

Putin tells Qatar's emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani

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SECOND EDITION

THE DAILY

Star

ON FRIDAY



DHAKA FRIDAY APRIL 18, 2025

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 90

BAISHAKH 5, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SHAWWAL 19, 1446 HIJRI

16 PAGES: Tk 15.00



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# No IMF deal yet, talks to continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Monetary Fund and Bangladesh have failed to reach a staff-level agreement on the next tranche of a \$4.7 billion loan programme, after two weeks of talks ended amid disagreements over revenue measures and exchange rate flexibility.

The IMF has insisted on a clear path to raising the country's chronically low revenue-to-GDP ratio and demanded greater flexibility in the exchange rate regime.

Now, talks are expected to continue next week on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington, with the goal of securing a deal.

While Bangladesh and the IMF had previously reached staff-level agreements during the first, second, and third reviews of the loan programme, the third review ultimately stalled before reaching the IMF Executive Board due to continued differences on these two thorny issues.

An IMF team led by Chris Papageorgiou, the mission chief to Bangladesh, visited the country on April 6-17 to discuss economic and financial policies in the context of the combined third and fourth reviews of the

## \$4.7B LOAN PROGRAMME

- IMF reaffirms commitment to Bangladesh
- Stalemate over revenue and exchange reforms
- Talks to resume in Washington next week
- Loan disbursement targeted by June, if a deal is reached

IMF programme.

Despite the setback, Papageorgiou said the IMF remains committed to supporting Bangladesh during what he described as "a challenging period", citing slowing growth, persistent inflation, and mounting external financing pressures.

GDP growth fell to 3.3 percent in the

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Transport workers blocked the Dhaka-Aricha highway near Gabtoli in the capital after police fined a pickup driver for a traffic violation yesterday morning. Even army personnel faced difficulty clearing the road as the tailback stretched for miles. The transport workers left after a sudden downpour a couple of hours later.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

# DEMAND FOR POLLS BY DEC BNP plans talks with allies to rally support Party serious about reforms, reaching consensus: Salahuddin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP will hold talks with like-minded political parties to come up with a comprehensive action plan to drum up support for election by December.

The decision came at the party's standing committee meeting last night, a day after a disappointing meeting with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus.

Party leaders believe the government might be holding something back and that is why it's not coming up with a specific timeline for the election.

However, the party will not take a hard line right now. Instead, it wants to hold nationwide soft programmes, like rallies and processions on various issues, focusing on the election, to maintain momentum.

The programmes will be finalised after consultations with all like-minded political parties, sources in the standing committee said.

Party insiders said a tentative three-month action plan is ready, and its implementation would be discussed with the allies.

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman presided over the standing committee meeting held at the chairperson's Gulshan office.

Before the meeting, BNP Standing Committee Member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said, "The election atmosphere is already taking

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# Election only after reforms, trials, proper polls system Says Jamaat ameer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday said the national election can only be held after the basic reforms, trials for crimes against humanity committed in July, and the establishment of a proper election system.

Shafiqur said his comment on Wednesday that the election should be held before the next Ramadan was not a rigid stance.

"It may be held before [Ramadan] or after it if the conditions are met," he told reporters at a city hotel.

All political parties should cooperate with the government efforts to make reforms, he said.

"The faster they coordinate with the government, the sooner the election will be held. Unless the conditions are met, whether it's March or February, nothing will be certain..."

There should not be any "cut off time" for the election, he said, adding that if a deadline is set then one would ask what might happen in case the deadline is missed. "We think there should be flexibility for the government."

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# Bangladesh demands \$4.52b, apology from Pakistan

Foreign secy-level talks take place after 15 yrs



Pakistan Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch called on Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus at state guesthouse Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has demanded \$4.52 billion from Pakistan as its share of pre-1971 assets, along with a formal apology for the genocide committed against Bangladeshis by the Pakistan military.

The assets include foreign aid, unpaid provident funds, savings instruments, and \$200 million given by international donors for the 1970 cyclone, said Foreign Secretary Jashim

Uddin after a bilateral consultation with Pakistan Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch in Dhaka yesterday.

Uddin led the Pakistan side at the 6th foreign secretary-level bilateral meeting. The previous one was held 15 years ago.

