France overcame Croatia thanks to Mike Maignan's heroics—his two penalty saves proved decisive. With Ronaldo's leadership and Maignan's brilliance, the semifinals promise high drama on June 5.

PHOTO: REUTERS/FACEBOOK

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Five cops held for abduction and extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A police officer, three constables from the Detective Branch of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police (RMP), and another constable from the Rajshahi University Police Outpost were arrested in Bogura yesterday on charges of abduction and extortion.

The five were detained by a patrol team from the Kundarhat Police Outpost in the Birgram area of the district's Shajahanpur upazila in the morning.

The arrestees are: Sub-Inspector Shahin Mohammad Anu Islam, and constables Ripon Mia, Abul Kalam Azad, Mahbub Alam, and Bashir Ali. Their microbus driver, Mehdi Hasan, was also arrested and accused in a case filed with Dhunat Police Station.

Another constable, Wahab, was also accused in the case, which was filed by the father of one of the victims, Selim Sheikh, yesterday morning. Wahab is currently in the RMP's custody and is set to be brought to Bogura this morning.

The incident was confirmed to The Daily Star by Bogura's Superintendent

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Hundreds of rickshaws stuck in a jam on Dhanmondi Road-1 around 11:30am yesterday. This street sees a surge in the number of rickshaws during Ramadan due to the increase of seasonal pullers. However, battery-operated rickshaws are more visible this year.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

'Thriving ecosystem' discovered after iceberg breaks off

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have discovered a "thriving ecosystem" of strange deep sea creatures on a newly exposed seafloor after an iceberg broke off near the Antarctic.

The area, which had never before been accessible to humans, is home to giant corals and sponges which support a myriad of life forms including giant sea spiders, octopuses, and icefish, researchers from the Schmidt Ocean Institute say.



The latest finding at depths as great as 1,300m below the sea surface offers fresh insights into how ecosystems function beneath floating sections of the Antarctic ice sheet.

Until now, very little is known about creatures living beneath Antarctica's floating ice shelves. A previous British survey in 2021 first reported signs of bottom-dwelling life forms beneath the Antarctic's Filchner-Ronne ice shelf.

It found a rich biodiversity hosting hints of several new species unknown to science.

Deep-sea ecosystems typically rely on nutrients trickling from the surface slowly down to the seafloor.

But it remains unclear how Antarctic ecosystems, covered by 150 metre-thick (almost 500ft) ice for centuries, host thriving ecosystems when they are completely cut off from surface nutrients.

Declare AL a 'criminal organisation' Nahid urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam said the party's political



roadmap is centred on three key agendas: justice, reform, and election for a constituent assembly.

The assembly, which will also function as the next parliament, is essential because the existing constitution is "fundamentally flawed", according to him.

"Only through a new constitution can we lay the foundations of a genuinely democratic state," he said at an NCP iftar party for diplomats at the InterContinental hotel yesterday.

The party wants the emergence of a "Second Republic built firmly upon democracy and the rule of law, accountability, distributed power and inclusive politics, where

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

JULY UPRISING IN CTG Helmeted and masked, AL men gunned down scores

Finds ICT probe, claims to have identified suspects

SHARIFUL ISLAM and SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

In Dhaka, it was the law enforcers who turned on the people they were supposed to protect. It was the law enforcers who preyed upon protesters during the July uprising. But in Chattogram, it was different. The killers were not in uniform. They came clad in helmets and masks, guns ablaze. And now investigators say they have the names of the suspects.

The port city had turned into a hub of protests at the height of the uprising. Its streets had become battlefields where scores were shot dead.

Investigators of the International Crimes Tribunal say they have found evidence that Awami League activists were responsible for many of these deaths.

Led by two prosecutors, a six-member probe team visited Chattogram and identified at least 11 leaders and activists of AL, its student or youth wings who brandished firearms and shot at protesters. Some of them were already known as armed cadres and loyal followers of AL leaders.

