

YOUR  
RIGHT  
TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION

DHAKA WEDNESDAY APRIL 9, 2025

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 82

CHAITRA 26, 1431 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SHAWWAL 10, 1446 HIJRI

16 PAGES: TK 15.00

## Green shoots in economy

GDP sees 4.5pc growth in 2nd quarter, but Trump tariffs may hurt recovery

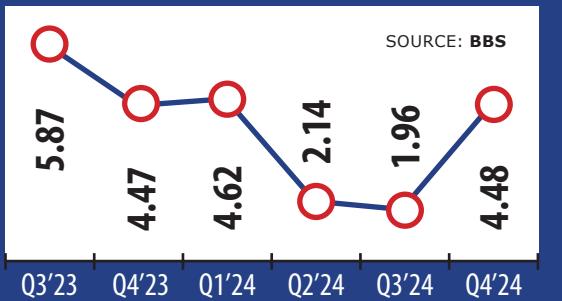
REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh's economy started showing signs of a turnaround in the second quarter of the fiscal year, official statistics show, although economists caution that Trump's tariff measures are likely to slow down the momentum.

Between October and December last year, Bangladesh's GDP expanded by about 4.5 percent to Tk 886,800 crore, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the state agency for collecting data on demographics, the economy and other facts.

In the previous quarter, the GDP growth was about 2 percent. The second quarter's recovery was led by manufacturing growth: the industrial GDP grew 7.1 percent in contrast to 2.4 percent the previous quarter.

### GDP growth picking up after cratering in Q3 of 2024 (in %)



Agricultural growth was about 1.3 percent in contrast to 0.8 percent the preceding three months, while service sector growth was 3.8 percent, up 137 basis points from the previous quarter.

The second quarter GDP growth was more in line with the International Monetary Fund's latest projection of about 4 percent growth for this fiscal year, up from about 3.8 percent previously.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Vast fallow land in the Moukhali area of Dacope, Khulna. Farmers say they cannot cultivate paddy or vegetables because the land has become too dry due to a lack of rain and inadequate water in the canals that could be used to irrigate the farms.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## BNP to meet CA, push for polls roadmap

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP will meet Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus again and ask for a roadmap to the next election, according to the top leaders of the party.

The decision was made at a Standing Committee meeting on Monday night at the BNP chairperson's office in Gulshan.

During the meeting, the party plans to convey its concerns and doubts regarding the election and the political situation to Yunus.

Outcome of the meeting with Yunus will determine the BNP's next course of action.

The meeting is expected to take place after BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir returns from Singapore.

Fakhrul left for Singapore last Sunday for treatment and is expected to return in about a week.

The Standing Committee members also discussed plans to celebrate Pahela Baishakh, which will be on April 14, with events highlighting Bangla culture, across the country.

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman presided over the meeting via video link. It was the party's first policy-level gathering after Eid.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## 60 arrested over Monday's vandalism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested 60 people on charges of vandalism in different districts during Monday's demonstrations in solidarity with the oppressed people of Gaza.

Besides, the Chief Adviser's Press Wing in a statement yesterday said the attacks on shops were a "serious threat to public safety and the rule of law".

Two cases have been filed over the matter, the statement added.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## ShopUp, Sary to merge, raise \$110m

AHSAN HABIB



ShopUp, the country's most-funded start-up, is merging with Sary, a Saudi-based business-to-business (B2B) e-commerce platform, in a deal expected to facilitate the entry of Bangladeshi products into the Saudi market.

Both companies essentially connect micro, small and medium-sized businesses with a network of wholesalers and manufacturing brands to procure supply efficiently.

"While some Bangladeshi goods are available in Saudi Arabia today, the range is limited and dominated by just a few companies -- we want to make it easy for more homegrown producers to enter that market," said Afeef Zaman, founder and chief executive officer of ShopUp.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

**Unlock New OPPORTUNITIES IN BANGLADESH: INVEST THROUGH PPP**

Wishing Great Success to the Bangladesh Investment Summit 2025, Welcome, Global Investors!

**Public Private Partnership Authority**

**Chief Adviser's Office**

Bangladesh opens its doors to transformative opportunities through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). With landmark successes like the Dhaka Elevated Expressway, NIKDU, Patenga Container Terminal and Dhaka Bypass, the PPP model is driving sustainable growth and infrastructure excellence.

Join us in building the future - invest in Bangladesh.  
Invest Smart. Invest PPP.



## 2 US delegations arrive next week

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Washington is sending two delegations to Dhaka, the first visits under the Trump administration that is making huge policy changes in trade and diplomatic fronts.



Andrew R Heerup    Nicole Chulick

Nicole Chulick, deputy assistant secretary at the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs (SCA), will be leading a delegation on a four day visit on April 15.

The other delegation will be led by Andrew R Herrup, deputy assistant secretary at the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, which is scheduled to arrive on April 16.

US Chargé D'Affaires to Myanmar Susan Stevenson will accompany Herrup during his visit to Bangladesh,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

## ShopUp, Sary to merge, raise \$110m

FROM PAGE 1

ShopUp is the largest organised distributor of fast-moving consumer goods in Bangladesh, operating more than 200 hubs across the country. Sary has operations in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan.

There are more than 30 lakh Bangladeshis living in Saudi Arabia and they play a massive role in the Bangladesh economy, according to ShopUp.

"Not just Saudi Arabia – very soon, we plan to launch across other countries in the Middle East," Zaman said.

In the next decade, the Gulf-South Asia trade corridor is expected to become one of the world's most significant routes, handling over \$682 billion worth of trade.

"ShopUp wants to seize this opportunity and evolve into a global company," Zaman said.

The merged outfit will be called the Silq Group and the strategic merger is backed by a \$110 million (about Tk 1,300 crore) funding round led by Saudi Arabia's Sanabil Investments and Peter Thiel's Valar Ventures, according to ShopUp.

The funding round includes equity financing as well as a financial facility for Silq Financial, Silq Group's planned dedicated financing arm focused on advancing innovations in SME funding.

ShopUp did not disclose when the deal was closed.

Both the ShopUp and Sary brands will continue to operate in their respective geographies under their respective brand names post-merger while leveraging Silq's enhanced infrastructure, combined capabilities and shared resources.

Zaman will now serve as the CEO of Silq Group, while Sary's founder and CEO, Mohammed Aldossary, will take charge as CEO of Silq Financial.

ShopUp's co-founder, Ataur Rahim Chowdhury, will become ShopUp (Bangladesh) CEO and lead the Bangladesh business.

"By merging our strengths, we are not just expanding our reach – we are revolutionising how digital commerce serves merchants across the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] and Emerging Asia," said Mohammed Aldossary, CEO of Silq Financial.

All of this is in service to SMEs that have traditionally been an underserved and untapped community, despite their significant contributions to their respective markets, he added.

The merger reflects a bold vision to place the markets at the centre of a new commercial ecosystem connecting with South Asia, said James Fitzgerald, founding partner at Valar Ventures.

This would be Sanabil's first-ever investment in South Asia. The other investors include Flourish Ventures, Kuwait's state-owned Wafra and Qatar's state-owned Qatar Development Bank.

## 60 arrested

FROM PAGE 1

"Further investigations are underway, and additional cases are being filed against those responsible for the reprehensible acts," it said.

Police have raided multiple locations and are analysing video footage to identify the suspects, it said.

The government urges people to come forward if they have any information that could lead to the arrest of more suspects, it added.

Groups of rowdy people vandalised and looted shops, restaurants and shoe stores in Sylhet, Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Khulna, Gazipur, and Bogura during demonstrations on Monday.

Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday warned of tough action against those involved.

He added that the law enforcers would be vigilant and prevent the recurrence of such incidents, he told reporters at the Secretariat.

Responding to a question regarding the matter, Tuhid said both the leaders agreed on this as the same things are happening from the Indian side too.



People queue up as Election Commission employees update voter data at a school in the Tigerpass area of Chattogram city. Signatures, photographs, fingerprints, and iris scans are being collected as part of the national initiative.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## Green shoots in economy

FROM PAGE 1

"This is a recovery -- there is no ambiguity about this," said Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office.

The first quarter of fiscal 2024/25 was affected by two calamities: the July uprising and then the floods in August.

"The twin events had affected the farming, manufacturing and services sectors. But from October onwards, there were fewer economic disruptions and hence both agricultural and manufacturing production picked up pace."

Besides, both exports and remittances were strong during the quarter, he said.

Exports raked in about \$12.9 billion during the quarter, up about 18 percent year-on-year, according to data from the Export Promotion Bureau.

Remittance inflows soared 22.8 percent year-on-year to \$7.2 billion during the quarter, according to Bangladesh Bank data.

Manufacturing growth is directly connected to exports, while remittance has a direct impact on domestic demand.

"If both agriculture and

manufacturing do well, the service sector will automatically improve. And that is what transpired. The economy did not normalise -- it was not out of the woods -- but it was better than the first quarter," he added.

There was definitely a turnaround in the second quarter of the fiscal year, said Mustafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

The third quarter data is poised to be better than the previous two quarters, said Hussain, who was part of the 12-member committee that recently prepared a white paper on the state of the Bangladesh economy.

"Normalcy began to return, while both export and remittance receipts remained buoyant. The balance of payment situation improved, while there was stability in the macroeconomic front, the foreign exchange market and even the financial sector. The panic is no longer there."

However, the US administration's announcement of a fresh 37 percent tariff on Bangladeshi products to the market, the single largest export destination for the country's goods, threatens to derail the momentum.

"Trump tariff is a big risk factor. In any case, exports will be affected -- there is a new risk to manufacturing growth."

The measures taken by the interim government so far on the tariff measures are unlikely to enforce a reversal of a decision by US President Donald Trump.

"I don't think the two letters [by Bangladesh] would make Trump change his decision -- a lot needs to be done now."

There is also the risk of a global recession as a result of the tariff war brought on by Trump.

"In that case, the impact on exports will be even more," Hussain added.

However, Rahman begs to differ.

"There will be some negative impact on imports. But in the context of GDP, there won't be much impact as exports' share in GDP has declined over the years."

Manufacturing GDP will be impacted as it is mainly export-oriented.

"But the strong trend of remittance inflow will have a positive impact on consumer demand and can pick up the slack left behind by exports. I don't envisage there will be any big impact on the overall GDP growth."

## Bangladesh must look east for trade expansion

FROM PAGE 12

"China is the biggest source of capital surpluses in the world today."

PRI Chairman Zaidi Sattar said the current tariff policy of Bangladesh is a major barrier to the diversification of exports because of the high tariffs in place. As a result, many manufacturers prefer to do business locally rather than export their goods to other countries where there is foreign competition.

He also believes Bangladesh's market needs to be orientated towards Asia as the 21st century is predicted to be an "Asian century," but these markets are not yet as readily accessible to Bangladeshi products as the US.

"Now we are talking about a \$100 trillion global economy, with the United States accounting for one-quarter of that. Okay, but the rest of the world makes up 75 percent," PRI chairman added.

Anwar Ul-Alam Chowdhury (Parvez), former president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) said Bangladesh responded too soon to the Trump tariff and should have

taken more time.

Shams Mahmud, managing director of Shasha Denims Ltd, said it's unlikely that increasing cotton imports from the US will significantly reduce the trade deficit and at the same time, the potential for further growth in exports to the European Union is limited.

He went on to say that exporting man-made fibre garments to the US will face difficulties due to the new tariff measures implemented by the Trump administration.

A Gafur, director of Abdul Monem Economic Zone Ltd, stressed the importance of political stability and building capacity.

"The Japanese Honda company has been producing 8,000 to 10,000 units of motorcycles in the factory, housed inside of their economic zone," he mentioned.

Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the CPD, said more than \$1 billion in tariffs will be imposed on Bangladesh under the new measure by the Trump administration.

Bangladesh may not be much

benefited if it goes to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) for a settlement, as the trade dispute settlement mechanism in the WTO has been made dysfunctional over the last many years.

However, Bangladesh should hold bilateral discussions with the US on which items they prefer to enjoy the duty benefit on shipment to Bangladesh, he added.

Trade facilitation and logistics policy should be implemented for the greater interest of Bangladesh, and the revival of SAARC is also important, he also added.

Selim Raihan, executive director at the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM), said Bangladesh needs to look into its own preparedness, like tariff policy, trade policy, foreign trade policy and investment policy for a better deal with the US.

The government should continue the reforms in different areas so that the trade environment is created, he added.

## Hasina extradition came up, nothing was finalised

FROM PAGE 12

He made the comment while speaking at another press conference at the Foreign Service Academy.

On April 4, Yunus and Modi had a meeting on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC summit at a Bangkok hotel.

It was the first in-person meeting between the two leaders since the political changeover in Bangladesh in August last year when the Hasina government fell, and she fled to India amid a mass uprising.

Tuhid added that further improvement of the relations depends on both sides. "We need to progress the relations together."

He said that by and large, the chief adviser's visits to China and Thailand to attend BIMSTEC summit fulfilled Bangladesh's expectations.

Meanwhile, Khalilur, during his press briefing on the summit's outcome, said that the Ganges Water-Sharing Treaty with India is going to expire next year, so Bangladesh is hoping for optimum cooperation

from India about renewing the treaty.

"Both sides maintain communications to ensure that discussions on this issue begin smoothly," he said while responding to a query.

On the Teesta water sharing, Khalilur said the life and livelihoods of about 14 percent of the country's people, who have been living on the Teesta basin, depends on the availability of the river water.

Ensuring a minimum availability of Teesta waters is one of the top priorities of the Bangladeshi government, he said.

"You cannot push 14 percent of the population into such a dire situation. That is why we are engaging with everyone, including India, to finalise the agreement. Once the agreement is in place, no further action will be necessary. At the same time, we must keep other options open, which is why we are working with all parties," he said.

Kazbekov said the lender has introduced multi-currency lending, which will benefit Bangladesh.

## Scientists resurrect dire wolf

FROM PAGE 12

Aenocyon dirus, which was the inspiration for the fearsome canine featured in the HBO TV series "Game of Thrones," was a top predator that once roamed North America. Dire wolves were larger in size than gray wolves and "had a slightly wider head, light thick fur and stronger jaw," the company said.

The measures taken by the interim government so far on the tariff measures are unlikely to enforce a reversal of a decision by US President Donald Trump.

"I don't think the two letters [by Bangladesh] would make Trump change his decision -- a lot needs to be done now."

There is also the risk of a global recession as a result of the tariff war brought on by Trump.

"In that case, the impact on exports will be even more," Hussain added.

However, Rahman begs to differ.

"There will be some negative impact on imports. But in the context of GDP, there won't be much impact as exports' share in GDP has declined over the years."

Manufacturing GDP will be impacted as it is mainly export-oriented.

"But the strong trend of remittance inflow will have a positive impact on consumer demand and can pick up the slack left behind by exports. I don't envisage there will be any big impact on the overall GDP growth."

## Bangladesh navy ship leaves for Myanmar with 120 tonnes of relief materials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Carrying 120 tonnes of relief materials and emergency medical assistance, BNS Somudra Avian, a navy ship, left the Chattogram Port for Myanmar yesterday to support the earthquake victims there.



The ship, under the command of Captain Mohammad Arif Hossain, is scheduled to reach the Port of Yangon on April 11, said a press release of the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

Before the ship's departure, navy chief Admiral M Nazmul Hassan visited the port to oversee the relief operations and briefed the personnel.

The humanitarian assistance mission is being carried out under the directive of the chief adviser of the interim government and is supervised by the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## BNP to meet CA

FROM PAGE 1

The participants mainly discussed when the election would be held and electoral reforms.

On March 23, the BNP handed the National Consensus Commission its stance on reforms.

At Monday's meeting, the leaders opined that all election-related reforms could be implemented through an ordinance while other reforms could be made by those who become lawmakers winning the election.