Baloch also called on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain.

Prof Yunus and Pakistan Prime

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Take steps to protect minority Muslims

Dhaka urges Delhi

BSS, Dhaka

The interim government yesterday strongly protested India's attempts to link Bangladesh to communal violence in Murshidabad, West Bengal, and urged the neighbouring nation to take steps to protect its minority Muslim population there.

"We strongly refute any attempts to implicate Bangladesh in the communal violence in Murshidabad," Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam told BSS at the Foreign Service Academy.

"We urge the Government of India and West Bengal to take all steps to fully protect the minority Muslim population," he added.

The violence broke out last week in the Muslim-dominated

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# I'm being denied justice

Says Meghna Alam; court sends her to jail in extortion case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Model Meghna Alam yesterday told a Dhaka court that she was sent to jail without trial.

She made the remarks after the court allowed her to defend herself during a hearing in connection with an extortion case filed with Dhamondi Model Police Station against her.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Masum Mia yesterday showed her arrested in the case after the Detective Branch (DB) of police appealed, said a court staffer.

During the hearing, no lawyer was present at the courtroom to defend Meghna.

Meghna said, "I was sent to jail without trial. I was told that I wouldn't

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A busy vegetable market on railway lines in the capital's Jurain. Every time a train approaches, the shoppers and traders scurry back to safety with the carts. This happens even though the railway authorities put signs in the vicinity, asking for caution near the lines.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

# Bangladesh braces for tariff war fallout

CPD says, lots of unknown variables in tariff negotiations with US

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's export-dependent economy is facing new risks from the escalating tariff war between the US and China, said the CPD yesterday.

"Ultimately, US consumers will have to bear the additional cost of imported goods, and a large portion of that burden will fall on suppliers in countries like Bangladesh," said Mustafizur Rahman, a distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

Rahman's comment came at a seminar styled 'Trump reciprocal tariffs and Bangladesh: implications and response' organised yesterday by the think-tank.

Trade between the US and China accounts for 27 percent of global trade and most of it could be impacted by the latest tariff exchanges, he said.

The US has imposed tariffs of up to 145 percent on Chinese goods, prompting China to retaliate with tariffs of up to 125 percent on American products.

This would certainly impact the cost of goods in the US, which, in turn, would reduce people's purchasing power. Subsequently, Bangladesh's exports would be impacted.

In bilateral trade discussions, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) may raise concerns about Bangladesh's tariff rates, intellectual property rights, labour standards and non-tariff barriers like corruption and bribery.

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## SHAKIL'S SEA TO SUMMIT EXPEDITION

# Being a part of history

HOMAED ISHAQUE

On February 25, 2025, Iqramul Hasan Shakil began his "Sea to Summit" expedition -- walking from Cox's Bazar to the summit of Mount Everest. Only one person, Tim Macartney-Snape, has attempted this before in 1990, walking 1,200 km before his Everest ascent. Shakil aims to complete roughly 1,300 km in 90 days, becoming the youngest and fastest to complete such a journey -- a feat that will be a remarkable milestone for the country too.

This isn't just an adventure. Carrying the message of reducing single-use plastic pollution and lowering carbon emissions, Shakil, sometimes joined by friends and fellow adventurers on the way, started his walk from Cox's Bazar on February 25 and reached Dhaka after 12 days.

On March 9, at a press conference in Dhaka, he detailed his plan and urged sponsors to come forward to fulfil his goal -- a costly adventure. The permit to climb Everest alone costs \$15,000.

After a few days of reorganising, Shakil resumed his walk in mid-March from Sayedabad, joined by fellow adventurers.

I joined the group in Kawran Bazar. That day's walk wrapped up in Pallabi, after passing through the heart of the city -- Farmgate, Agargaon, and Mirpur -- filled with conversations about Everest and past climbs.

I have finished Ironman70.3 and



crossed the Bangla Channel, but joining Shakil for a short time in his effort felt special. People often call us "crazy" for chasing these kinds of adventures. But not everyone is meant to do everything, and if a few so-called crazy ones end up setting world records, maybe being a little crazy isn't such a bad thing after all.