The investigators also gathered photographic evidence of the AL men in action -- wielding weapons and shooting them. Video clips of them shooting at demonstrators that went viral on social media show that they had helmets and



They are AL leader and ex-mayor of Chattogram City Corporation AJM Nasir Uddin, ex-AL lawmaker from Chattogram-6 ABM Fazle Karim Chowdhury, AL leader Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Chattogram city AL President Mahtab Uddin Chowdhury, AL leader Didarul Alam, city Juba League Vice-president Debashish Paul Debu, Chattogram city BCL leaders Imran Ahmed Imu and Zakaria Dastagir.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

UK MPs suspect disinformation targeting BB governor

STAR DESK

British MPs suspect they may have been targeted by a "disinformation" campaign aimed at discrediting Ahsan Mansur, the Bangladesh Bank governor, who is leading the efforts to trace funds allegedly laundered from Bangladesh into the UK, British newspaper The Guardian reported.

According to the report published yesterday, MPs raised concerns after receiving emails containing articles questioning Mansur's credibility ahead of a session today with the 47-member all-party parliamentary group (APPG) on responsible tax and corruption.

Ahsan Mansur, a former IMF official, has been in London seeking assistance from the UK government and private firms to track billions of dollars allegedly siphoned off by allies of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, some of which he believes may have been used to buy UK property, said the report.

His visit comes amid a growing controversy involving Hasina's niece, former UK city minister Tulip Siddiq, who resigned this year after Bangladesh's Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed a case against her.

MPs are now concerned that efforts to assist Bangladesh's anti-corruption drive

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5



People protest the arrest of Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu as part of a corruption investigation, in Istanbul, Turkey, yesterday. Story on Page 7. PHOTO: REUTERS



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PRAYER TIMING
MARCH 25

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:42 12:45 4:45 6:12 7:45

JAMAAT 4:52 1:15 5:00 6:27 8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN MARCH SEHRI IFTAR

24 25 6:12

25 26 4:40 6:12

26 27 4:39 6:13

Hamza adds spice to India-Bangladesh tie

ANISUR RAHMAN

The much-anticipated Asian Cup qualifying showdown between neighbours Bangladesh and India has finally arrived. Tonight, English Premier League-bred midfielder Hamza Choudhury is set to make his long-awaited debut for Bangladesh, a team eager to make strides in international football.



The match kicks off at 7:30 pm (Bangladesh time) at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Shillong, Meghalaya, and will be broadcast live on T Sports. Excitement has been building in both camps, with the pre-match briefing charged with anticipation – especially following Hamza's inclusion, which has drawn attention not just from Bangladesh and India but from the entire South Asian football community.

India, ranked far higher than Bangladesh in FIFA rankings, hold the historical edge in this fixture. However, past encounters have often been more competitive than the rankings suggest. The addition of Hamza brings a new layer of intrigue, with Bangladesh hoping his experience will tip the scales in their favour.

Hamza's arrival has not gone unnoticed by India, who, in response, have recalled their legendary striker Sunil

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

Ethnic groups to feature in next Mangal Shobhajatra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An inclusive Mangal Shobhajatra will be held on Pahela Baishakh this year, featuring participation from various ethnic communities, including Chakma, Marma, Santal, and Garo.

The decision was taken at a meeting held at Dhaka University's Senate Bhaban yesterday.

The meeting began around 11:00am with DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan in the chair. Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostafa Sarwar Farooki also joined the meeting.

Apart from the DU VC, various stakeholders including different cultural figures from the Dhaka University Senate were present at the meeting, among others.

Talking to The Daily Star, DU Registrar Munshi Shams Uddin Ahmed said there is a vision to make the Mangal Shobhajatra, an inclusive event for different ethnic groups, not just Bangalees.

The meeting focused on the how the country's ethnic communities and other organisations can participate and how many people will be involved in the procession.