The government should make the election-related reforms swiftly and hold the polls by December, they said.

Yunus in a televised address late last month said the national election will be held between this December and June

next year.

Leaders of the party fear that the polls will be delayed.

They say they want to gain clarity on the government's true intentions at the meeting with the chief adviser.

At the Standing Committee meeting, the leaders said the BNP would continue to cooperate with the government and would prefer not to launch tough programmes for election at this stage, sources said.

BNP policymakers hope that the interim government will consider the reality, the political situation, and global expectations and hold the national election by this year.

The leaders condemned what they said was Israel's genocide in Palestine.

## BRICS-backed bank

FROM PAGE 1

The NDB official made the comments when he called on the Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, at the State Guest House Jamuna in Dhaka.

The NDB is a multilateral

ত্রুটি এ রিপোর্ট প্রমিটেড পাঠান  
প্রিয়জনের প্রয়োজনে...  
যেকোনো শাখা থেকে রোমটিয়াল গ্রহণ করলেই  
পাবেন সরকার নির্ধারিত ২.৫% প্রশ়াদন  
সাথে অ্যারও আরও নিচে আকর্ষণীয় পুরস্কার  
\* শর্ত প্রযোজন

ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পুরালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

## 'July Charter to guide next national polls'

Consensus commission meets Nagorik Oikya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The upcoming national election is expected to be held in line with the July Charter, which will soon be published by the National Consensus Commission (NCC) based on input from political parties and public opinion, said the commission's vice chairman Prof Ali Riaz yesterday.

Speaking at a meeting with Nagorik Oikya at the Jatiya Sangsad, Prof Riaz said, "For the first time since independence, we have created a participatory process for state reforms involving all stakeholders. This has been made possible due to the people's struggle and the efforts of political parties, with Nagorik Oikya being one of the key partners."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

**ROHINGYA REPATRIATION**  
We are engaging with Myanmar govt, Arakan Army says Khalilur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is engaging with both the Myanmar government and the Arakan Army to ensure the safe and voluntary repatriation of Rohingya refugees to their homeland in Rakhine, officials said yesterday.

Khalilur Rahman, high representative of the chief adviser, said Bangladesh wants to see stability in Rakhine for the smooth return of the Rohingyas, who are citizens of Myanmar but have taken refuge in Bangladesh.

Speaking at a press conference at the Foreign Service Academy on the outcome of the recent BIMSTEC Summit in Thailand, Khalilur said repatriation is intrinsically tied to the restoration of peace in Rakhine.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman pays tribute to the fallen Russian soldiers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Alexander Garden, Moscow yesterday. Oleg Salyukov, commander-in-chief of the Russian Ground Forces, was present on the occasion. General Waker is in Russia on an official visit. Following his stay in Russia, Waker is scheduled to go to Croatia on April 10. The army chief is scheduled to return home on April 12, said an ISPR media release.

PHOTO: ISPR

## Maternal health at risk amid threats of funding cuts

Warns UN report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although Bangladesh has achieved a remarkable reduction in its maternal mortality rate, this progress could be jeopardised by current and potential funding cuts from key development partners, according to a new UN report.

The report warns that funding cuts may lead to decreased functionality of healthcare facilities, loss of healthcare

professionals, and disruptions in essential supply chains – ultimately undermining the availability and quality of maternal care.

Despite the country's significant strides, marginalised groups remain vulnerable. Education, ethnicity, gender, income, and access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services are key to maternal health outcomes.

"Reduced funding could worsen inequalities and disproportionately

impact the most vulnerable women," the report said.

Launched on World Health Day on Monday, the UN global report titled "Trends in Maternal Mortality" highlights worldwide progress in reducing maternal deaths, according to a joint press release from the World Health Organization (WHO) and Unicef.

Stanley Gwawya, OIC representative to Unicef Bangladesh,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Children bathe and play in a waterbody in the Suhrawardy Udyan. Afterwards, they use a net to catch various fish that resides in the water. Inset, they managed to catch some fries as a result of their fishing efforts. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Obituary



We mourn the passing of our beloved mother Prof. Rtd. Altafunessa (Maya), former Department Head of Geography, Dhaka College, Dhaka, Chairperson & Trustee Gonoshasthya Kendra, passed away on 7th of April 2025 at Evercare Hospital. Her 1st Namaze Janaza will be held at Savar Gonoshasthya Kendra at 10 AM. 2nd Namaze Janaza will be held at Gulshan Society Jam-e Mosque, Gulshan-2, Dhaka after Asr prayers.

Please pray for the departed soul.

- Family Members

## Job seekers break into PSC Demand deferral of 46th BCS written exam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of BCS job seekers broke into the Public Service Commission (PSC) in Dhaka yesterday, demanding that the written examinations for the 46th Bangladesh Civil Service be postponed.

Later in the day, the protesters gave the PSC an ultimatum of three days to meet their demand, following a meeting with PSC officials.

They said if their demands are not met by Friday, they will launch a movement calling for the resignation of the PSC chairman and its members.

Speaking to reporters earlier, PSC Chairman Prof. Mobassir Monem said

candidates should already be prepared. "Those who have been studying are already prepared. They've been getting ready for a long time. I don't think they're just sitting around hoping for a two-week deferral," he said.

As per the schedule, the written examinations for the 46th BCS are set to begin on May 8.

Protesters pointed out that viva voce for the 44th BCS began on December 22 last year, but more than half of the candidates have yet to attend. The written test for the 46th BCS is scheduled for May 8, followed by the preliminary test for the 47th BCS on June 27.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



## Nation continues protests against Gaza atrocities

STAR REPORT

Protest programmes were held across the country yesterday against the ongoing Israeli offensive in Gaza and in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

In Dhaka University, a march towards the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, featuring a 70-foot-long Palestinian flag, was held. Participants later submitted a memorandum outlining a six-point demand, including a call for an independent Palestine and the reinstatement of the "except Israel" clause in Bangladeshi passports.

Musaddiq Ibne Ali Muhammad and AB Zubayer, former co-coordinators of the Student Against Discrimination, led the programme.

In Jagannath University, teachers, students, and staff announced a "March for Palestine" programme



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

on Thursday, where participants are set to march towards the US Embassy and submit a memorandum.

The decision was taken during a views-exchange meeting organised by the JnU Teachers' Association yesterday, said Prof Rais Uddin, general secretary of the association.

In Noakhali Science and Technology University, teachers and staffers organised a human chain and solidarity rally under the banner of "Stop Genocide, Save Gaza".

Meanwhile, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) organised demonstrations in educational institutions across the country yesterday, including in Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, and Jahangirnagar University, to express solidarity with Palestinians.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

## CAREER OPPORTUNITY WITH

**The Daily Star**

The Daily Star is looking for an experienced, strategic, innovative and result-oriented Senior Executive/Assistant Manager for its Business Development Department.

### Senior Executive/Assistant Manager, Business Development

#### Job Responsibilities:

##### A. Revenue Collection & Billing:

- Prepare invoices using software tools and issue them to clients.
- Collect cheque/cash payments and issue money receipts.
- Address dishonored cheques in coordination with the AGB office.

##### B. Debt Recovery & Client Communication:

- Develop and implement strategies to recover outstanding payments.
- Send reminders to defaulting clients through phone calls and official letters.
- Maintain effective communication with advertisers and ad agencies to ensure smooth transactions.

##### C. Business Development:

- Establish and maintain strong relationships with government, semi-government, and autonomous institutions to secure advertisement opportunities.
- Develop and execute marketing strategies to increase advertisement sales revenue, particularly from government sectors.
- Prepare persuasive sales presentations and coordinate with government agencies to achieve advertisement targets.
- Acquire new clients while ensuring the retention and growth of existing relationships.

##### D. Assist the supervisor in preparing various management reports.

#### Educational Requirements:

- Graduation from any reputed educational institution.
- Completion of CA Course will be preferred.

#### Experience Requirements:

- A dynamic and ambitious person with 2-5 years of working experience in similar role.

#### Job Requirements:

- Proficiency in MS Excel at an intermediate level is mandatory.
- Excellent communication skill.
- Self-motivated and innovative
- Should display a positive, team-man attitude and leadership quality.

#### How to Apply:

If you feel worthy you can apply through the link below, scan the QR Code, or send cv to career@thedadlystar.net

Link: <https://forms.gle/BJJRGy14qgGoNzEA>



HR & Admin Department

The Daily Star Centre  
64-65, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue,  
Dhaka-1215

Application Deadline: April 20, 2025

## July Charter

FROM PAGE 3

"We hope that by continuing this dialogue, we will be able to prepare a National Charter. The commission's tenure ends on July 14, and we aim to complete our work by then. One of our main goals is the July Charter, which will outline a roadmap for the future of Bangladesh. Holding the next election is a part of this process."

Prof Riaz also said the July Charter would play an important role in ensuring free and fair elections.

The NCC met with Nagarik Oikya after 3:00pm yesterday. A 10-member delegation from Nagarik Oikya, led by its presidium member Zillur Chowdhury Dipu, took part in the meeting.

During the discussion, Dipu said, "Since independence, the people's aspirations for freedom and democracy have remained largely unfulfilled. After 54 years, the current government's initiative to establish democracy is a groundbreaking step."

"We believe that through this process, people will achieve the democracy, justice, and good governance they desire -- in short, a complete democracy," he added.

Referring to the commission's spreadsheet seeking feedback, Dipu said, "Out of 166 proposals, we agreed with 114, partially agreed with 11, and disagreed with the rest. We hope to learn the reasoning behind each proposal during this discussion."

## Maternal health at risk

FROM PAGE 3

attributed the country's maternal mortality reduction to government efforts in improving women's economic and educational status, enhancing emergency care, increasing skilled birth attendance, expanding family planning, and strengthening the community health worker network.

"However, echoing global concerns in the UN report, Bangladesh's progress is now at risk," the press release emphasised. Ahmed Jamsheed Mohamed, WHO Representative to Bangladesh, said, "We've made significant strides in expanding maternal health services, but inequities persist -- especially among women in remote, rural, and low-income communities."

"We must act swiftly to ensure every woman, regardless of where she lives, has access to the life-saving care she needs during pregnancy and childbirth," he said.

The WHO remains committed to supporting Bangladesh in strengthening its health system, investing in the healthcare workforce, and ensuring continued progress toward ending preventable maternal deaths, it added.

"Eliminating preventable maternal deaths demands solidarity, investment, and sustained action," he said.

The leading causes of maternal death in Bangladesh include obstetric haemorrhage, hypertensive disorders, unsafe abortions, and other indirect complications.

Compounding these risks, Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of out-of-pocket health spending globally -- accounting for 74 percent of total health expenditure.

This burden pushes around five million people into poverty each year, leaving many expectant mothers without the resources to meet their health needs.

To address this, UNICEF and WHO stress the importance of strong health systems, including well-equipped facilities, a skilled healthcare workforce, and reliable access to life-saving medicines, diagnostic tools, and supplies.

"As Bangladesh celebrates its progress in maternal health, the looming threat of funding cuts highlights the fragility of these gains," the release said.

Sustained commitment from national and international development partners is essential to protect the lives of pregnant women and ensure continued progress toward ending preventable maternal deaths, it added.

extremely remote and lacks mobile network coverage, news of the abduction only came to light yesterday morning. The incident was then reported to Lama Police Station, the locals added.

Lama Police Station Officer-in-charge Tofazzal Hossain said that a joint rescue operation by the army and police has been ongoing since the abduction.

On February 1, a similar incident occurred in the same area, where seven woodcutters were abducted during the night. They were later released after a ransom of Tk 8 lakh was paid.

and the Arakan Army are involved in repatriation talks. Rohingya verification is ongoing under the bilateral agreement signed by Bangladesh and Myanmar in 2018, which remains in effect.

While acknowledging that Myanmar is a sovereign state, he said discussions have also been held with the Arakan Army, which has declared its support for the return of Rohingyas.

"They reaffirmed this position during our talks last September," he said.

"We believe arrangements can be made to repatriate 1,80,000 Rohingyas who have been verified," he added.

To facilitate dialogue with the Arakan Army, Khalilur said the UN is acting as an intermediary. "Being non-state actors, the Arakan Army is not bound by the norms of governing states. Ensuring accountability is therefore crucial."

He said UN involvement lends credibility and neutrality to the peace process and envisioned humanitarian aid.

Myanmar have so far verified 1,80,000 Rohingyas for repatriation from a list of 8,00,000 provided by Bangladesh in six phases between 2018 and 2020. Verification of an additional 70,000 is ongoing, while the remaining 5,50,000 are expected to be processed soon, he added.

The humanitarian crisis in Rakhine affects both Rohingyas and the Rakhine community. Many are starving and without medical care. The international community has a responsibility to support both sides."

"Bangladesh remains the only viable conduit for delivering aid, given that Rakhine's coast remains under Tatmadaw control."

Regarding Bangladesh's role in promoting peace in Arakan, Khalilur said Bangladesh is working with international organisations and various nations to address the humanitarian crisis and restore stability in the region.

"For any meaningful progress, a ceasefire between the warring parties is crucial," he added.

Khalilur confirmed that

## 3 lemurs stolen

FROM PAGE 3

requesting police to register the case. This matter has been reported to the Superintendent of Police in Gazipur through the Divisional Forest Officer," said Md Rafiqul Islam, in charge of Gazipur Safari Park.

"Also, after April 5, two birds were stolen. Both were later recovered, but one was found dead. There are more than 1,300 animals of different species in the park. However, the boundary wall is low, making it easy to steal animals by entering the park and cutting the net at night. We do not have any security guard. The CCTV cameras were also found broken after April 5. Security has been beefed up at night. New CCTV cameras will be installed," he also said.

JCD activists also observed similar protest programmes in different other districts in Chuadanga and Nilphamari, among others.

Bangladesh Judicial Service Association yesterday condemned Israeli operations in Gaza.

In Sunamganj, several cultural organisations also

## Nation continues

FROM PAGE 3

Rafah, and other regions of Palestine, and urged international community to play an effective role to protect Palestinians.

"Israel and its allies continue this genocide, trampling upon all principles of international law, human rights, and the laws of war, while the global community remains a silent spectator...," read a BJS statement, undersigned by its president Md Amirul Islam and secretary general Muhammad Mazharul Islam.

In Chandpur, lawyers under the banner of Bangladesh Lawyers' Council also held a protest rally in the morning in front of the district court.

In Sunamganj, several

## 1.4m lack

FROM PAGE 5  
(DSK), WaterAid, Global Center on Adaptation, CWasa, and Chattogram City Corporation.

Presenting the keynote, Mamun Chowdhury, a researcher at DSK, said Chattogram is facing growing water scarcity due to rising salinity levels.

He noted that CCC wards 19, 20, 29, 30, and 35 are the most vulnerable.

Babul Bala of WaterAid said the impact of climate change is intensifying in Bangladesh and stressed that public awareness is essential to tackle the challenge.

Sharmin Jahan, additional commissioner of Chattogram Division, and Nurul Karim, chairman of Chatogram Wasa, also spoke at the event, which was chaired by Abdul Hakim of DSK.

## INVITATION FOR TENDER

**Pubali Bank PLC**, the largest private commercial Bank in Bangladesh is hereby inviting sealed Tenders from the eligible Tenderers, who can participate in any of the following tenders, but in separate envelope as defined in the tender documents of the under mentioned works as per terms & conditions stated below:

1. Civil, Electrical & Networking works at proposed premises (Ground & 1st floor) of our **Kalaiya Bandar Branch, Patuakhali**.
2. Civil, Electrical & Networking works at proposed premises (1st & 2nd floor) of our **Stadium Branch, Sylhet**.
3. Selling of Bank's 04 (four) old vehicles as mentioned below:

SI No.	Registration No.	Brand, CC & Year
01	Dhaka Metro Cha-53-3305	Toyota Liteace Microbus (KR42), CC-1800 Year-2006
02	Dhaka Metro Cha-54-1259	Toyota Townace Microbus (KR42), CC-1800 Year-2003
03	Dhaka Metro GA-23-8214	Toyota Corolla G Car, CC-1500, Year-2004
04	Dhaka Metro GA-37-3084	Toyota AXIO G Car, CC-1500, Year-2009

Please visit our web site, <https://www.publibangla.com/tender.asp> for details. Interested parties may purchase their Tender document by **17 April, 2025** duly filled up all requirements at office hour and submit their offer in the Tender Box by **20 April, 2025** (before 11.00 A.M). Tender will be opened on **20 April, 2025** at 11:30 A.M.