The next day, we covered 34.21km from Ashulia to Kaliakair. We were greeted by dust, honking, and the chaos of traffic. To escape the noise, we took an alternate path via Zirabu but eventually rejoined the main road. Since Shakil's ancestral home is nearby, we dropped by. His mother's blessings and home-cooked meal gave us a moment of comfort and a surge of strength for the road ahead.

On day three, we reached Tangail,

walking 37.97km. Walking amidst intense heat for long, straight stretches of highway with no shade wasn't easy. Shakil battled painful blisters, slowing our pace.

The next day, we set off early from the Tangail Circuit House. A pleasant breeze and vibrant green fields guided us through the countryside. At Baghila, we met friends who came to join us in swimming across the Jamuna. A drizzle fell as we approached the riverbanks, where the mighty Jamuna awaited.

First, we swam across the shallow Bangshi river without any support boat. Then, after a short walk along the embankment to Doliapara, we prepared for the real challenge. Swimmers geared up, drones flew overhead, and the river roared with wind and current. The first crossing took us through thick mud and

farming chars. Then came the real test.

The Jamuna current was brutal. Shakil, exhausted and not a confident swimmer, struggled with every stroke. Helal, one of the companions, cramped midway. I had to take hold of Shakil, pushing forward despite my own fatigue. It felt endless. But finally, we reached the other side, collapsing on the sand in relief.

Wrapped in dry clothes, Shakil shivered. Yet, he smiled through the tears. "Maybe Everest will be easier," he joked. "You were my river Sherpas today."

The sun dipped behind the Jamuna Bridge. After walking over 100 kilometres and crossing the 3-km-wide mighty Jamuna, we finally reached Sirajganj -- shaken but filled with an unforgettable sense of triumph.

I feel so proud to be a part of Shakil's journey. Though we parted ways at Sirajganj, Shakil continued as required by his mission. Walking through several districts, Shakil crossed into India through the Banglananda land port on March 29. After walking through West Bengal, he crossed into Nepal through the Panitanki Karabhatta border on March 31.

As of yesterday, Shakil was on his way to Everest Base Camp after acclimatising at the Kanchenjunga Base Camp.

This wasn't just Shakil's journey -- it became a shared story of courage, camaraderie, and resilience.

## Bangladesh demands

# No IMF deal yet, talks to continue

FROM PAGE 1

first half of the 2024-25 fiscal year, down from 5.1 percent a year earlier, while inflation stood at 9.4 percent in March, still well above Bangladesh Bank's 5.6 percent target.

"The Bangladeshi economy continues to face multiple challenges amidst elevated global uncertainty," Papageorgiou said in a statement yesterday.

At a media briefing in Dhaka, IMF Resident Representative Jayendu De confirmed that negotiations will resume in Washington next week.

"If all goes well, we expect to make a disbursement before the end of the fiscal year. So, by the end of June, we will try to complete the disbursement. That is our current baseline," he said.

Discussions are continuing with the objective of reaching a staff-level agreement in the near term -- including during the April 2025 IMF World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington," Papageorgiou said. "We reaffirm our commitment to support Bangladesh and its people at this challenging period."

To tackle the growing external financing gap and bring inflation down further, the IMF said Bangladesh needs to tighten policies in the near term.

It urged the government to focus on tax reforms by removing widespread exemptions and simplifying the tax system.

The IMF also advised the central bank to avoid loosening monetary policy too soon, and called for a more flexible exchange rate to improve export competitiveness, rebuild reserves, and make the economy more resilient to external shocks.

"A comprehensive strategy to boost revenue and reform expenditures is crucial for supporting increased social spending and infrastructure investment," Papageorgiou said.

As Jashim briefed reporters, he was asked how the bilateral relations can be deepened while historical issues remain unresolved. He replied that Bangladesh told the Pakistan side that to establish a solid foundation for Bangladesh-Pakistan relations, the unresolved issues must be addressed.

Jashim said the Pakistan side assured that discussions would continue.

"In a meeting after 15 years, we do not expect immediate resolution. However, the willingness to engage in future discussions is a positive sign."

## REVENUE TARGET

The IMF has raised alarms over Bangladesh's stagnating revenue performance.