Additionally, he confirmed that

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

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SAUDIA AFRIN

How to pick the perfect AC for your space?

When the Bangladeshi summer hits full swing, it doesn't just raise temperatures—it tests your patience, sleep, and sanity. In this sweltering heat, an air conditioner isn't a luxury—it's a lifeline. Whether you're buying your first AC or upgrading to a smarter model, choosing the right unit is a long-term decision. Thankfully, Bangladesh's electronics market is booming, offering energy-efficient, feature-packed options. With the right knowledge, you can turn this blazing summer into a season of comfort and smart choices.

SEE PAGE J2

ILLUSTRATION: SOJIB ROY



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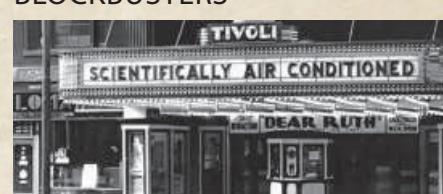
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For Website

5 COOL FACTS ABOUT AC

In the 1930s, cinemas across the US invested in air conditioning to draw in viewers seeking relief from the summer heat, thus paving the way for the emergence of "Summer Blockbuster" releases.

AC HELPED CREATE SUMMER BLOCKBUSTERS



AC TRANSFORMED ARCHITECTURE



In 1902, Willis Carrier invented air conditioning not for human comfort, but to control humidity in a printing plant. This helped prevent paper from wrinkling and ink from smudging.

Before AC, buildings were designed with high ceilings, thick walls, and large windows to promote natural ventilation. With air conditioning, architects could design taller skyscrapers and windowless office spaces, revolutionising urban landscapes.

IT WAS ORIGINALLY INVENTED FOR PRINTING PRESSES



INCREDIBLY EXPENSIVE AC UNITS



Packard Motor Company introduced the first air-conditioned car in 1939—but it was too expensive and impractical. The cooling unit took up half the trunk space, and there was no thermostat—the driver had to turn off the system if it got too cold!

In the early 1900s, air conditioning was incredibly expensive, and only the wealthiest people and businesses could afford it. The first air-conditioned home was built in Minneapolis in 1913—it cost \$10,000 at the time (over \$300,000 today)!

THE FIRST AIR-CONDITIONED CAR CAME IN 1939



A SNAPSHOT OF BANGLADESH'S AC INDUSTRY

Expected revenue in 2025: US\$ 103.19 million | Expected revenue per household in 2025: US\$ 3.01 | Annual growth rate (anticipated): 20%

AC Sales in the Last Two Years

SOURCE: WALTON

2024	650,000
2023	450,000

Market Share of Local and Global AC Brands (in %)



Export of Air Conditioners (in BDT Million)

2018-19	79.21
2019-20	32.824
2020-21	539
2021-22	76.07

Import of Air Conditioners (in BDT Million)

2018-19	8,844
2019-20	11,211
2020-21	9,397
2021-22	12,705

SOURCE: STATISTICAL YEARBOOK BANGLADESH 2022

Pick the perfect AC for your space

FROM PAGE J1

Residential space

When buying an air conditioner for residential use, one of the most important factors to consider is capacity, measured in tons or British Thermal Units (BTUs).

A general rule of thumb: 1 ton (12,000 BTU) is suitable for around 120 sq. ft. However, room size isn't the only factor. Sunlight exposure, ceiling height, insulation, number of occupants, and even proximity to the kitchen all impact cooling efficiency.

Ariful Islam, Deputy Executive Director and Head of Research and Innovation for Residential Air Conditioners at Walton, has emphasised the importance of checking the specifications beforehand, stating, "You must ensure you're choosing the right AC for your home, as selecting the appropriate BTU capacity is essential for both performance and cost-effectiveness."

For larger homes or open areas, consider multiple units or a high-capacity inverter AC. An undersized AC will struggle to cool efficiently, while an oversized one will waste energy by cycling too quickly. The right capacity ensures balanced cooling, lower maintenance, and better energy efficiency for long-term comfort.