**Md. Kamruzzaman**  
General Manager & Division Head

**পুরালী বাণিজ প্রিলিম্স**  
PUBLI BANK PLC

Establishment & General Services Division  
Head office, 26 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

**BD Designs  
Private Ltd.**  
Manufacturers & Exporters Of Readymade Garments



## CAREER OPPORTUNITY

A 100% foreign owned Garments Manufacturing Company (Woven) located at North Patenga, KEPZ is looking for qualified persons for newly established factory at Chittagong (1500 Sewing Machines):-

Position	Academic Qualification	Experience
GM/AGM- Admin, HR & Compliance	MBA/Masters in any discipline	10-15 Years experience in Garments Manufacturing Sector.
GM/AGM- Production	Masters/Graduate in any discipline	10-15 Years experience to overall Production (cut to ship) with 1500 M/C
GM/AGM- Marketing	MBA/Masters in any discipline	07-10 Years with familiier with renewed Brands.
GM/AGM- Quality	MBA/Masters.	08-10 Years experience in Woven Factory.
GM/AGM- IE	Science Graduate/ Masters.	05-10 Years experience to organise 1500 M/C
AGM- Audit	MBA/Masters in Accounts/Finance/CA/ CA-part.	05-08 Years experience in large Manufacturing Unit.

Please apply within 15 days to

**BD Designs Private Limited,**

Sector # 3, Plot # 48-49, Karnaphuli EPZ, North Patenga, Chattogram - 4204.

Or E-mail: recruitment@bdddsltd.com

## 6 UP chairmen

FROM PAGE 3

been assigned to ensure continued operations."

The officials appointed are Saiful Islam in Kalmakanda Sadar UP, Md Mizanur Rahman in Nazirpur UP, Md Ashraful Islam in Pogla UP, Zahidul Islam in Kailati UP, Amit Dutta in Birishiri, Durgapur UP, Bijon Kanti Dhar in Kokir-Gora UP.

However, concerns have been raised about the efficiency of panel chairmen, as many of them reportedly lack the administrative skills necessary.

Regarding Bangladesh's role in promoting peace in Arakan, Khalilur said Bangladesh is working with international organisations and various nations to address the humanitarian crisis and restore stability in the region.

"For any meaningful progress, a ceasefire between the warring parties is crucial," he added.

Khalilur confirmed that

Myanmar's government

is involved in repatriation talks. Rohingya verification is ongoing under the bilateral agreement signed by Bangladesh and Myanmar in 2018, which remains in effect.

While acknowledging that

Myanmar is a sovereign state, he said discussions have also been held with the Arakan Army, which has declared its support for the return of Rohingyas.

"They reaffirmed this

position during our talks last September," he said.

"We believe arrangements can be made to repatriate 1,80,000

Rohingyas who have been verified," he added.

To facilitate dialogue with the Arakan Army, Khalilur

said the UN is acting as an

intermediary. "Being non-

state actors, the Arakan Army is not bound by the

norms of governing states.

Ensuring accountability is therefore crucial."

He said UN involvement

lends credibility and

neutrality to the peace

process and envisioned

humanitarian aid.

While acknowledging that

Myanmar is a sovereign state, he said discussions have also been held with the Arakan Army, which has declared its support for the return of Rohingyas.

"They reaffirmed this

position during our talks last September," he said.

"We believe arrangements can be made to repatriate 1,80,000

Rohingyas who have been verified," he added.

To facilitate dialogue with the Arakan Army, Khalilur

said the UN is acting as an

intermediary. "Being non-

state actors, the Arakan Army is not bound by the

norms of governing states.

Ensuring accountability is therefore crucial."

He said UN involvement

lends credibility and

neutrality to the peace

process and envisioned

humanitarian aid.

While acknowledging that

Myanmar is

## Three killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least three people were killed and four injured in separate road accidents in Brahmanbaria and Barguna districts yesterday.

In Brahmanbaria, two were killed and four others injured as a covered van hit a CNG-run auto-rickshaw coming from opposite direction on Cumilla Sylhet highway in Sultanpur area of Sadar upazila in the afternoon.

The deceased are Tanvir, 23, of Nabinagar upazila, and Rafiqul Islam, 25, of Ashuganj upazila. Identities of the injured could not be known immediately.

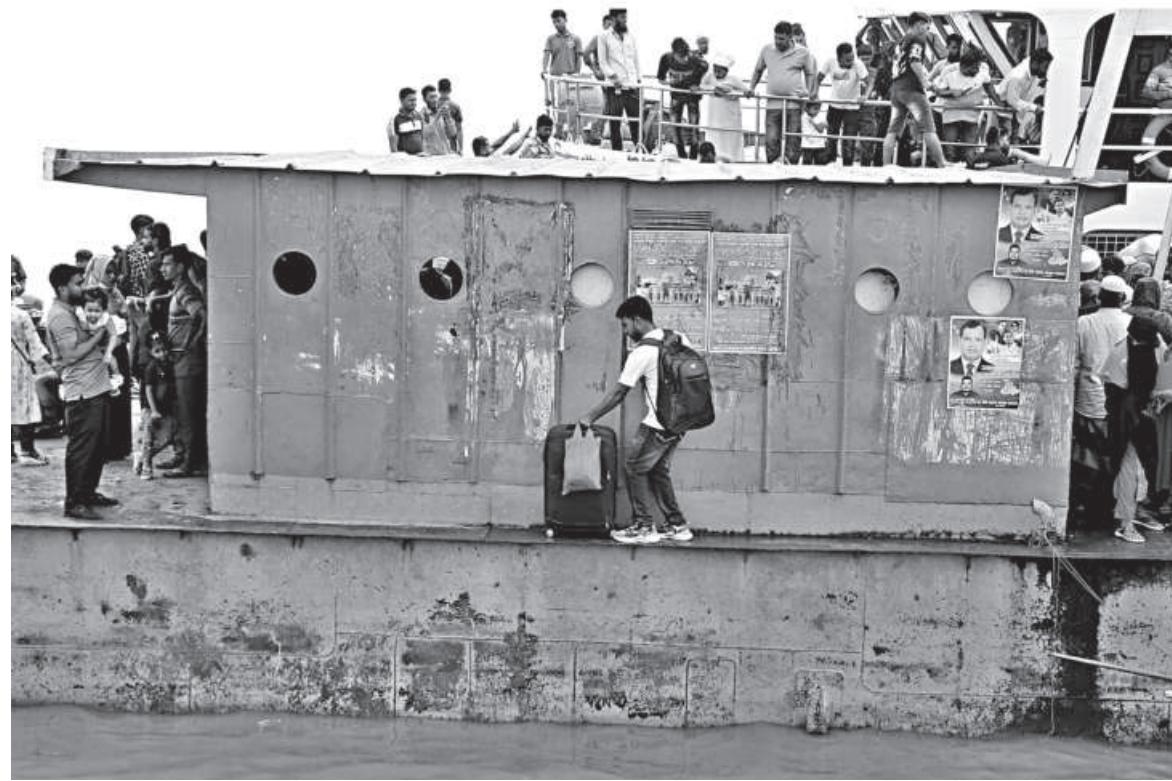
All of them were passengers of the auto-rickshaw.

Locals rushed the injured in the accident to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital, where Tanvir and Rafiqul succumbed to their injuries, said Asifuzzaman, a sub-inspector of Khatihata Highway Police Station.

"The covered van could not be seized yet. Police are trying to identify and arrest the van's driver. The mangled auto-rickshaw has been recovered, and its driver, Mizanur Rahman, is currently in police custody," said SI Md Mahbub of Brahmanbaria Sadar Model Police Station.

In Barguna, a schoolteacher died on his way to school after his motorcycle collided with an oil-laden lorry on Patuakhali-Kuakata highway in Amtali upazila around 9:30am.

The deceased is Md Khalilur Rahman, an assistant teacher at Shakaria Government Primary School.



A passenger walks along this narrow path at Bhola's Ilisha launch terminal, amid risk of falling into the water. He does so in hopes of boarding a launch, as mismanagement at the terminal left many passengers waiting for hours. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: MONIR UDDIN ANIK

## 1.4m lack access to safe water in port city: survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Around 1.4 million people living in 435 low-income communities (LICs) across the 41 wards of Chattogram City Corporation lack access to proper water and sanitation facilities, researchers said at a programme yesterday.

Only 37 of these LICs are served by small water networks connected to transmission mains or deep tube wells. The majority still depend on shared water points, which increases the burden on women and girls, they said, based on a survey that was conducted over two years in the port city.

It also causes them to rely more on private water vendors who charge

10 to 60 times more than the rates of the Chattogram Water and Sewerage Authority (CWasa), they added.

The LICs are home to around 1,90,000 people, making up 5.91

**There is also a severe shortage of toilets, with one toilet for every 2.7 families and one hygienic toilet for every 5.2 families. About 43.70 percent of toilets were found unhygienic, and 3.61 percent were abandoned.**

percent of CCC's total population. Of them, 65.25 percent rely on deep tube wells and 14.17 percent on shallow tube wells, which often contain salinity and iron,

researchers said.

A large number of the tube wells were found to be unsafe during the survey, they added.

There is also a severe shortage of toilets, with one toilet for every 2.7 families and one hygienic toilet for every 5.2 families. About 43.70 percent of toilets were found unhygienic, and 3.61 percent were abandoned.

The findings were shared at a programme, titled "People's Adaptation Plan for Chattogram Water Supply Improvement Project," held at the Zilla Parishad Auditorium in the port city.

The event was jointly organised by Dushta Shasthya Kendra

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

## Nine workers abducted in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Nine labourers were abducted from a tobacco field in the Luline area of Lama upazila in Bandarban early on Monday.

Bandarban Additional Superintendent of Police (Crime and Ops) Abdul Karim confirmed that the abduction took place around 3:00am.

However, their identities have not yet been confirmed.

Citing information from locals, the police official said that a rescue operation was underway, and efforts were being made to ensure the safe and healthy return of all the workers.

According to locals, the workers were staying overnight at a farmhouse after finishing work in the tobacco fields in Luline.

Armed miscreants stormed into the house and abducted them at gunpoint.

Since the area is

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## Expatriate voting to be finalised soon: CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday said the voting system for expatriates will be finalised soon, based on recommendations from technical experts, to ensure their voting rights.

The Election Commission (EC), the constitutional body responsible for conducting elections, organised a daylong workshop titled "Determining the Voting Method for Expatriate Bangladeshis" at the Electoral Training Institute (ETI) in Agargaon, Dhaka.

At least 80 participants, including election experts and officials, attended the workshop.

According to EC officials, the workshop aimed to gather opinions from experts representing Dhaka University, Buet, MIST, and various government, non-government, and development partner organisations. Among the proposed methods, priority was given to proxy voting over postal and online voting.

CEC Nasir Uddin inaugurated the workshop, which was attended by all four election commissioners and EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed.

"We are giving priority to ensuring the voting rights of expatriate Bangladeshis," the CEC said while addressing the event.

"I hope this workshop with experts will help determine a specific method. We will take initiatives based on the method you suggest. After that, a proper framework will be developed, and the voting system will be introduced in selected countries through piloting," he said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD)

Road Division, Bogura.  
Phone/Fax: 051-66304  
✉ [eebag@rhd.gov.bd](mailto:eebag@rhd.gov.bd)

Date: 08/04/2025

### e-Tender Notice

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>).

e-Tenders are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer (RHD), Road Division, Bogura for the procurement of:

Tender ID & Package No.	Package Description	Publishing Date, Closing Date
Tender ID No. 1094979, e-GP-71/EE/BRD/OTM/2024-2025	Supply of Skilled & Un-Skilled Labour for raincut repair & jungle cutting work at 16th Km to 21st Km & 33th Km to 43th Km at different location of Bogura-Naogaon-Mohadebpur-Patnitola-Dhamurhat-Joypurhat (R-545) Road under Road Division, Bogura during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 19:00:00, 17-Apr-2025 14:05:00
Tender ID No. 1094980, e-GP-72/EE/BRD/OTM/2024-2025	Construction of protective work to protect the pavement & Shoulder at 12th (p) Km & 14th(p) Km of Sultanganj (Litchutola)-Madla-Bagbari (Kadamto)-Gabtoli (Panchmile) Road (Z-504) under Road Division, Bogura during the year 2024-2025.	06-Apr-2025 19:00:00, 17-Apr-2025 14:10:00

e-Tender details can be downloaded from as stated above on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for pursue.

e-Tenders will be accepted only up to as above date and time. Accepted tender will be opened online immediately after as stated above date and time.

(Abul Monsur Ahmed)  
Identity No: 602288  
Executive Engineer (C.C), RHD  
Road Division, Bogura.

GD- 841

## 3 lemurs stolen from Gazipur Safari Park Cops yet to begin probe after 15 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Police have yet to launch an investigation even 15 days after a general diary was filed over three lemurs being stolen from Gazipur Safari Park.

"On the night of March 23, three lemurs were stolen by cutting the net of the cage-like fence in the park. We searched the surroundings. A GD was filed with the police station the next day. The police have neither registered a case yet, nor came to investigate the incident. A letter of reminder has also been sent

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

GD- 841

## ইস্টার্ন রিফাইনারী লিমিটেড Eastern Refinery Limited

(A Subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation)

e-Tender Notice No. ER/TN/e-GP/C-17/2024-2025

e-Tender has been invited in the National e-GP Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of work as stated below:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Tender Package No. & description	Tender last selling/downloading date & time	Tender closing & opening date & time
01	1095319	Package No. ER/C-18/2024-2025 RENOVATION OF TURBINE HOUSE	23 April 2025 16:00 Hrs	24 April 2025 12:00 Hrs

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) is required.

Ahmad Fazle Rabbi  
AGM (Construction & Project)  
Eastern Refinery Limited  
Tele No. 0233301261-7, Ext-440

GD- 838

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ প্রযুক্তি বিভাগ

ইলেক্ট্রনিক স্বাক্ষর সার্টিফিকেট প্রদানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের নিয়ন্ত্রক-এর কার্যালয়

আইসিটি টাওয়ার, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭

[www.cca.gov.bd](http://www.cca.gov.bd)

স্থারক নং-৫৬.০৩.০০০০.০০১.০৯.০৯০.১৫-২৮৮

### অকেজো ঘোষিত গাড়ি বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ইলেক্ট্রনিক স্বাক্ষর সার্টিফিকেট প্রদানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের নিয়ন্ত্রক-এর কার্যালয়ের ০১ টি প্রাইভেট কার (গাড়ি) বাংলাদেশ কম্পিউটার কাউন্সিল ভবনের প্রাথমিক 'যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে' এবং উহার রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ, ট্যাক্সি টোকেন ও ফিল্টেন্স সনদ 'যে অবস্থায় যে পর্যন্ত নবাবন আছে' ভিত্তিতে নিলামে বিক্রির জন্য বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিক/প্রতিটান ও আগ্রহী ক্রেতাদের নিকট থেকে সীলনোহরকৃত খামে আবেদন আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। সিডিউলের মূল নগদ ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) ঢাকা (অফেরত্বযোগ্য) জমা দিয়ে নিম্নবর্ণিত স্থান হতে অকেজো ঘোষিত সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে:

অকেজো ঘোষিত গাড়ির সংখ্যা	স্থান
০১ (এক)	আইসিটি টাওয়ার, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭ এর নিচতলার প্রাথমিক রাস্তা

১। অকেজো ঘোষিত গাড়ির সিডিউল বিক্রি, আবেদন দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়, আবেদন বাক্স খোলার তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান নিম্নরূপ :

ক্রমিক নং	সিডিউল বিক্রির শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	সিডিউল দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	সিডিউল বিক্রি ও গ্রহণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ও ঠিকানা	আবেদন বাক্স খোলার তারিখ ও সময়
১।	২২/০৪/২০২৫ খ্রি. তারিখ বিকাল ০৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	২৩/০৪/২০২৫ খ্রি. তারিখ দুপুর ০২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত	ইলেক্ট্রনিক স্বাক্ষর সার্টিফিকেট কর্তৃপক্ষের কার্যালয়, তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ প্রযুক্তি বিভাগ, আইসিটি টাওয়ার (২য	

## 'Jongli' screen count doubles in theatres

The widely discussed film *Jongli*, directed by M Raahim, hit theatres this Eid with a limited number of screenings.