"Indeed, over the last year or so, we've seen that the revenue-to-GDP ratio has not performed very well, partly due to the continuous shocks that Bangladesh has endured," said SeokHyun Yoon, senior economist at the IMF.

"At the beginning, it was external shocks, then the uprising, and then the transition to where we are today."

"What I want to emphasise is that our assessment is not only for the present, which is very challenging, but also for the future."

Bangladesh is scheduled to graduate from the Least Developed Countries (LDC) status in November 2026. That ambition must be accompanied by higher revenue-to-GDP ratios, Yoon said.

He said Bangladesh's current ratio, hovering around 7.8 percent, is "extremely low" even by developing country standards.

"Just to give you a statistic: over the last 10 years, most developing economies have had ratios between 10 and 15 percent. With Bangladesh at 8 percent, we see a lot of value in making progress," Yoon said.

The IMF is working with authorities to build momentum for reform. "We try to create momentum and shift public mindset and community attitudes toward the need for a higher revenue-to-GDP ratio," Yoon said. "We are exploring different approaches."

## EXCHANGE RATE FLEXIBILITY

On the external side, the IMF acknowledged steps taken on exchange rate reform but called for further flexibility.

"Right now, we also see that the difference between the illegal exchange

rate and the official exchange rate is very small, and we praise the authorities for this," Papageorgiou said at the media briefing in Dhaka.

"There is, I think, an agreement between us and the government -- specifically the government and Bangladesh Bank -- on flexibility. There is no doubt that we all want to move in the same direction. We see more flexibility in the exchange rate regime in Bangladesh."

"From the IMF's perspective, and looking at the reform and its history, we have been discussing this crawling peg for at least one or two years. This is, in fact, the right time to move toward this flexibility. Again, this is not full flexibility; this is a crawling peg, which allows for some guidance around the band, but also allows for full flexibility in the future."

The IMF also pushed for legal and regulatory reforms in the financial sector.

It said the authorities must move quickly to operationalise new frameworks that enable orderly bank restructuring while protecting small depositors.

The lender called for improved asset quality reviews, risk-based supervision and stronger governance at Bangladesh Bank.

On structural reform, the IMF urged efforts to expand exports beyond garments, improve governance, and accelerate climate-related investment.

"Enhancing resilience to climate change is key for mitigating macroeconomic and fiscal risks," Papageorgiou said.

In Dhaka, the IMF delegation met Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur, Finance Secretary Khairuzzaman Mozumder and NBR Chairman Abdur Rahman Khan.

# Bangladesh braces for tariff war fallout

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh imported 2,515 items from the US last year, of which 2,218 items, worth \$2.9 billion, were subject to duties averaging 6.2 percent.

However, after rebates, the weighted average import duty stood at just 2.2 percent.

On the other hand, Bangladeshi exports to the US faced an average duty of 15.1 percent. The US government collected \$1.27 billion in duties on goods from Bangladesh, while Bangladesh earned only \$180 million in duty revenue from American imports.

In total, Bangladesh exported 1,208 items to the US, of which 927 were taxed and 281 items were duty-free.

"What is bothersome in this situation is that we thought that we would get some advantage by writing

a letter from the chief adviser and being the first two to put it into the post box," said Rehman Sobhan, chairman of CPD.

Until a much clearer idea of the general direction of the policy of the US government and the outcome of the negotiations with some of its bigger trading partners are obtained, it may not be a good idea to rush to predetermine Bangladesh's position.

"It may not be necessarily to our advantage. Now here again what is bothersome is that negotiations which are going on are not going to be conducted exclusively on the issue of import and export volumes."

All should be worried about as Bangladesh is trying to preserve \$8 billion worth of exports to the US.

"At the moment, our principal strategy is to initially try to raise the import from the US and then hope that the export volume that we have can be protected," Sobhan added.

# I'm being denied justice

FROM PAGE 1

be allowed to have a lawyer. The issue is, my relationship is only with the ambassador Issa [Issa bin Youssef Al-Duhailan, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Bangladesh], no one else..."

Denying the allegations brought against her, the Miss Bangladesh Foundation chairperson said she was falsely implicated in the case. She claimed that she did not know Dewan Samir, a businessman, who is also accused in the case. Ambassador Issa contacted her, she said.