Commercial space

For business owners in Bangladesh, air conditioning is a necessity that impacts both productivity and customer satisfaction. However, high electricity bills can be a major concern, making it crucial to select the right AC system for your commercial space.

Like residential areas, factors such as square footage, number of windows and doors, local climate, and occupancy levels all play a role in determining the ideal cooling solution.

Smaller shops and offices (under 1,000 sq. ft.) should opt for 2-3-ton units from cost-effective brands, while larger spaces (over 1,000 sq. ft.) benefit from high-performance commercial systems suited for large offices or boutiques.

For large commercial spaces, central air conditioning is ideal, distributing cooled air through ducts. For smaller commercial spaces, ductless systems offer flexibility by cooling specific areas independently.

FEATURES THAT TRULY MATTER

Modern air conditioners come loaded with features, from Wi-Fi remote start to precision sensors detecting room hotspots. Here are the key factors to consider:

A ROUGH GUIDE FOR RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL SPACES

Residential spaces

- » Up to 120 sq. ft. (Small bedroom) 1 Ton
- » 120-180 sq. ft. (Medium bedroom/living room) 1.5 Ton
- » 180-260 sq. ft. (Large bedroom/living room) 2 Ton

Commercial spaces

- » 500-1,000 sq. ft. (Small Office) 5-10 tons
- » 1,000-3,000 sq. ft. (Retail Store) 10-30 tons
- » 3,000+ sq. ft. (Large Office) 30+ tons (preferably Central/VRF systems)

Window vs split

While split ACs dominate today, window ACs were once popular. Choosing between them depends on installation, design, cooling capacity, and aesthetics. Window units suit single rooms, while split ACs offer greater capacity for larger spaces.

Energy efficiency

Unlike traditional ACs that turn on and off repeatedly, inverter ACs adjust their speed seamlessly to maintain a steady temperature.

"Inverter ACs sip electricity. Unlike

their non-inverter counterparts, they don't gulp power in one go. Instead, they gracefully modulate their cooling capacity based on your room's needs," says Md Julhak Hossain, National Sales Manager, Electromart Ltd. This reduces carbon footprints and lowers electricity bills.

Additionally, two key efficiency indicators to consider are COP (Coefficient of Performance) for heating and EER (Energy Efficiency Ratio) for cooling. It is imperative to note that the higher the COP or EER, the more efficient and energy-saving the AC tends to be.

For commercial spaces, opting for an AC unit with a high Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) ensures maximum efficiency, meaning the AC uses less energy to provide the same amount of cooling compared to units with lower SEER.

ratings.

While energy-efficient models may have a higher upfront cost, they reduce electricity bills in the long run—making them a smart decision. Look for Energy Star-certified units to ensure optimal energy savings and environmental benefits.

A wealth of smart features

Innovative features include a sleek digital display, offline voice control in both Bangla and English, Bluetooth-enabled operation, air filters, noise reduction systems, and an AI Doctor system that improves air quality by killing bacteria and controlling humidity levels, while also providing maintenance alerts.

"The Jamuna Smart Inverter AC includes a PM2.5 filter that uses high-pressure ionisation and nano cold catalyst dust-collecting technology to eliminate even the tiniest airborne particles, ensuring cleaner indoor air. Its Cold Plasma Technology enhances air ionisation, reducing mental fatigue, preventing infections, and boosting vitality," says Monika Islam, Group Director, Jamuna Group.

Other essential factors include cooling speed, noise levels, gas type, spare parts availability, and Coatec Technology, which enhances durability by protecting against rust and corrosion, ensuring long-lasting performance.

Warranty

Whether buying an AC for residential or commercial use, prioritising after-sales service and warranty is crucial. Opting for a brand that offers a comprehensive warranty and reliable customer support can protect you from surprise repair expenses and minimise system downtime.