Although the team made several appeals for more showtimes, only slight increases were made, prompting disappointment among fans who expressed their concerns across social media platforms.

However, it has been confirmed that the



number of shows at Star Cineplex alone has now doubled.

According to Star Cineplex authorities, *Jongli* started with just seven shows on Eid day. The number rose to nine on day two, dropped to six by day four, then climbed to eight on day eight, and reached 14 shows by day nine – double its opening day count.

The lead roles in *Jongli* are played by Siam Ahmed, Shobnon Yesmin Bubly, Dighi, and child artiste Nooreeta.



## 'Hajaro Konthe Borshoboron' returns to Rabindra Sarobar this Pahela Baishakh

The iconic Bengali New Year celebration *Channel i-Shurer Dhara Hajaro Konthe Borshoboron* will return on April 14 at 6am at Dhaka's Rabindra Sarobar, after a three year break.

Thousands of voices, including indigenous artistes, will welcome the Bengali New Year 1432 with choral and cultural performances.

The festivities will begin on April 13 evening with a traditional *Chaitra Sankranti* fair featuring folk elements

like *nagor dola*, *lathi khela*, and local crafts.

Cultural adviser and filmmaker Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, along with officials from Dhaka South City Corporation, Channel i, and Shurer Dhara, will inspect preparations.

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is extending its full support to the event, which will return to its open-air setting this year, with a large number of audience expected to attend.

## Govt announces new deadline for film grant submissions

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has extended the deadline for submitting complete proposals for both feature-length and short films seeking government grants.

Therefore, filmmakers and producers can now submit proposals by April 22. The previous original date was April 7, set in February.

In a press release signed by the ministry's Senior Assistant

Commissioner Sharmin Akter, it has been affirmed that the submission deadline for complete package proposals has been extended to 4pm on April 22, keeping all terms and conditions from the previous circular unchanged.

The government will provide grants to a maximum of 12 full-length films and 20 short films – 32 films in total – for the fiscal year 2024-25.

## 'Daagi' special screening protests against genocide in Palestine

During a special screening of the film *Daagi* in a Dhaka cinema on April 7, actors, musicians, filmmakers, producers, and journalists observed a one minute silence in support of Palestine, as part of the ongoing global strike.



The event notably saw the presence of *Daagi*'s producers Mahendra Soni (SVE, Alpha-i Entertainment), Shahriar Shakil, and Redoan Rony (Chorki), along with director Shihab Shaheen.

Other prominent attendees included actors Tariq Anam Khan, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Gazi Rakayet, Afran Nisho, Bijori Barkatullah, Tama Mirza, directors Raihan Rafi and Saraf Ahmed Zibon, and musicians Sajid Sarker and Masha Islam.

## WHAT'S THE HAPS?

### Play: 'Kinu Kaharer Thetar'

Prachyanat's 15th production, *Kinu Kaharer Thetar*, written by Manoj Mitra and directed by Kazi Toufiqul Islam Emon, will be staged on Thursday, April 10. A biting political satire, the play explores corruption, complicity, and absurd justice in the fictional kingdom of Putna.

DATE: THURSDAY | APRIL 10

TIME: 7PM ONWARDS

VENUE: BANGLADESH SHILPAKALA ACADEMY (BSA)



## Cannes to honour Robert De Niro with Palme d'Or this year

Robert De Niro is all set to receive an honorary Palme d'Or award for lifetime achievement at the upcoming Cannes Film Festival 2025. The festival authorities confirmed that he will be awarded during the opening ceremony on May 13.

This honour marks 14 years since De Niro presided over the Cannes jury in 2011.

His long-standing Cannes history includes iconic films like *Taxi Driver* (1976), which won the Palme d'Or, *The King of Comedy* (1983), and *The Mission* (1986). He last appeared at Cannes in 2023 with *Killers of the Flower Moon*.

De Niro will also lead a masterclass at the Debussy Theatre on May 14 for festival attendees.

The 78th edition of Cannes will run from May 13 to May 24.



## NEWS

### Govt failed to stop attacks on businesses

FROM PAGE 12

He made the remarks while addressing a rally in front of the Raju Memorial Sculpture on Dhaka University campus that was organised by the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal.

Salahuddin also said that BNP will soon announce a large-scale nationwide and central programme in support of the Palestinian people and in protest against Israel's mass killings.

"Awami League had given the recognition to Israel in an indirect way by removing tourism ban on Israel from the passport of Bangladesh," said Salahuddin Ahmed at the rally.

He claimed that the Awami League government had purchased Pegasus spyware from Israel, which was used to repress the opposition during their rule.

"The Muslim world is silent on the Palestine issue, and Indo-USA is backing the atrocities in Gaza directly and indirectly," said Salahuddin,

adding that after World War II, the United States conspired against the Palestinians, making them foreigners in their own land.

He denounced and expressed resentment over the attacks in Gaza and urged the leaders of the Muslim world to stand with oppressed Muslims across the globe.

He added, "Take measures to stop the support for the conspiracies through which many superpowers are backing Israel, supplying them with weapons, and enabling the genocide in Gaza and Rafah."

Meanwhile, the leaders and activists of the Rajshahi University (RU) unit of JCD today formed a human chain protesting Israel's continued military attacks on Gaza and expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people.

The demonstration began around 10:30am in front of the main gate of the university. The protesters wore black cloths over their mouths as a symbol of silent protest against the Israeli forces'

genocide.

The protesters criticised the inaction of Arab nations, alleging, "They are acting as proxies of Western powers and have failed to take any stand against Israel's attacks."

They further compared the current Israeli actions to alleged repression by the previous government in Bangladesh, accusing it of suppressing democratic rights.

Calling for international intervention, RU Chhatra Dal Convener Sultan Ahmed Rahi urged the United Nations and world leaders to take immediate steps to halt the attacks on Gaza.

He said, "We stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine and demand that global bodies act urgently."

Later around noon, Rajshahi city unit of Chhatra Dal leaders and activists gathered at the city's Zero Point area following a rally. There, they chanted slogans in support of Palestine and against Israeli aggression.

The driver fled the scene after the crash, he said, adding police were trying to identify him.

Nasir Uddin, assistant director of Faridpur Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, said the Faridpur bus' fitness certificate had expired on March 5 and tax token on June 26, 2024. "Fitness certificates must be renewed annually, ideally 7-10 days before expiry."

The bus is owned by Fazir Rahman, labour affairs secretary of Faridpur District Awami League. He hails from the Courtpara area of Bhangal upazila. He could not be reached for comments.

Faridpur Deputy Commissioner Md Kamrul Hasan Molla said a five-member probe committee led by the additional district magistrate of Faridpur has been formed to investigate the crash.

The remaining 29 have been admitted to the hospital.

Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Ishrat Jahan said she visited the site of the accident. "Witnesses said the bus going over 80km/h. The accident happened solely due to the driver's recklessness."

Assistant Superintendent of Madaripur Highway Police Station Md Maruf Hossain echoed the same, saying

the vehicle lost control while overtaking at high speed.

The driver fled the scene after the crash, he said, adding police were trying to identify him.

Nasir Uddin, assistant director of Faridpur Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, said the Faridpur bus' fitness certificate had expired on March 5 and tax token on June 26, 2024. "Fitness certificates must be renewed annually, ideally 7-10 days before expiry."

The bus is owned by Fazir Rahman, labour affairs secretary of Faridpur District Awami League. He hails from the Courtpara area of Bhangal upazila. He could not be reached for comments.

Faridpur Deputy Commissioner Md Kamrul Hasan Molla said a five-member probe committee led by the additional district magistrate of Faridpur has been formed to investigate the crash.

The remaining 29 have been admitted to the hospital.

Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Ishrat Jahan said she visited the site of the accident. "Witnesses said the bus going over 80km/h. The accident happened solely due to the driver's recklessness."

Assistant Superintendent of Madaripur Highway Police Station Md Maruf Hossain echoed the same, saying

### Tureen Afroz placed

FROM PAGE 12

Tureen then said, "Honourable Court, I would like to speak with your permission." And the court granted her plea.

She said, "My learned friend [state prosecutor] has made conflicting statements... The case in Dhaka is based on the 5th August incident. This case is fabricated. I can provide full documentation of where I was prior to August 5. During that time, I had surgery for a tumor at the Evercare Hospital."

"For the past four years, I haven't said anything in the media, haven't written anything. It is being said that I supported fascist Hasina," she also said.

She continued, "I supported fascist Hasina, and yet it was during her regime I was deprived of my job. I've been out of work for six years. I don't understand which side I belong to."

She also told the court she had faith in the law.

"No one is above the law... The investigating officer has requested a 10-day remand. You may even give 20 days if you want, because I know I haven't done anything wrong. I believe I will get justice," she concluded.

After her submission, the magistrate put her on remand.

On March 27 this year, Md Jabbar, 21, who suffered bullet wounds in Dhaka's Uttara on August 4 last year, filed the case with Uttara West Police Station against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 49 others.

Tureen, 52, was arrested at her home in Uttara early yesterday as she was a FIR-named accused.

She had been removed from the ICT after she allegedly met suspected war criminal Mohammad Wahidul Haque.

Tureen had prosecuted several high-profile cases, including those against executed war criminals -- Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahed, Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, Motiur Rahman Nizami and Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, and Ghulam Azam, who died in jail.

Tureen, 52, was arrested at her home in Uttara early yesterday as she was a FIR-named accused.

### 2 US delegations arrive

FROM PAGE 12

according to diplomatic sources.

A foreign ministry official said Chulick will meet top officials of the government and discuss the reforms and democratic transition in Bangladesh.

After the fall of Awami League, the Biden administration extended full support for the reforms and democratic transition in Bangladesh.

Experts say the Trump is more transactional and the focus on human rights and democracy will be less than that of the Biden's administration.

Trump has already imposed 37 percent tariff on the exports of Bangladeshi products to the US, promoting the government to ask for three months before the tariff is enforced.

"How his policy will be and how the two countries can work together will be the main focus of the visit," a foreign ministry official told The Daily Star.

Much of the discussion during

the visit by Herrup will be focused on Rohingya crisis and Myanmar.

Bangladesh has been sheltering 1.2 million Rohingya, most of those who faces military atrocities in 2017.

On the other hand, Myanmar has been going through a civil war since the military coup in 2021 and is now facing another challenge of a devastating earthquake.

Besides, there are serious issues of drug and arms trafficking, kidnapping, and human trafficking, which are creating huge security issues.

"All these issues may come up during the discussion," a diplomatic sources added.

Meanwhile, UK Trade Envoy to Bangladesh, Baroness Rosie Winterton of Doncaster DBE, has arrived in Dhaka yesterday to.

While in Dhaka, she will be meeting key officials of the government, political parties and business leaders, says a statement of the UK High Commission in Bangladesh.

## Mob attacks ex-AL MP Aziz at jail gate

FROM PAGE 12

Md Humayun Kabir, its officer-in-charge.

Aziz walked out of Sirajganj jail around 8:00pm after a court granted him bail in a case filed over attempted murder during the July uprising in Sirajganj's Tarash upazila.

He was arrested on February 4.

After he got out of the jail, a mob

attacked him. They harassed and forcibly took him to the Kather Pul area in Sirajganj town.

Later, a team of army personnel rescued him.

Aziz was in police custody till filing of this report around 11:55pm last night, the OC added.

However, law enforcement agencies claimed that they were unaware of his release today.

## Isn't it a conflict of interest?

FROM PAGE 12

takes up the opposite side in the same case, that would be a conflict of interest. However, if a lawyer represents the defence in one case and the prosecution in another, that would not be considered a conflict of interest."

After the hearing, reporters asked Tajul about the matter. He said a person may be a defence lawyer today and join the prosecution tomorrow in another case. That's not a big issue.

It does not amount to a conflict of interest.

This is a well-known and common principle, he added.

Following the July uprising, at least four lawyers, who previously worked as defence counsels during the war crimes trials, have been appointed prosecutors in the restructured ICT.

Chief Prosecutor Tajul himself had earlier served as a defence lawyer.

On March 27 this year, lawyer Satar was made an ICT prosecutor.

## Bangladesh navy ship leaves for Myanmar

FROM PAGE 2

Armed Forces

## Lanka passes landmark law to recover stolen assets

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's government introduced sweeping legislation yesterday to recover stolen assets and pave the way for the prosecution of high-profile politicians from previous administrations, among others.

The Proceeds of Crime Bill was passed unanimously in parliament, where the leftist government of President Anura Dissanayake enjoys a two-thirds majority after elections last year.

"This is a historic day for Sri Lanka," Justice Minister Harshana Nanayakkara told the assembly. "This is the first bill of the new government."

He said the bill had been in the works for nine years, but the new administration had accelerated it to deliver on a promise to pursue politicians who had bankrupted the country.

It allows for the seizure and confiscation of ill-gotten wealth even without a criminal conviction, and it can be applied to unexplained assets accumulated in the past.

The legislation is also in line with an IMF bailout programme that the island nation entered into in early 2023, after declaring bankruptcy.

Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$4 billion foreign debt in April 2022 after running out of foreign exchange to finance even the most essential imports, such as food, fuel and medicines.

Months of street protests led to the resignation of then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, a younger brother of Mahinda Rajapaksa, who ruled for a decade until January 2015.

Sri Lanka's Supreme Court has ruled that then-president Gotabaya, his then prime minister brother Mahinda and then-finance minister brother Basil were responsible for the economic meltdown.

Several relatives, including two of Mahinda's children, are currently facing criminal proceedings over corruption and money laundering.



Left-wing MPs hold portraits of children of Gaza, who they claim have been killed by Israel's military offensive in Gaza, during a session of questions to the government at The National Assembly, France's lower house of parliament, in Paris yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Trump announces direct nuclear talks with Iran

Iran says deal can be reached if US shows goodwill

AFP, Tehran

Iran's top diplomat yesterday said he believed a new nuclear deal could be agreed with the United States provided Tehran's longtime foe shows sufficient goodwill in talks to begin in Oman yesterday.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran's principal aim remained the lifting of sweeping US sanctions. Their reimposition by President Donald Trump in 2018 has dealt a heavy blow to the Iranian economy.

Trump made the surprise announcement that his administration would open talks with Iran during a White House meeting on Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu, whose country is an arch foe of Tehran.

Trump said the talks would be "direct" but Araghchi insisted his negotiations with US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff on Saturday would be "indirect".

"We will not accept any other form of negotiation," Araghchi told official media.

"The format of the negotiations... is not the most important thing in my view. What really counts is the effectiveness or otherwise of the talks.

"If the other side shows

enough of the necessary willingness, a deal can be found. The ball is in America's court."