Meghna also appealed to the court to reject the application filed for showing her arrested.

Omar Faruqi, public prosecutor of Dhaka Metropolitan, told The Daily Star that Meghna informed the court that the Saudi envoy made marriage proposal to her. She added that she never initiated contact with the diplomat, but he frequently called and texted her.

While being taken back to the lockup of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court after hearing, the model also said she was being deprived of justice.

"I only had relationships with Issa -- no one else. I'm not getting justice," she said when a journalist asked her about the matter.

But police officers stopped her from speaking further.

In his application, investigator Md Akhtar Morshed, a DB inspector, said, "Meghna Alam, her close associate Dewan Samir, and two to three others were involved in luring foreign envoys into affairs with attractive girls."

The accused conspired to extort \$5 million from a diplomat. Meghna needed to be shown arrested in the case for the sake of a fair probe, said the investigator.

Meanwhile, the court yesterday placed Samir on a five-day remand in the extortion case after he was produced before it with a seven-day remand prayer.

On April 15, Mohammad Abdul Alim, an inspector of Dhammendi

# Cancellation of Transhipment due to 'some developments'

Says Indian foreign ministry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India yesterday said its withdrawal of transhipment facility to Bangladesh for third-country exports should be seen in the backdrop of "some of the developments" that preceded it.

Responding to media queries during the weekly press briefing, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "I would urge you to look at some of the developments that preceded it, so that you get the full perspective on the issue."

Although Jaiswal did not elaborate on what those developments were, he reaffirmed India's desire for a positive and constructive relationship with Bangladesh, emphasising New Delhi's continued support for a "democratic and inclusive Bangladesh."

Jaiswal further said that the withdrawal would not affect trade in South Asia, pointing out that Bangladesh can still trade with Nepal and Bhutan through India's land ports.

He also said the move was prompted by cargo congestion at Indian airports, which had begun affecting Indian exporters.

However, sources in India familiar with the matter said that Bangladesh had earlier decided to close three land ports used for yarn imports from India, citing infrastructure constraints -- a move made even before India revoked the transhipment facility.

Bangladesh's commerce ministry's recommendation in this regard came in March, added the sources.

They said the decision raised concerns in New Delhi, as yarn is a crucial raw material for Bangladesh's garment industry. The shift to sea port-only imports was perceived by some as a strategy to open the door for Pakistani suppliers, albeit at higher costs.

This decision by Dhaka did not go down well in New Delhi, they added.

When asked about the ongoing visit of Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch to Bangladesh, first such visit in 15 years, Jaiswal responded briefly, saying, "We have taken note of it."

During the briefing, Jaiswal also addressed Indian media reports alleging the involvement of Bangladeshi nationals in recent violent protests against the Wafti Amendment Act in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas and Murshidabad districts. He said the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs would take appropriate action, and all Bangladeshi -- whether staying in India legally or illegally -- would be dealt with in accordance with Indian laws and regulations.

Asked about the Bangladesh Khilafat Majlis's threat to march to the Indian High Commission in Dhaka on April 23 over the Wafti Amendment Act, Jaiswal said, "It is an internal issue of India."

## Police Station, lodged the case against Meghna, Samir, and two to three unknown others.

According to the case statement, Meghna and Samir, along with two to three unidentified others, are allegedly active members of an "organised fraud ring".

They reportedly used "attractive" women to lure foreign diplomats and representatives of foreign missions in Bangladesh, as well as local businessmen, into romantic and illicit relationships, and then applied various tactics to extort money by threatening to tarnish their reputation, the case statement said.

Samir is the CEO of a business organisation named KAWAII Group and owner of a manpower firm named Sanjana International. He also previously owned a company called MIRI International Event Management Ltd.

As part of a scheme to gain access to foreign diplomats and businessmen, Samir allegedly appointed attractive and smart women as brand ambassadors, including Meghna, in his companies to use them to blackmail envoys and extract large sums of money, the case statement said.

Meghna, the winner of Miss Earth Bangladesh 2020, was picked up from her flat in Bashundhara Residential Area in the capital on April 9.

The next day, a Dhaka court ordered Meghna to be kept in jail for 30 days under the Special Powers Act, 1974, following an application submitted by the detectives.