Professional installation

Correct installation by trained professionals is crucial to ensure your AC performs at its best. Expert technicians optimise airflow and system efficiency while avoiding common pitfalls—such as improper sizing—that can result in higher electricity bills and faster wear and tear.

An expert from Transcom Digital notes, "Commercial spaces generally require an HVAC system (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning), and its usage is increasing over time." Professional teams conduct site assessments before installation, informing buyers about potential additional costs for pipes, lines, or other add-ons beyond the AC unit itself. Investing in professional installation ensures optimal performance and longevity of your AC system.

TRANSCOM DIGITAL

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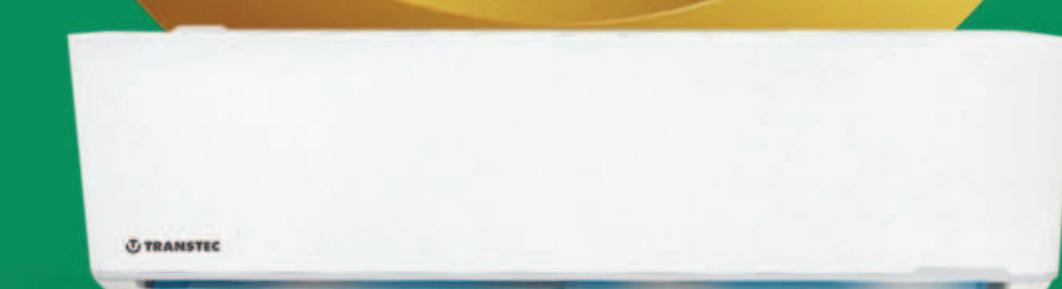
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What's Next for ACs IN BANGLADESH?



MD TANVIR RAHMAN
Chief Business Officer
Walton Air Conditioner

The air conditioner market in Bangladesh has experienced significant growth in recent years, driven by rising temperatures, increased urbanisation, and a growing middle class. This surge in demand has led to a robust domestic manufacturing sector, with over 50% of ACs sold now being produced locally. The expansion of local manufacturing has made ACs more affordable. Moreover, new technologies and after-sales benefits have further fuelled market growth, with projections exceeding 20% in the coming years.

With strong domestic manufacturing capabilities, Walton delivers innovative AC solutions, reinforcing its leadership in the industry. Incorporating cutting edge technologies—such as the highest EER, voice control, Bluetooth control, AI Doctor, and Coatec Technology—the company offers a unique blend of efficiency, smart features, and affordability, making its products a top choice in Bangladesh's expanding AC market.

We hope the government will take all necessary steps and provide appropriate policy support to ensure the sector's sustainability. This will contribute to greater economic progress and the overall development of the country.



MHM FAIROZ
Managing Director & CEO
Singer Bangladesh

Singer Bangladesh is continuously striving to enhance the user experience. Alongside our Singer Green Inverter ACs, we have recently introduced Beko ACs.

Our inverter ACs reduce electricity costs while delivering superior cooling. Designed for the Bangladeshi climate, our ACs ensure rapid cooling even in extreme heat. Built-in ionisers and a 4-in-1 filtration system provide cleaner, healthier air. We are the first to introduce easy instalments without bank cards, along with a 12-month, 0% interest facility—making ACs more affordable for customers.

We have a robust stock-building strategy during peak seasons, ensuring that customers never have to worry about stock shortages for Singer and Beko ACs. This Eid, we are offering discounts, free installation, institutional bundle offers, and extended warranty options to make AC purchases more convenient and affordable for our customers.

In January 2025, we inaugurated a state-of-the-art home appliances plant in the Bangladesh Special Economic Zone (BSEZ) at Araihazar, Narayanganj. This facility, spanning 135,000 square metres, stands as a testament to our commitment to local manufacturing and reducing reliance on imports.