Speaking Monday in the Oval Office, Trump said he was hopeful of reaching a deal with Tehran, but warned that the Islamic republic

would be in "great danger" if the talks failed.

"We're dealing with the Iranians, we have a very big meeting on Saturday and we're dealing with them directly," Trump told reporters.

Trump's announcement came after Iran dismissed direct negotiations on a new deal to curb the country's nuclear activities, calling the idea pointless.

The US president pulled out of the last deal in 2018, during his first presidency, and there has been widespread speculation that Israel, possibly with US help, might attack Iranian facilities if no new agreement is reached.

Trump issued a stern warning to Tehran, however.

"I think if the talks aren't successful with Iran, I think Iran's going to be in great danger, and I hate to say it, great danger, because they can't have a nuclear weapon," he said.

66  
If they  
[Iran] don't  
make a  
deal, there  
will be  
bombing.

DONALD TRUMP  
US president



Since then, virtually every month has been at least 1.5 degrees Celsius hotter than it was before the industrial revolution, when humans began burning massive amounts of coal, oil and gas.

March was 1.6C above pre-industrial times, extending an anomaly so unusual that scientists are still trying to fully explain it.

## WE ARE HIRING

Democratic Reforms through Inclusive Participation in Bangladesh (DRIP) Project



- Project Analyst (Electoral Affairs) - NSA 9
- Project Officer (M&E) - NPSA 8
- Project Officer (Communications and Outreach) - NPSA 8
- Project Associate (Finance and Admin) - NPSA 6

Duty Station Dhaka

Apply Before 18 April 2025 (23:59, New York time)

### Contract Duration

1 year with possibility for extension

Female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. For details of the job description and instructions to apply, please visit our website:

[www.undp.org/bangladesh/careers](http://www.undp.org/bangladesh/careers)

## WE ARE HIRING

Strengthening Institutions, Policies and Services (SIPS) Project



- Project Analyst (Communication and Reporting) - NPSA 8
- Project Analyst (Data Governance) - NPSA 8
- Project Associate (Research and Policy Support) - NPSA 6
- Project Associate (Gender) - NPSA 7

Duty Station Dhaka

Apply Before 18 April 2025 (23:59, New York time)

### Contract Duration

1 year with possibility for extension

Female candidates are particularly encouraged to apply

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. For details of the job description and instructions to apply, please visit our website:

[www.undp.org/bangladesh/careers](http://www.undp.org/bangladesh/careers)

Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution PLC	
Emergency Gas Control and Management (Metro Dhaka)	
105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawranbazar C/A, Dhaka-1215	
<b>Invitation for Tender</b>	
Issue Ref No: 28.13.0000.000.333.35.0010.24; Date: [09.04.2025]	
1 Ministry/Division Power, Energy and Mineral Resources/ Energy and Mineral Resources Division	
2 Agency Bangladesh Oil, Gas and Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla)	
3 Procuring Entity Name Titas Gas Transmission & Distribution PLC	
4 Procuring Entity District Dhaka	
5 Invitation for Procurement of Non-Consulting Services for Gas Leak Detection, Localization & Leak Repair of underground Gas Pipelines in Metro Dhaka & Keraniganj.	
6 Invitation Ref. No 28.13.0000.000.333.35.0010.24	
7 Date 09.04.2025	
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>	
8 Procurement Method Open Tendering Method (OTM)	
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>	
9 Budget and Source of Funds TGTDPCLC Own Funds	
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>	
10 Tender selling Date From 09.04.2025 to 29.04.2025 on all working days	
11 Tender last selling Date and Time 29.04.2025 Time: 01:00 PM	
12 Tender Submission Date and Time 30.04.2025 Time: 10:00-11:00 AM	
13 Tender Opening Date and Time 30.04.2025 Time: 12:00 PM	
<b>Name &amp; Address of the Office(s)</b>	
14 Selling Tender Document (Principal) Accounts Department, Head Office, Titas Gas T & D PLC, 105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawranbazar C/A, Dhaka-1215.	
15 Selling Tender Document (Others) 1. Accounts Department, Petrobangla, 3, Kawranbazar, Dhaka-1215; 2. Accounts Department, BAPEX, Bepex Bhaban, 4, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215	
16 Receiving Tender Document 1st Floor, Tender Box, 105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215	
17 Opening Tender Document Office of GM (Operation), 2nd Floor, 105, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka-1215	
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>	
18 Eligibility of Tenderer 1. The minimum number of years of general experience of the Tenderer in Government / Semi-government / autonomous body or under any project financed/invested by the foreign agencies as Prime Contractor/Sub-Contractor/Third Party shall be 3 (Three) years. 2. Tenderer shall have specific experience as a Prime Contractor/Sub-Contractor under Government / Semi-government / autonomous body or under any project financed/invested by the foreign agencies as Prime Contractor/Sub-Contractor/Third Party shall be 3 (Three) years. 3. Tenderer shall have specific experience as a Prime Contractor/Sub-Contractor under Government / Semi-government / autonomous body or under any project financed/invested by the foreign agencies as Prime Contractor/Sub-Contractor/Third Party shall be 3 (Three) years. 4. Tenderer shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organizations registered in Bangladesh. 5. Tenderer shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh. 6. Tenderer shall have specific experience in detecting underground gas pipeline leakage and related services.	
19 Brief Description of Services Procurement of Non-Consulting Services for Gas Leak Detection, Localization & Leak Repair of underground Gas Pipelines in Metro Dhaka & Keraniganj as follows: 1.1 Gas Leakage detection by Laser methane detector. 1.2 Gas leakage point confirmation by Coating detect locator. 1.3 Excavation to expose gas leakage point. 1.4 Gas leakage repair by Gas leakage preparing clamp or welding operation. 1.5 Related services.	
20 Tender Document Price Tk. 5000/- (Taka Five Thousand only) (Non Refundable)	
21 Package No.	Identification Of Package
22 Single Package	Gas leak detection (using any means of mobilization), localization and instant leak repair works of underground Gas Pipelines in Metro Dhaka & Keraniganj
23 Designation of Official Inviting Tender Deputy General Manager (Emergency Gas Control & Management Metro Dhaka )	
24 Contact Details of official Inviting Tender 11th Floor, Head Office, Titas Gas T & D PLC, 105, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. Call 01939-921026, Email: parvez776@gmail.com	
25 Special Instruction a) Tender must remain valid for 120 days after the date of tender submission. b) Tender in unavoidable circumstances of the tender cannot be opened on the scheduled date, tender will be received and opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.	
26 The Tender will be conducted and interpreted as per the Public Procurement Regulations-2008 and subsequent amendments	
27 The procuring entity reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever	



## GAZA CARNAGE 19 killed in Israeli strikes overnight

AFP, Gaza City

Gaza's civil defence agency yesterday said that Israeli strikes overnight killed at least 19 people across the Palestinian territory, where Israel has resumed its offensive against Hamas.

Civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that "19 civilians including several children were martyred" and dozens more wounded in the latest Israeli raids.

Five children and four adults were killed in a strike that hit a home in the central city of Deir el-Balah, while two separate pre-dawn attacks on Gaza City and Beit Lahia in the north left a total of 10 people dead, Bassal said.

Israel resumed intense strikes on the Gaza Strip on March 18, ending a two-month ceasefire with Hamas. Efforts to restore the truce have so far failed.

According to the health ministry in the Hamas-run territory, at least 1,391 Palestinians have been killed in the renewed Israeli operations, taking the overall death toll since the start of the war to 50,752.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian health ministry said Israeli troops killed a 30-year-old woman near the West Bank city of Salfit yesterday after what the army described as an attempted stabbing.

Since the start of the Israeli invasion of Gaza in October 2023, violence has soared in the occupied West Bank. Israeli troops and settlers have killed at least 918 Palestinians in the territory.

French President Emmanuel Macron visited the Egyptian city of El-Arish, a key transit point for Gaza-bound aid, yesterday to call on Israel to lift its blockade of aid deliveries to the war-battered Palestinian territory.

## Pakistan expels 8,000 Afghans

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan has expelled more than 8,000 Afghan nationals in the past week in a fresh repatriation drive after the expiry of a March 31 deadline, the UNHCR said yesterday.

All Afghan nationals who have no legal documents to stay or those holding Afghan Citizen Cards had been warned by Islamabad to return home or face deportation.

Authorities say they have set up temporary centres in various cities to house the Afghan nationals before transporting them to Torkham border crossing in northwest Pakistan.

At least 8,906 Afghan nationals have been deported since April 1, the UNHCR said in a WhatsApp message.

Islamabad says the drive is part of a campaign called the Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan launched in late 2023.

Kabul has termed the repatriation as forced deportation.

## World's heat streak persisted till March

AFP, Paris

Global temperatures hovered at historic highs in March, Europe's climate monitor said on Tuesday, prolonging an unprecedented heat streak that has pushed the bounds of scientific explanation.

In Europe, it was the hottest March ever recorded by a significant margin, said the Copernicus Climate Change Service, driving rainfall extremes across a continent warming faster than any other.

The world saw the second hottest March in the Copernicus dataset, sustaining a near unbroken spell of record or near-record-breaking temperatures that has persisted since July 2023.

Since then, virtually every month has been at least 1.5 degrees Celsius hotter than it was before the industrial revolution, when humans began burning massive amounts of coal, oil and gas.

March was 1.6C above pre-industrial times, extending an anomaly so unusual that scientists are still trying to fully explain it.

## Palestine doesn't need our violence

### Vandalism during Palestine protests reflects deeper fractures

As a nation that has always stood firmly in solidarity with the people of Palestine, we are dismayed by what unfolded in several districts during Monday's nationwide protests against Israel's war on Gaza. The protests—comprising sit-ins, processions, and academic closures—followed a global call for strikes, under the banner "The World Stops for Gaza", demanding an end to the brutal military campaign that has already killed over 50,000 Palestinians. While this cause is close to our hearts, we cannot condone the vandalism and looting carried out in its name. According to a report by this daily, various business outlets with alleged links to Israel, including restaurants and shoe stores, were attacked during the protests in Sylhet, Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, Khulna, Gazipur, Bogura, and so on.

Later, images and video footage showing some of the attacks went viral, redirecting the conversation from what was a well-intended act of solidarity with a persecuted population. While the government has condemned these incidents, with subsequent police raids resulting in the arrest of at least 49 suspected miscreants, the question that stares us in the face is: how does ransacking and looting local businesses (or even those with international backing) serve the Palestine cause? What justice is served by trashing, for instance, a Bata showroom—a company with no ties to Israel? This doesn't help the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement either, as it is meant to be nonviolent. The ignorance of the miscreants in this regard is matched only by their disregard for peaceful expressions, making a mockery of a noble cause.

Unfortunately, their vandalism took place just as the government launched the Bangladesh Investment Summit 2025, a four-day event aimed at attracting global investors and reshaping our international image. How unfortunate it is that scenes of looted shops, torched signage, or terrified shopkeepers are being broadcast at the same time. This is not how a country invites confidence or foreign capital. And if the government cannot effectively address this trend of violence by opportunists and criminals hiding in the crowd, Bangladesh's image is unlikely to improve any time soon. As we have highlighted in a recent editorial, it is because of the lack of a proper response by police and the judiciary that mobs are being exploited to serve various purposes. Often, mere suspicions of crimes including mugging, extortion, murder or rape have resulted in deadly violence. Political and personal grudges are also fuelling such violence.

This calls for a critical reassessment of the government's approach to dealing with mob activities. But law enforcement alone is not enough. We need a national reckoning with this culture of impulsive violence through the engagement of political and religious platforms. We must uphold the right to protest, but never at the cost of peace, order, and our collective interests.

## Make upazila health complexes effective

### Rural, marginalised communities need better access to healthcare

We are concerned about the situation at upazila health complexes where a severe shortage of doctors and essential staff is disrupting healthcare services. According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), around 59 percent of doctor positions in these health complexes remain vacant, while absenteeism is another major barrier to providing treatment to rural patients. Many of these facilities also lack specialist doctors, forcing patients to seek treatment at district or medical college hospitals. With such inadequacies, what is the point of having these facilities?

Staff and doctor shortages have been a persistent issue for the upazila health complexes but little action has been taken to address it. Recently, this daily published a report on the Kulaura Upazila Health Complex in Moulvibazar suffering from a similar shortage. The facility, serving a population of five lakh, has only two doctors. Similarly, the 50-bed Phulbari Upazila Health Complex in Dinajpur has only three regular doctors to serve an average of 80-90 patients daily. Patients unable to access services at these health centres are often forced to turn to private clinics, increasing their healthcare expenses.

At the Phulbari Health Complex, there are 182 positions for doctors, nurses, and fourth-class employees, but nearly half have remained unfilled for years. In Khulna division, 896 of the 1,327 doctor positions in upazila health complexes remain vacant. Meanwhile, Bandarban district is grappling with a shortage of over 300 staff, including doctors. Clearly, the crisis prevails across the country. The reasons for this are well-known. Since the recruitment of doctors is conducted through the BCS exams, the lengthy recruitment process often delays appointment. Also, doctors posted at the upazila level often prefer living in Dhaka rather than staying in remote areas, disregarding the rules. Furthermore, many doctors, nurses, and other staff members frequently remain absent or on leave due to a lack of discipline and proper oversight. This must change.

The government must develop a comprehensive plan to address the manpower shortage in local-level health complexes. As these facilities play a crucial role in delivering critical services at the grassroots level, they should be adequately staffed. The Public Administration Reform Commission has proposed the establishment of a dedicated Public Service Commission (Health) to manage recruitment, promotions, and other related activities in the health sector—which should be seriously considered to streamline healthcare operations and improve efficiency. Reform is crucial to ensuring healthcare for all.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Baghdad falls

On this day in 2003, Baghdad fell to US-led forces several weeks after the start of the Iraq War, a conflict begun to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein because of his supposed possession of weapons of mass destruction.

## Getting the most out of our economic zones



Syed Akhtar Mahmood  
is an economist who previously worked for an international development organisation.

SYED AKHTAR MAHMOOD

In 2011, Bangladesh lost a great opportunity to break into the global value chain for electronics. The Korean giant, Samsung, which had entered Vietnam just a few years prior, had set its eyes on Bangladesh. It wanted to invest \$1.25 billion in an electronics plant in Chattogram that would employ 50,000 people. It wanted 250 acres of land to build its plant. Bangladesh could not provide that land. Samsung decided to take that investment to Vietnam and expand its operations there.

By the early years of the new century, the country was ready for an industrial take-off. But there was an emerging constraint that stood in the way. Businesspeople had started complaining about it. Newspapers were reporting it anecdotally. Then, in 2007, solid evidence came in the form of a World Bank report. An investment climate assessment for Bangladesh, the second in a series that had started in 2002, showed that scarcity of serviced industrial land was becoming a serious constraint.

Both the 2002 and 2007 investment climate assessments by the World Bank listed the top five constraints faced by businesses. Four of these were present in both reports. What was new this time was the access to land constraint. In 2007, almost 50 percent of the respondents identified this as a major or severe constraint—this was up from about 30 percent in 2002. Land scarcity was a perennial problem. Weaknesses in land recording and titling compounded it. Businesses found it difficult to obtain unencumbered and serviced industrial land, with good access to infrastructure and utilities. The environment was also harmed by rapid industrialisation. Entrepreneurs had set up factories indiscriminately, and scarce land was being used inefficiently.

At that time, the country had a small number of export processing zones (EPZs) and about 60 industrial parks. The latter were in bad shape, lacking good infrastructure and utilities, and some were in locations that made little economic sense. The EPZs were reasonably well-run, but these were, by definition, all export-oriented. The total area of available

plots in these zones was also limited. Demand was rising for increasing the supply of serviced industrial land through the establishment of more zones, including those accessible by domestic businesses. Moreover, the inability to provide serviced land was a major factor discouraging FDI.

It was in this context that the government started thinking about an ambitious economic zones programme in 2007. This was meant to be a transformative agenda that would not only address the problem of serviced industrial land but would also help ensure that future industrialisation of

the country would be better organised and environmentally sustainable. The programme also envisaged a move away from the purely public sector model of zone development and management prevalent in Bangladesh. This was a bold idea for a country. The report argued for allowing varying degrees of private sector participation, such as purely private zones where the private sector both develops and manages the zones, and PPP zones which may be publicly developed but managed by the private sector.

Where do we stand with the economic zones now? Currently, 122 investment projects are being implemented in the economic zones, with a total land allocation of 1,950 acres. This land amount compares well with the total land occupied by investors (2,300 acres) in the eight EPZs of the country, which represent an earlier generation of economic zones. In other words, the amount of serviced land made available to

the country would be better organised and environmentally sustainable. The programme also envisaged a move away from the purely public sector model of zone development and management prevalent in Bangladesh. This was a bold idea for a country. The report argued for allowing varying degrees of private sector participation, such as purely private zones where the private sector both develops and manages the zones, and PPP zones which may be publicly developed but managed by the private sector.

When it comes to FDI attraction, the picture is not encouraging. Of the roughly \$5 billion already invested in the ongoing projects, only \$200 million, i.e., a meagre 4 percent, is FDI. In other words, even after addressing one of the main bottlenecks to FDI attraction, i.e., serviced land, we have

investors through zones has almost doubled with the advent of the new economic zones.

But what is the country getting, in terms of investment, exports, and employment, from this very substantial land allocation?

Data available from the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) allow us to answer these important questions.

Of the 122 projects, 50 (41 percent of the total) have already commenced operations. The rest are in various stages of construction. Total investment to date is \$5.06 billion, which is 57 percent of the total cost projected. It is projected that these investments will generate about 100,000 jobs. This amounts to 53 jobs per acre of allocated land compared to 217 jobs generated per acre in the EPZs. So far, 43,286 jobs have been generated, i.e., a little less than half the projected number. BEZA provides gender disaggregated data, which tells us that four out of five jobs have

not been able to use the economic zones to attract significant foreign investment.

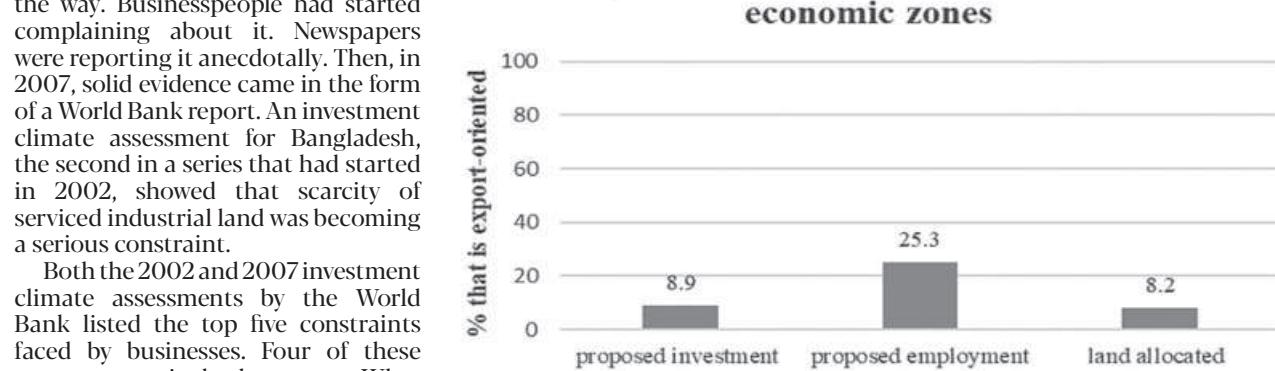
One reason is that while the land and basic infrastructure are ready in the operational zones, many still suffer from an inadequate supply of energy. But why is it that the share of FDI in total investment is so low? If a sizeable amount of domestic investment is coming to the zones despite the energy-related issues, why are foreign investors not coming? This points to the weaknesses that remain in our investment promotion and attraction efforts and the deficiencies in our overall investment climate.

What about the export orientation of the investments in the economic zones? This is an important question since increasing exports is an important development objective of Bangladesh, and the economic zones are supposed to make a major contribution here. The table provided summarises the situation.

Before we discuss the findings, let me clarify how I obtained these numbers. The BEZA database distinguishes between three categories of investment: a) 100 percent domestic-oriented; b) "mostly" domestic-oriented; and c) 100 percent export-oriented. For the "mostly" domestic-oriented category, I designated 20 percent of proposed investment, 20 percent of proposed employment, and 20 percent of land allocated as being export-oriented. For the 100 percent export-oriented investments, the corresponding figures are, of course, 100 percent. I then added up the export-oriented proposed investment, proposed employment, and land allocated for all the operational economic zones. Note that this does not include the EPZs, which belong to an earlier generation of economic zones; this article is about the contribution of the new generation of zones.

The results summarised are somewhat disappointing. We see a low export-orientation, with only about 8 percent of proposed investment and allocated land, and 25 percent of proposed employment being associated with export-oriented investments.

While good progress has been made in developing the economic zones, with more than 100 investors provided with land so far, the economic zones are far from fulfilling their promise—i.e., serving as a major vehicle for attracting FDI that will help diversify our exports and give us a foothold in global value chains. Thus far, economic zones are largely about local investors targeting the local market. This must change.



## Can democracy and populism coexist?



Asinur Reza  
is a writer and development professional.  
He can be reached at  
asinur.reza@gmail.com

ASINUR REZA

When defining democracy, the words of Abraham Lincoln—"government of the people, by the people, for the people"—resonate universally. Similarly, Winston Churchill's pragmatic observation reminds us that while democracy may be flawed, it surpasses all other forms of governance attempted throughout history. Democracy's appeal lies in its grounding in the will of the people, yet its implementation varies widely. Like the societies it governs, democracy reflects diverse cultures, histories, and local dynamics.

Democracy, though globally dominant since the fall of communism, is far from a one-size-fits-all system. Diverse societies require governance tailored to their unique needs, but certain universal principles must anchor any democratic system. Democracy is not simply the will of the majority; it must safeguard freedom of speech and association, uphold the rule of law, and protect the rights of all, including minorities. While free, fair, inclusive, and regular elections are essential, they alone do not guarantee democratic governance. Without robust checks and balances, elected governments can misuse power or drift into authoritarianism. To ensure accountability, democracy requires the separation of powers among legislative, executive, and judicial branches, supported by independent media and civil society acting as

vigilant watchdogs.

Over the past decade, as concerns about democracy's global decline intensified, the recently former US President Joe Biden sought to reaffirm America's self-proclaimed historical role as a champion of democratic values. He initiated the Summit for Democracy, inviting hundreds of nations from across the globe (excluding Bangladesh multiple times). Many analysts viewed the summit as a strategic effort to counter China's rising influence and highlight its undemocratic governance. In response, China published a white paper titled, *China: Democracy That Works*, asserting that its governance model aligns with democratic principles. However, the ordinary people of China do not have the opportunity to directly elect their leaders. Interestingly, they do not seem to be much concerned about this. Nevertheless, it is for Chinese citizens to decide what kind of democracy best suits their nation. As Mahatma Gandhi aptly noted, "The spirit of democracy cannot be imposed from without. It has to come from within."

The term "democracy" has become so universally admired that even authoritarian regimes hesitate to reject it outright. North Korea, officially the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), exemplifies this paradox. Despite being one of the world's most repressive and isolated

regimes, ruled by a single family for over 70 years, it conducts regular elections where citizens cast votes by secret ballot. However, these elections are purely symbolic, offering only one candidate on the ballot. The scarcity of reliable information about North Korea further obscures the true nature of its political system.

The assumption that democracy would flourish universally after the Cold War has been tempered by reality. Instead of converging towards liberal democracy, many nations have adopted diverse democratic systems, some of which deviate significantly from democratic fundamentals. One of the greatest challenges to democracy today is the rise of populism.

Historically, populism began as a movement advocating for the masses against elite rulers. In its modern form, however, it often leverages division rather than unity. Populist leaders exploit religion, nationalism, and cultural identity to manipulate emotions and garner support. This rhetoric often lacks substantive vision, instead deepening societal divisions and marginalising dissent.

In South Asia, populism frequently intertwines with religion and nationalism, shaping political discourse through identity politics that deepen societal divisions. Politicians often exploit religious sentiments and nationalist rhetoric to consolidate support, as evident in India's Hindu-nationalist politics and Pakistan's Islamist-driven narratives. Bangladesh presents a distinct case, where cyclical anti-India and anti-Pakistan sentiments reflect a hybrid populist strategy. While these tactics effectively mobilise public support, they often divert attention from pressing governance issues, exacerbate polarisation, and marginalise minorities. Once in power, populist leaders tend to bypass

checks and balances, concentrating authority under the guise of acting for "the people." This approach weakens democratic institutions, targeting independent judiciaries, free media, and civil society while relying on propaganda and hate speech to suppress dissent. If left unchecked, populism risks undermining the very democratic structures it claims to uphold, as evidenced by recent regimes across the region.

A key distinction between democracy and populism lies in their approach to pluralism. Democracy balances majority rule with protections for minority rights and dissenting opinions, embracing diversity as a cornerstone of governance. Populism, by contrast, often prioritises the will of the majority, viewing minority protections or institutional checks as obstacles to fulfilling "the mandate of the majority."

However, populism is not inherently harmful. When strategically managed, it can drive reforms within democracy, bringing attention to neglected issues and challenging entrenched elites. Then again, unchecked populism risks concentrating power, undermining institutional integrity, and sidelining dissent.

Populism, as an integral part of democracy, holds a dual nature: it can strengthen democratic participation but also threaten its core principles when left unregulated. Democracy must transcend populist impulses, maintaining its commitment to inclusivity, accountability, and institutional safeguards. American author James Bovard's cautionary words, "Democracy must be something more than two wolves and a sheep voting on what to have for dinner," emphasise the need to protect minority rights and uphold systemic checks and balances.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Baghdad falls

On this day in 2003, Baghdad fell to US-led forces several weeks after the start of the Iraq War, a conflict begun to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein because of his supposed possession of weapons of mass destruction.

## What should be our game plan to tackle global volatility?

In the aftermath of the Chief Adviser's visit to China, Trump Tariffs, and as the BIDA investment takes place, **Mustafizur Rahman**, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), speaks to **Ramisa Rob** of The Daily Star about how Bangladesh can navigate the current challenges.

### What economic opportunities can come from strengthening Bangladesh's bilateral ties with China?

The Chief Adviser's recent visit to China was of heightened importance to Bangladesh from multiple perspectives. First of all, China is our major bilateral trading partner and the most important source of our imports. Over the last few years, average imports from China were about \$20 billion, and these imports from China are crucial for many of our export-oriented industries, domestic import-substitute industries, and also for our consumers. On the other hand, China plays a crucial role in Bangladesh's infrastructure scenarios and has its footprints in many of our major infrastructure projects, including the Padma Bridge, rail connectivity over the Padma River, Karnaphuli tunnel and many other economic, social and digital infrastructure. Bangladesh has been a part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and many projects are being implemented as part of the initiative.

There exists significant Chinese investment in Bangladesh in various sectors, but not to the extent that we had hoped for. The plan to build a Chinese Economic Zone on the south bank of the River Karnaphuli could not be realised on time but there is a plan in place to revive it. China also remains the predominant source of Bangladesh's defence-related imports.

Bangladesh has taken loans, particularly from Exim Bank of China, for various development projects focused on economic, social, and transport infrastructure, as well as to establish digital connectivity. The Chief Adviser's visit was thus an excellent opportunity not only to deepen bilateral economic relations, but also to open discussions on re-examining the terms of the loans, attracting investment to Bangladesh, and exploring opportunities for further borrowings from China. Most of the loans from China were incurred at 2 percent interest, with a grace period and repayment period of 5-10 years and 20 years, respectively. This was important given that Bangladesh's foreign reserves are under pressure and debt servicing liabilities are growing.

It was announced following the meeting that about \$2 billion worth of investment will be forthcoming from China. China will explore shifting some of its industries to Bangladesh, which could give Bangladesh competitive edge in exporting to China and other markets. Until now, most of the Chinese investments and sunset industries have been going to Vietnam, Cambodia, and other East Asian countries. Bangladesh could be a major hub for Chinese investment, particularly if the proposed dedicated SEZ could be established



Mustafizur Rahman.

PHOTO: CPD

at an early date.

**As reported, Beijing expressed its willingness to start negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). What would that entail?**

The proposed FTA with China will need to be carefully considered as there are revenue loss concerns if we provide zero tariffs to imports from China. On the other hand, if we receive preferential market access in China as part of an FTA, from a short run perspective its significance will be limited, as our exports are relatively low. For now, we are getting duty-free, quota-free access to the Chinese market under the Chinese GSP scheme for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). In this regard, China's offer to extend preferential market access till 2028, two years beyond Bangladesh's upcoming LDC graduation, during the Chief Adviser's visit, is a positive development.

If we are able to triangulate trade, investment, transport connectivities, and other forms of cooperation—such as technology transfer, productivity enhancement, and Chinese investment in Bangladesh—the prepared FTA, in the form of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, will be beneficial for Bangladesh. It also has to be based on reciprocity, taking into account the differences in our economic levels.

**With India-China rivalry, and tensions between Bangladesh and India, what should the geostrategic framework be?**

I presume balancing the relationship between India and China remains at the core of Bangladesh's current geostrategic outlook. Bangladesh's strengthened ties with China should not be seen as contradicting Bangladesh's clearly articulated policy to deepen cooperation with India. Both these will need to be on the basis of win-win outcomes.

India remains a major trading partner of

Bangladesh, for many consumer goods with advantages in terms of price competitiveness and lead time. Bangladesh has received \$8 billion from India, and many projects are being implemented under this credit. The duty-free, quota-free market access provided by India to Bangladesh for almost all items originating from the country has benefitted Bangladesh's consumers, producers and exporters.

Of course, there are some issues in view of deepening bilateral ties with India that cannot be ignored, such as the sharing of water of Teesta River and the management of

**The BIDA investment summit should be viewed as a way to address the challenges posed by the Trump tariffs and as a step towards increasing our regional market engagement, which also carries a peace dividend. I envision Bangladesh as a central hub for the Southern Asian integrated market.**

all the rivers that we share. But Bangladesh is keen to negotiate on these issues, including joint river basin management.

At one time, we were very hopeful that the proposed Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor would play an important role in deepening transport, trade, investment, logistics, and people-to-people connectivity. Regrettably, following a promising start, the BCIM Economic Corridor project has become dormant now. These types of multilateral cooperation initiatives can help Bangladesh take advantage of its geostrategic location while easing regional tensions.

**In this context, Trump tariffs are another geo-economic issue hovering over the nation. What steps should the interim government take?**

The Trump tariffs reinforce Bangladesh's need to pursue market and product diversification and to deepen regional cooperation. Our strategy should be two-pronged. First, Bangladesh will need to engage with the US, which is Bangladesh's single largest export destination. Bangladesh has already taken a number of initiatives including the Chief Adviser writing to President Trump. The

NBR is examining what we can offer the US. At the same time, this serves as a reminder that the global trading scenario is becoming increasingly uncertain. For weaker economies like Bangladesh, a rules-based multilateral trading system remains the best option, but the WTO has been weakened irreparably by US policies.

Second, while we tackle short- and medium-term ramifications of the tariffs, we should also pursue multilateral initiatives such as reviving SAARC and strengthening our bilateral ties with regional countries such as China and India to reduce dependence on the US. At the recently held Sixth Summit of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), the Report of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) and the Bangkok Vision 2030 have been adopted, and the maritime transport agreement has been signed. As part of a broader strategy to address global trade volatility, we should also consider strengthening ties with ASEAN, which is part of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement.