MD NURUL AFSER
Deputy Managing Director
Electro Mart Group

With advanced features that set them apart, Gree ACs offer an efficient Cold Plasma system for cleaner breathing, a fully enclosed air guide louvre and top-mounted filter, auto-clean functionality, comfortable airflow with wide air supply, a quiet design, and AI intelligent control.

Additional features include Wi-Fi remote control, washable air purification filters, 60-second fast cooling, 3D airflow, four-way air swing, I-Feel technology, a comfortable sleeping mode, ideal temperature settings, cold air prevention, a turbo button, intelligent auto-restart, LED display, self-diagnosis, healthy filters, energy-saving capabilities, Golden Fin technology, intelligent defrosting, a compact design, low-voltage start-up, automatic operation, and the use of environmentally friendly R32 gas. Installation and maintenance are also designed to be easy and efficient.

Looking ahead, Gree will rise to every challenge, forge new paths, achieve fresh milestones, embrace innovation, and lead industry development with a more dynamic and inspiring approach—promoting high-quality advancements in air conditioning manufacturing and contributing to a better quality of life for all.



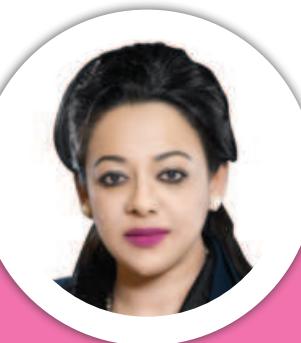
RITESH RANJAN
Head of Business
Transcom Electronics

We are strategically positioning ourselves for strong growth in the AC market by catering to diverse customer needs with a comprehensive product lineup. Our range includes low, mid, and premium-segment ACs, ensuring affordability and accessibility for all consumer groups.

We offer ACs at varied price points with advanced features, prioritising energy efficiency and environmental sustainability. Our ACs are designed to operate efficiently at temperatures of up to 50°C, ensuring reliable cooling amid Bangladesh's rising heat.

By focusing on product diversity, affordability, and superior after-sales service, Transcom Digital continues to drive growth and strengthen its position in Bangladesh's AC market.

The future of Transcom Digital in the AC industry is centred on continued growth, technological innovation, and customer satisfaction. We are committed to expanding our product range with more energy-efficient and eco-friendly air conditioners to meet the evolving needs of our customers. As demand for advanced features increases, we will continue to introduce smart ACs with cutting-edge technologies that ensure superior cooling performance and convenience.



MONIKA ISLAM
Group Director
Jamuna Group

Our state-of-the-art factory manufactures world-class Jamuna ACs that can compete with global brands. Thanks to cutting-edge technology, modern machinery, advanced raw materials, and persistent innovation and excellence, Jamuna ACs are now the number one choice for consumers.

Jamuna Electronics introduces an all-new range of AC models featuring revolutionary 5D AI Inverter Technology. Cold Plasma Technology enables air ionisation, which reduces mental fatigue, keeps your home infection-free, and enhances bodily vitality.

Additionally, the Vitamin-C filter in Jamuna ACs helps maintain the skin's natural moisture. The Silver Ion Filter and Degerming Filter prevent harmful bacteria in the air and help eliminate bad odours from the room.

We have also introduced Dual Inverter Technology, Fine Accuracy Line, Hot & Cool Option, voice control without a remote or internet, and a strong antivirus filter with 3rd-generation UVC Sterilisation Technology in Jamuna Air Conditioners. Jamuna ACs ensure our customers stay cool while keeping their energy bills in check. With smarter technology and eco-friendly performance, we are redefining comfort and sustainability.

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THE COOLEST AC deals this summer

From Eid-exclusive gifts and cashback to foreign trip lotteries and free installation, this summer's deals are designed to tempt. Institutions can also cash in on special packages.

PRIYAM PAUL
As temperatures rise, Bangladeshis are turning to ACs to stay cool—and brands are turning up the heat with irresistible offers. From Eid-exclusive gifts and cashback to foreign trip lotteries and free installation, this summer's deals are designed to tempt. Institutions can also cash in on special packages. With the right timing and a little research, buyers can score serious savings while locking in cool comfort for the months ahead.