Bangladesh has strong arguments to engage with the US. First, though we have a bilateral trade surplus with the US of around \$7 billion, we are one of the major importers of US cotton, which is used in our RMG exports to the US. In this way, Bangladesh's imports from the US are closely tied to US exports to Bangladesh. Second, there are no import duties on US import products such as cotton, wheat and soybean and others like LPG remain very low. While some imported items do face higher tariffs, Bangladesh may reconsider lowering those, though this has to be done on a Most Favoured Nation basis.

We must carefully study the items where the US has export interests and assess whether, and to what extent, we can lower tariffs to zero and what the revenue implications might be. Another strategy is to improve our trade and investment environment so that more US investment can come to Bangladesh, as FDI from the US is currently very low. Removing the obstacles to US investment should be part of improving our overall investment climate through reducing costs of doing business, and undertaking needed reforms.

As we speak, the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) investment summit is taking place. It is very encouraging to see a large number of prominent global investors' keen interest in Bangladesh. If we can provide the necessary services under the One Stop Service Act 2018—such as unencumbered land, appropriate infrastructure, skilled workers and mid-level professionals, quality electricity, and uninterrupted gas—then there is every

opportunity to translate investor interest into higher FDI flows to Bangladesh.

A large flow of FDI would help in a few ways: addressing the challenges of LDC graduation and emergent volatile global trading scenario; creating decent jobs; greater export product and market diversification; and paving the way for Bangladesh to leverage FDI to enter regional markets with greater competitive strength. India imports more than \$700 billion annually; China, more than \$2,800 billion. Yet Bangladesh's exports to India remain around \$2 billion, and less than \$1 billion in case of China. If we can increase investments targeting the regional markets, we can benefit from the duty-free and quota-free access provided under LDC schemes of India and China. Bangladesh may seek an extension of India's DF-QF market access beyond the LDC graduation timeline to maximise the benefits.

The BIDA investment conference should also be viewed as a way to address the challenges posed by the Trump tariffs and LDC graduation. Given its strategic position, with four seaports on the Bay of Bengal, Bangladesh could be a major hub for maritime routes and transportation which will also create investment opportunities that can be harnessed in a win-win manner. To achieve this, macroeconomic stability and a conducive political environment will be crucially important.

**Does the current explosive geopolitical landscape make transitioning from LDC status even more challenging?**

The Trump tariffs and the broader challenges in the global market once again reinforce the need for Bangladesh to take proactive steps towards smooth and sustainable LDC graduation. Opportunities created by the BIDA investment summit, as well as bilateral discussions held in China, and the meeting between the Chief Adviser and Prime Minister Modi, should all be seen as part of navigating the turbulent waters of geopolitics and geopolitics which will be necessary if Bangladesh is to move towards LDC graduation with momentum. Post-graduation, we will no longer have duty-free, quota-free market access. The pressure to comply with intellectual property rights, labour standards, and environmental regulations will increase. If we want to attract FDI, we will have to improve compliance in these areas as well. Workers and producers will need to be provided with necessary support to raise competitiveness through higher labour and capital productivity. A "whole of society" and "whole of economy approach" will be key to moving towards sustainable LDC graduation.

## Rising tariffs may lead to a global recession



Sarzah Yeasmin is a policy analyst who works on the intersections of education and development economics. She is an alumna of Harvard University.

SARZAH YEASMIN

The impact of the seismic shift in the global economy caused by Trump's reciprocal tariffs is as immediate as it is personal. From factory floors in Vietnam to markets in Lagos and ports in Rotterdam, the consequences of rising trade barriers are being felt not just in numbers but in the daily realities of workers, producers, and consumers.

The resurgence of reciprocal tariffs—a form of economic retaliation that was once viewed as an outdated relic of 20th-century protectionism—are imposed in direct response to trade barriers enacted by another country, matching the restrictions "dollar for dollar" or "item for item." On April 2, 2025, President Trump announced a comprehensive 10 percent tariff on all exports to the US. China, referred to as the biggest target, was immediately impacted, while higher duties were also levied on European Union goods, reportedly affecting as much as \$3 trillion worth of imported goods. Tariffs were also announced on Mexico and Canada, in part as a retaliatory move for fentanyl trafficking across the southern border—signalling the use of national security emergency powers to frame the trade agenda.

A new dimension has emerged in the US-China economic clash, with additional tariffs being placed on strategic sectors such as semiconductors and artificial intelligence chips. This is paired with renewed tension between the US and the EU, as Washington imposed 20 percent duties on European goods. With the new round of import tariffs on cars now in force, companies such as Volkswagen and BMW have seen their share prices plunge. Apparel supply chains have been heavily disrupted, affecting brands like Lululemon, Abercrombie & Fitch, and Gap.

Apple continues to produce key US-sold devices in factories across China, India, and Vietnam—further complicating its cost

structure. NVIDIA, heavily reliant on China for AI chip supply, faces new hurdles.

In 2018, the United States introduced sweeping tariffs on Chinese steel, aluminium, and consumer goods, arguing that such measures were necessary to correct "unfair trade practices." In response, China imposed tariffs on American agricultural and industrial products. The logic was simple: if one country raises barriers, the other retaliates in kind. But the effects were anything but simple.

Across the world, producers and exporters began feeling the strain. From Argentine soybeans to German car parts, global supply chains were suddenly subjected to new layers of cost and uncertainty. Countries dependent on exporting raw materials or low-cost manufactured goods faced price volatility and declining demand. In others, increased import costs led to a spike in inflation, eroding household purchasing power. While some sectors—such as domestic steel and certain segments of manufacturing—saw modest gains in employment, others were undercut by higher production costs. For workers in industries dependent on global supply chains, the promise of tariff-driven revival has proven to be largely illusory.

South and Southeast Asian economies, particularly those dependent on low-skill manufacturing, have been the hardest hit. Vietnam, for instance, exports 46 percent of its GDP, with over 90 percent of that growth tied to trade. Any significant loss in global trade demand could be catastrophic. In this context, a 1-2 percent decline in Chinese GDP growth, currently forecast due to the tariffs, would have dramatic knock-on effects across Asia.

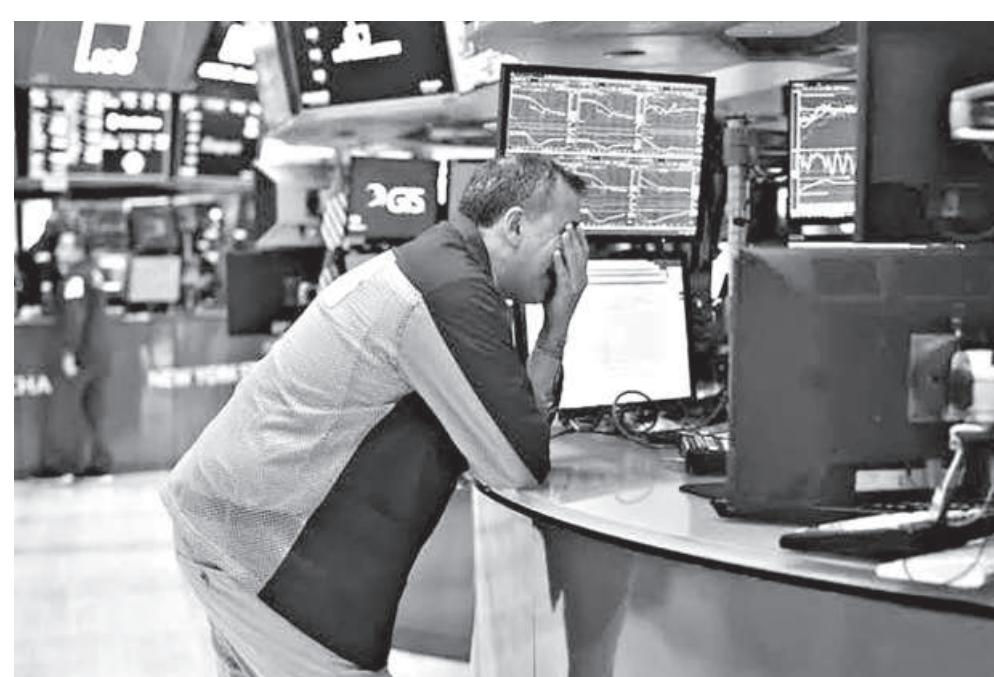
In the 1930s, the US Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act set off a global wave of retaliatory measures that many historians argue helped deepen the Great Depression. In the aftermath of World War II, the international

community established a framework to avoid such cycles—first through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and later through the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Yet, decades of trade liberalisation have not resolved core tensions. As manufacturing jobs disappeared in developed economies and new industrial powers rose, political pressure mounted to protect domestic industries,

further weighed on the dollar. At the same time, the usual inflationary consequences of tariffs persist, pushing some central banks towards monetary tightening—despite global calls for policy caution.

De-dollarisation has gained traction, particularly among BRICS nations, which have explored alternative settlement systems and bilateral trade agreements in local currencies. The current trade shocks will



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in New York City, USA, on April 4, 2025.

PHOTO: AFP

often disregard economic orthodoxy. The Trump era tariffs marked a sharp break from the post-war consensus, but they also reflected a broader, global phenomenon: the return of economic nationalism.

While reciprocal tariffs have historically been associated with increased demand for the US dollar as a safe haven currency, the dollar has weakened amid investor anxiety over policy unpredictability and a potential economic slowdown. Speculation that the Federal Reserve may cut interest rates to buffer against recessionary pressures has

likely push many countries to seek greater financial autonomy not only as a form of sovereignty but to hedge against future volatility in dollar-denominated trade.

In the private sector, the response to rising tariffs has been no less transformative. Multinational firms have begun to diversify supply chains, embracing what economists call the "China+1" strategy: maintaining Chinese operations while adding production bases in countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia, and Mexico. Some companies have opted for nearshoring, bringing production closer to

home. Others are exploring "friendshoring," sourcing goods only from politically aligned nations. These strategies, while aimed at minimising risk, represent a significant departure from the efficiency-driven logic that previously dominated global trade. They signal a world where resilience trumps cost-cutting—a world in which global integration no longer feels inevitable.

Financial indicators strongly suggest the onset of a mild global recession. Defensive stocks are outperforming cyclical ones, especially in sectors like consumer staples and utilities, while airline and carmaker stocks have plunged. The gap between cyclical and defensive stock performance is the widest since the Covid lockdowns in 2020. Global indices like the MSCI World have fallen sharply, with US and European markets experiencing similar declines. Investment banks have delayed IPOs, and analysts from institutions like JPMorgan Chase have raised recession forecasts to 60 percent.

Key sectors such as semiconductors, critical minerals, and pharmaceuticals are under close watch. In agriculture, tariffs have destabilised markets and increased the cost of essential equipment and fertilisers. In manufacturing, particularly in small and medium enterprises, increased input costs have pushed many to the brink. The complex web of intermediaries—suppliers, logistics companies, retailers—must now absorb and adapt to constant uncertainty.

As policymakers and institutions grapple with these challenges, a broader question looms: what kind of global economy do we want to build?

If tariffs and retaliations become the norm rather than the exception, the risk is not just slower growth or higher prices—it is the erosion of trust. Trust that trade can benefit more than a privileged few. Trust that rules and dialogue can replace confrontation. Trust that economic interdependence, carefully managed, can prevent conflict rather than provoke it. To navigate the changing trade system, global resilience must be redefined. It will require investments in digital infrastructure, diversification of trade partnerships, education systems that prepare citizens for technological change, and institutions capable of managing shared challenges.

**Legal Notice**

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

**COMPANY MATTER NO. 534 OF 2025****IN THE MATTER OF:**

An application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009.

**AND****IN THE MATTER OF:**

H.R. Holdings Limited, represented by its Managing Director, Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury

**.....Petitioner****-VERSUS-**

The Registrar Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215

**.....Respondent**

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009 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 Annual General Meeting of H.R. Holdings Limited for the calendar years of 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 and relieving the Directors and Shareholders of the Company from payment of fine or penalty.

Upon preliminary hearing, the Hon'ble Company Bench, comprising of his Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel vide order dated 27.03.2025 was pleased to admit the said application and directed to file an affidavit-in-compliance on or before 29.04.2025 after publication of this notice within 03(three) weeks from the date of the aforesaid order, i.e. on or before 17.04.2025. Any person or persons having interest in the said application may appear either personally or through duly authorized Advocate on or before the date so fixed.

Copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on payment of required costs.

Yours faithfully  
**Faria Huq**

Head of Chamber, OHC & Associates  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
Barrister, Lincoln's Inn

**Legal Notice**

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

**COMPANY MATTER NO. 535 OF 2025****IN THE MATTER OF:**

An application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009.

**AND****IN THE MATTER OF:**

Karnaphuli Automobiles Ltd, represented by its Managing Director, Mr. Hamdan Hossain Chowdhury

**.....Petitioner****-VERSUS-**

The Registrar Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215

**.....Respondent**

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009 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 Annual General Meeting of Karnaphuli Automobiles Ltd for the calendar year of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and relieving the Directors and Shareholders of the Company from payment of fine or penalty.

Upon preliminary hearing, the Hon'ble Company Bench, comprising of his Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel vide order dated 27.03.2025 was pleased to admit the said application and directed to file an affidavit-in-compliance on or before 29.04.2025 after publication of this notice within 03(three) weeks from the date of the aforesaid order, i.e. on or before 17.04.2025. Any person or persons having interest in the said application may appear either personally or through duly authorized Advocate on or before the date so fixed.

Copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on payment of required costs.

Yours faithfully  
**Faria Huq**

Head of Chamber, OHC & Associates  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
Barrister, Lincoln's Inn

**Legal Notice**

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

**COMPANY MATTER NO. 533 OF 2025****IN THE MATTER OF:**

An application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009.

**AND****IN THE MATTER OF:**

Karnaphuli Limited, represented by its Managing Director, Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury

**.....Petitioner****-VERSUS-**

The Registrar Joint Stock Companies and Firms,

**.....Respondent**

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009 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 Annual General Meeting of Karnaphuli Limited for the calendar year of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 and relieving the Directors and Shareholders of the Company from payment of fine or penalty.

Upon preliminary hearing, the Hon'ble Company Bench, comprising of his Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel vide order dated 27.03.2025 was pleased to admit the said application and directed to file an affidavit-in-compliance on or before 29.04.2025 after publication of this notice within 03(three) weeks from the date of the aforesaid order, i.e. on or before 17.04.2025. Any person or persons having interest in the said application may appear either personally or through duly authorized Advocate on or before the date so fixed.

Copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on payment of required costs.

Yours faithfully  
**Faria Huq**

Head of Chamber, OHC & Associates  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
Barrister, Lincoln's Inn

**Legal Notice**

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

**COMPANY MATTER NO. 532 OF 2025****IN THE MATTER OF:**

An application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009.

**AND****IN THE MATTER OF:**

Performance Motors Ltd, represented by its Managing Director, Mr. Hamdan Hossain Chowdhury

**.....Petitioner****-VERSUS-**

The Registrar Joint Stock Companies and Firms,

**.....Respondent**

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009 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 Annual General Meeting of Performance Motors Ltd for the calendar years of 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and relieving the Directors and Shareholders of the Company from payment of fine or penalty.

Upon preliminary hearing, the Hon'ble Company Bench, comprising of his Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel vide order dated 27.03.2025 was pleased to admit the said application and directed to file an affidavit-in-compliance on or before 29.04.2025 after publication of this notice within 03(three) weeks from the date of the aforesaid order, i.e. on or before 17.04.2025. Any person or persons having interest in the said application may appear either personally or through duly authorized Advocate on or before the date so fixed.

Copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on payment of required costs.

Yours faithfully  
**Faria Huq**

Head of Chamber, OHC & Associates  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
Barrister, Lincoln's Inn

**Legal Notice**

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

**COMPANY MATTER NO. 531 OF 2025****IN THE MATTER OF:**

An application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009.

**AND****IN THE MATTER OF:**

Karnaphuli Works Limited, represented by its Managing Director, Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury

**.....Petitioner****-VERSUS-**

The Registrar Joint Stock Companies and Firms,

**.....Respondent**

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009 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 Annual General Meeting of Karnaphuli Works Limited for the calendar year of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 and relieving the Directors and Shareholders of the Company from payment of fine or penalty.

Upon preliminary hearing, the Hon'ble Company Bench, comprising of his Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel vide order dated 27.03.2025 was pleased to admit the said application and directed to file an affidavit-in-compliance on or before 29.04.2025 after publication of this notice within 03(three) weeks from the date of the aforesaid order, i.e. on or before 17.04.2025. Any person or persons having interest in the said application may appear either personally or through duly authorized Advocate on or before the date so fixed.

Copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on payment of required costs.

Yours faithfully  
**Faria Huq**

Head of Chamber, OHC & Associates  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
Barrister, Lincoln's Inn

**Legal Notice**

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

**COMPANY MATTER NO. 536 OF 2025****IN THE MATTER OF:**

An application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009.

**AND****IN THE MATTER OF:**

Karnaphuli Industries Limited, represented by its Managing Director, Mr. Saber Hossain Chowdhury

**.....Petitioner****-VERSUS-**

The Registrar Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka-1215

**.....Respondent**

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) read with sections 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 and Rules 8 & 263 of the Companies Rules, 2009 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 Annual General Meeting of Karnaphuli Industries Limited for the calendar year of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and relieving the Directors and Shareholders of the Company from payment of fine or penalty.

Upon preliminary hearing, the Hon'ble Company Bench, comprising of his Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel vide order dated 27.03.2025 was pleased to admit the said application and directed to file an affidavit-in-compliance on or before 29.04.2025 after publication of this notice within 03(three) weeks from the date of the aforesaid order, i.e. on or before 17.04.2025. Any person or persons having interest in the said application may appear either personally or through duly authorized Advocate on or before the date so fixed.

Copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on payment of required costs.

Yours faithfully  
**Faria Huq**

Head of Chamber, OHC & Associates  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
Barrister, Lincoln's Inn

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**

Office of the Project Director of the Project 'Aquifer Mapping Preparation and Water Stress Area Assessment in 13 Districts of the North-West Hydrological Regions of Bangladesh'  
Water Resources Planning Organization (WARPO)  
72 Green Road, Dhaka-1215

**Tender Notice for Vehicle Rental Service**

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Water Resources
2.	Agency	Water Resources Planning Organization (WARPO)
3.	Name of Procuring Entity	Project Director, 'Aquifer Mapping Preparation and Water Stress Area Assessment in 13 Districts of the North-West Hydrological Regions of Bangladesh'
4.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
5.	Invitation for	Vehicle Rental Service (Non-Consultancy Service)
6.	Invitation Reference No.	42.02.0000.005.14.0002.25.340
7.	Date	08.04.2025

**KEY INFORMATION**

8.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (National)
----	--------------------	----------------------------------

9.	Budget & Source of Fund	Development Budget (GOB)


</tbl

## Selectors stick to tried and tested names for first Zim Test

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday announced the squad for the upcoming first home Test against Zimbabwe, set to begin in Sylhet on April 20. The most notable omission is pace spearhead Taskin Ahmed, and his absence paves the way for a maiden Test call-up for young pacer Tanzim Hasan Sakib.

Taskin is suffering from an Achilles tendon issue and will miss the entire series against Zimbabwe, BCB chief physician Debashish Chowdhury was quoted as saying in a media release. Having also sat out Mohammedan's last two Dhaka Premier League (DPL) matches, the club awaits further medical reports before confirming Taskin's return to domestic action.

Right-arm fast bowler Khaled Ahmed makes a return after he was excluded following last year's India Test series, while Nahid Rana, Hasan Mahmud, and Sakib make up the pace battery. Rana, however, is set to depart after the first Test to play in the franchise-based Pakistan Super League.

While there was room for experimentation in the batting order, the selectors have gone with the tried and tested. Shadman Islam, Mahmud Hasan Joy, and Zakir Hasan were included as



Pacer Tanzim Sakib, thus far considered as a white-ball specialist, got his first call-up to the Bangladesh Test side.

### BANGLADESH SQUAD (FIRST TEST)

Najmul Hossain Shanto (c), Mahmud Hasan Joy, Shadman Islam, Zakir Hasan, Mominul Haque, Mashfiqur Rahim, Mahidul Islam, Jaker Ali Anik, Mehidy Hasan Miraz (vc), Taijul Islam, Nayeem Hasan, Nahid Rana, Hasan Mahmud, Khaled Ahmed, Tanzim Sakib.

### ZIMBABWE SQUAD

Craig Ervine (c), Brian Bennett, Johnathan Campbell, Ben Curran, Trevor Gwandu, Wessly Madhevere, Wellington Masakadza, Vincent Masekese, Nyasha Mayayo, Blessing Muzarabani, Richard Ngarava, Victor Nyachi, Tafadzwa Tsiga, Nicholas Welch, Sean Williams.

openers. All three have featured regularly, and chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu reminded that all three -- especially Joy or Zakir -- have the opportunity to solidify their positions in the side.

Mashfiqur Rahim and skipper Nazmul Hossain Shanto, meanwhile, return after the West Indies series. The return of the experienced duo meant Shahadat Hossain Dipu was excluded.

Moreover, middle-order batter Mahidul Islam Ankon was included as Liton Das will be playing in the PSL, while

spinner Nayeem Hasan returned in place of Hasan Murad.

The chief selector talked about the lack of experimentation in this series, which had been expected as it is not part of the ICC World Test Championship cycle.

"We are returning to the Test format after almost four-and-a-half months. Then we have the Sri Lanka series in June. That's why we didn't want to do any experiments."

While it might have been prudent to

give opportunities to youngsters such as Dipu, who impressed in the West Indies tour, or others against a relatively weaker opponent at home, Lipu said the opportunity is there for them to feature against New Zealand A in May or Bangladesh HP's series against South Africa at home.

The recent underperformance of the top order was also an issue in the squad announcement. "It's very important for us to do well, especially at home. We haven't been able to do well against Sri Lanka and South Africa last year.

"We are entering red-ball by playing white-ball cricket, so it will be a challenge," Lipu said, adding the series is an opportunity to improve those performances, in batting and bowling terms, to be better prepared for the Sri Lanka tour in June-July.

Lipu further informed pacer Ebadot Hossain, currently playing DPL, is being "observed". Regarding 22-year-old Tanzim -- who has featured in 16 first-class matches but has already played in 10 ODIs and 18 T20Is for the Tigers -- he said the right-arm has featured in white-ball cricket and "has shown potential" in the white-ball format.

"There is an eagerness to do well. Tanzim has got the pace and ability to take wickets and was included."

## Rebel footballers train under Butler

SPORTS REPORTER

Following a 68-day stand-off, most of the senior women footballers of Bangladesh team returned to training under head coach Peter Butler for the first time yesterday.

Thirteen of the 18 footballers, who had boycotted training under Butler since January 30, calling for his resignation trained for more than an hour under the guidance of the Englishman at the Abahani ground in Dhamondi on Tuesday morning.

Four other senior members -- Sabina Khatoon, Ritu Porna Chakma, Matsushima Sumaiya, and Monika Chakma -- are currently in Bhutan gearing up to play for Paro FC in the country's domestic league, while Tohura Khatoon is expected to join the camp later.

Signs looked ominous and pointed towards a continuation of the standoff as none of the boycotting players joined the gym session supervised by Butler at the BFF House on Saturday. However, later in the day a meeting between the coach and the 13 seniors took place, with BFF's women's committee chairman Mahfuza Akter Kiron in mediation, where the coach had reportedly asked the players to start training on his terms and forget the rift that had held women's football hostage for so long.

The training camp, which features both senior players and under-20 players, aims to prepare the senior team for June's Asian Cup Qualifiers in Myanmar as well as the SAFF Under-20 Women's Championship in Dhaka in July.

## WOMEN'S WC QUALIFIERS

### Tigresses end preparation on a high

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's team made a strong finish to their preparation for the Women's World Cup Qualifiers with a 167-run win against Pakistan 'A' in their second warm-up match at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Tuesday.

Thanks to a fine batting effort by the batters, the Tigresses posted a decent total of 276 all out in 49.4 overs after having opted to bat first.

Skipper Nigar Sultana Joty led the side from the front with an innings-high 70 runs while Farzana Haque and Jannatul Ferdous contributed with 50 and 46 runs respectively.

For Pakistan 'A', Umm-e-Hani and Waheeda Akhtar took three wickets each while Tania Saeed claimed two wickets.

Pakistan 'A', in reply, lost wickets at regular intervals as they failed to produce any fight and were bowled out for 109 runs in 39.1 overs.

Dua Majid top-scored for the hosts with 32 runs while Umm-e-Hani made 26. For Bangladesh, Rabeya Khan, Marufa Akter and Fatima Khatoon took two wickets each.

Bangladesh had earlier beaten Scotland by five wickets in the first warm-up match at the LCCA Ground on Sunday.

The Tigresses will begin their qualifiers campaign against Thailand on Thursday, a day after the tournament gets underway. Hosts Pakistan will take on Ireland while Scotland square off against West Indies in the opening day's fixtures.



## 'Bowlers are delivering, now batters need to perform'

In 2022, Zakir Hasan became only the fourth Bangladeshi batter to score a hundred on Test debut against India. He backed up that performance with a few more impressive knocks but in the last few series, the 27-year-old wicketkeeper-batter has failed to live up to expectations. With the Test series against Zimbabwe coming up, Zakir, who has been named in the 15-man squad for the first Test, expressed his expectations from the series during an interview with *The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan*. The excerpts are as follows:

**The Daily Star (DS):** Bangladesh will be playing a Test series after a gap of almost five months. During this period, the players have mostly played white-ball cricket. Would adjusting to the red-ball be an issue?

**Zakir Hasan (ZH):** Of course, this is a difficult situation for all the players. When you play in one or two formats for three to four months and then play in another format, it's quite difficult.

But as professional cricketers, we can't use it as an excuse. We don't play Tests as frequently as some other teams. It becomes a problem for the players who are in a flow in the format but then have to wait for a while for another series. But I feel every player who plays in this format always tries to remain mentally prepared for it.

**DS:** Your Test career started well, but now your presence in the playing XI has become sporadic. What are your expectations from the Zimbabwe series?

**ZH:** I think this series is very important for me. If I get the opportunity to play, I will try to regain my lost rhythm. I want

to maintain the process and deliver my best performance.

**DS:** You made your international debut in the T20 format back in 2018 and have delivered with the bat in previous editions of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL). Still, you are labelled as a red-ball cricketer. What's your view on that?

**ZH:** It's somewhat frustrating to me. In 2018, I got the chance to play one T20I and then I didn't get any more matches. To be honest, I had no idea that I was going to get picked for the T20I side at that time. Before that series, there was a camp consisting of 33 players but I wasn't picked for that. But all of a sudden, I was picked for the side. After that, I was told by the selectors that I would be picked in another series but as I was struggling with some injuries, I was unable to play. I also got the opportunity to play in two ODIs but in separate times. It's difficult to play when you are being picked after a while or when there is some gap between your selection. Those were good opportunities for me but I couldn't grab

them. But at the same time, if I'm given assurance that I'm not getting picked for only one match and will be able to play in one or two series, it will be easier for me and for the other players to prepare accordingly. I love Test cricket but I don't want to be labelled as only a Test player. I want to be a three-format cricketer.

**DS:** With some seniors no longer in the Test team, do you feel there is an added responsibility on others right now?

**ZH:** I think Bangladesh cricket is very grateful to those senior cricketers. They have brilliantly served the team. But if you want to win matches, everyone, not just the seniors, will have to contribute in the same way. As a top order batter, I have to play my part as others have to do so in their positions. I think everyone should take responsibility. If we can score 650 to 700 runs collectively in two innings, we have the ability to win matches. We are taking 20 wickets consistently at the moment. Now it's the responsibility of the batters, from the top to number seven, to perform from their respective positions.

## High-flying Barca host struggling Dortmund



Even though Borussia Dortmund are enduring a disappointing domestic season, their Champions League quarterfinal first-leg against Barcelona on Thursday night still makes up for an enthralling contest. Dortmund, the runners-up of the last edition, will be visiting Barca, who are on top of LaLiga points table. Meanwhile, the other fixture on the night features a high-flying PSG, who have already been confirmed as Ligue 1 champions, and Aston Villa.



Meanwhile, this is set to be the first meeting in European competition between PSG and Aston Villa.

Aston Villa's Unai Emery has won just two of his 10 games against PSG's Luis Enrique as a manager, with both wins coming at home.

PSG have won 21 of their 23 games and scored 73 goals in 2025 -- most wins and goals by any team from Europe's top five leagues this calendar year.

Barcelona are unbeaten in their five meetings with Borussia Dortmund in European competition (W3 D2).

Barca coach Hansi Flick has won all six of his meetings with Dortmund across all competitions during spells with Bayern Munich and Barcelona.

Barcelona have scored 32 Champions League goals this season, their most in a season since 2011-12 (35).

## Mitul's Abahani defy odds in Fed Cup classic

SPORTS REPORTER

Mitul Marma was on the verge of becoming a villain, but the national goalkeeper emerged as the hero in a thrilling penalty shootout as 10-man Abahani triumphed 4-2 over reigning champions Bashundhara Kings in Qualifier 1 of the Federation Cup in Cumilla yesterday.

Abahani's triumph meant the 12-time champions advanced to the final, leaving three-time champions Kings to play in Qualifier 2 against Rahmatganj MFS, who defeated Brothers Union 2-1 in the Eliminator fixture at Rofiq Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium in Mymensingh yesterday.

In the highly anticipated match at Shaheed Dharendranath Datta Stadium, neither Kings nor Abahani could create any clear-cut chances in the first half, but the holders headed to the interval with an extra-man advantage after Abahani defender Asaduzzaman Bablu received a second yellow card in the 42nd minute.

Making the most of the momentum, Kings pressed hard and were duly rewarded in the 57th minute when Mojibur Rahman Jonny, capitalising on a misunderstanding between Mitul and substitute central-back Shakil Ahmed, netted the ball home.

However, Abahani looked different after conceding the lead, and at one stage, coach Maruf Haque sent in three forwards, compromising the backline. The decision soon paid off with substitute Arman Faisal Akash striking the equaliser in the 84th minute, firing a rebound after Brazilian midfielder Raphael Augusto



struck the post from a free kick.

The match eventually rolled into the shootout after extra time failed to produce any decider, before the country's No.1 Mitul showed his character, amending his mistakes to drive Abahani into the final in the dramatic shootout, becoming the Player of the Match in the process.

After seeing his teammate miss the first shot -- the only one in five attempts -- Mitul stopped Kings' third shot from Rabby Hossain Rahal before Kings' new signing Daciel Santos floated the fourth shot over the crossbar, leaving Abahani players and coaching staff in raptures.

"We could easily have avoided

conceding the lead had Mitul come forward, but later he performed well under the post," Abahani head coach Maruful told *The Daily Star* over the phone.

"After being reduced to 10 men, we invited Kings into our midfield and then built up the attack quickly, with Raphael and Emeka [Ogbigh] helping control the midfield as well as creating chances."

Interestingly, Abahani had beaten Kings only twice in their previous 16 meetings before the start of the current season, but the Sky Blues managed to beat Kings in both season meetings -- starting with a 1-0 win in a Bangladesh Premier League encounter.