Cool Offers You Can't Miss
"We're offering a flat discount under our Sobar Jonno Bhalo campaign, where customers can avail a 10-12% discount on Gree ACs—delivering on the high expectations people have from Gree," says Md Julhak Hossain, National Sales Manager at Electromart Ltd.

Gree has also introduced a special offer for premium mobile users—'star consumers'—who can enjoy up to 10-14% discounts. Customers can check their eligibility at Gree showrooms using a designated code.

Jamuna Electronics is offering discounts ranging from 10% to 30% on air conditioners. As Ramadan continues, the company has extended special deals across all its electronics, including ACs.

As part of its Eid campaign, Jamuna has introduced the Jemon

Khushi Offer, where every buyer receives a guaranteed gift—such as a panjabi, sari, or three-piece outfit—upon digital registration.

The response from AC buyers has been positive so far. Our current Eid offer will continue until Eid-ul-Adha," says Salim Ullah Salim, Marketing Director at Jamuna Electronics.

He adds that the highlight of the campaign is a mega prize draw where buyers have a chance to win international trips through a weekly digital lottery. So far, four lucky customers have already secured foreign trips.

Singer and Beko are offering a 7% cash discount. Singer also has a special bundle offer for institutional and mosque AC purchases, including an extra 2% discount.

For online shoppers, Singer's Ura Dhura Campaign runs every Friday and Saturday, offering an additional 3-4% discount on top of the existing 7% when purchasing through singerbd.com.

"During this Ramadan, we're offering special bundle deals on ACs for mosques," says Sanjana Mahmud, Product Manager at Singer Bangladesh Ltd.

On warranties, she shares that Singer offers a 5-year compressor warranty and 3-year warranty on spare parts and services. Beko provides an 8-year compressor warranty,

alongside 3 years of spare parts and service coverage. Both brands offer free installation.

Transcom Electronics is offering exclusive AC deals with free installation, featuring a wide range of global brands. Ritesh Ranjan, Head of Business at Transcom Electronics, says, "Alongside our regular promotional discounts, we also offer additional cashback on selected bank cards, ensuring unbeatable deals in the market."

Walton is offering up to 25% off through its Exchange Offer for customers trading in their old

units. The company also runs a Mosjid Offer, which includes a free angle and one-year extended service warranty. Walton's Digital Campaign offers a chance for buyers to become millionaires through their AC purchase.

Md Tanvir Rahman, Chief Business Officer of Walton Air Conditioner, notes, "With nationwide service centres, 24/7 support, and industry-leading warranties, Walton ensures that customers get the best value, service, and peace of mind."

In addition, Walton offers several guarantees and warranties, including a one-year replacement guarantee (the only AC brand in Bangladesh to provide this), a 10-year compressor warranty, a 5-year PCB warranty on select models, a 3-year spare parts warranty, and one year of free after-sales service, which includes cleaning.

Flexible payment options for AC buyers
Understanding

that affordability is key, most brands now offer easy monthly instalment (EMI) options to make AC purchases more accessible. While these EMI plans are available year-round, they become especially attractive during the summer sales season.

Gree has partnered with 36 banks to offer EMI plans of up to 36 months. It has also introduced Sohjo Labbha o Sohjo Kisti—an instalment facility that allows customers to buy directly with a down payment.

Jamuna provides flexible EMI options over 3, 6, 9, or 12 months through its dealer network, own outlets, and online platforms.

Singer and Beko offer 36-month 0% EMI options in partnership with 36 banks.

Transcom Electronics has tie-ups with over 35 banks to provide 0% EMI facilities as well, making air conditioning ownership more affordable than ever.

Walton has 0% interest EMI and Easy Kisti facilities to make purchasing more convenient.



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