The High Court on April 13 issued a rule asking the government authorities concerned to explain in two weeks why Meghna's arrest under the Special Powers Act should not be declared illegal.

# Election only after reforms

FROM PAGE 1

There must be visible, acceptable, and basic reforms before the election, he said.

"We all have reform proposals. We have 41, the BNP has 31, some others have 57 or 58. We are not asking for all these reforms. We are

## MUJIBNAGAR GOVT

## No plan to change its name: adviser

BSS, Dhaka

The Mujibnagar government is constitutionally and internationally recognised government, as it has organised the Liberation War and helped establish relations with international communities, said Liberation War Affairs Adviser Farooq e Azam yesterday.

"There is no plan to rename the Mujibnagar government. History cannot be erased... it must be kept in its own place," he said.

The adviser made the remarks while talking to journalists after placing wreaths at the Mujibnagar Memorial in Meherpur, marking the historic Mujibnagar Day.

Emphasising the importance of preserving the history of the Mujibnagar government, the adviser said, "It is up to the future elected government to decide what steps to take in this regard... We have many achievements, and we do not want to subject them to unnecessary controversy. History must be kept intact."

In response to a query, he said, "Real freedom fighters often feel embarrassed because many individuals have falsely claimed the title. It's a shameful issue. We've already taken several steps to address this. Some cases are awaiting court verdicts -- over 2,700 are still pending -- and we expect their resolution soon."

Suspended cop sues 18 over 2022 'teep' row

Lata Samaddar, Suborna Mustafa among the accused

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Tejgaon College teacher Lata Samaddar, noted actor Suborna Mustafa and 16 others have been sued for defamation in connection with a 2022 incident involving a police constable who allegedly harassed Samaddar over wearing a teep.

Nazmul Tareque, the constable accused in that incident and later suspended, filed the case yesterday with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Sarah Farzana Haque, said court bench assistant Towhid Khan.

The magistrate recorded the complainant's statement and directed the officer-in-charge of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station to submit a report after investigating the case.

Dhaka University Professor Malay Bala, husband of Lata Samaddar, was also accused in the case.

Actors Anisur Rahman Milan and Saju Khadem, Pran Roy, Saymon Sadik, Manoj Pramanik, Swadhin Khasru, Chayanika

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Vehicles sit parked on three lanes of this road in front of the Motijheel Government Boys' High School in the capital yesterday. The vehicles are waiting for the SSC exams to end, at which point they will pick up the children. However, this careless parking, not only causes traffic congestion, but also leaves little space for the candidates to exit the school and into the street easily.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## 227 CANDIDATES OF 43RD BCS Appointment eludes them despite PSC nod

BAHARAM KHAN and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Ferdous Islam was overjoyed when he was recommended for the education cadre in the 43rd Bangladesh Civil Service exam.

Coming from a poor family, he had worked relentlessly for years, working as a private tutor to support himself.

After unsuccessful attempts in the 40th and 41st BCS exams, he finally secured success in the 43rd. But his dream soon turned into a nightmare when the government suddenly withheld the appointment notification.

"I'm now over the age limit to reapply," Ferdous told The Daily Star recently. "I was heartbroken for not being appointed despite qualifying... and then came the social stigma and family pressure. At times, it became so unbearable..."

Ferdous is among 227 candidates whose appointments have been on hold for over three months, following the suspension of the recruitment gazette by the public administration ministry.

The government has yet to announce a final decision, prolonging the uncertainty for those affected.

The interim government suspended the appointment notification on December 30 last year -- just two and a half months after it had been issued following recommendations from the Public Service Commission (PSC).

**The interim government suspended the appointment notification on December 30 last year -- just two and a half months after it had been issued following recommendations from PSC.**

"If a candidate has a criminal case or is a listed criminal, this can be stated in police reports and publicly disclosed," said Firoz Mia, a former additional secretary to the public administration ministry.

"But excluding someone without a proven offence is unjustifiable. This is a sheer disregard for merit and goes against public expectations," he said.

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An aerial view of agricultural land being filled up in Khulna for housing projects. This illegal sand filling of wetlands and canals is not only reducing cultivable land but also increasing the risk of waterlogging in the area. The photo was taken in the Beel Pabla area of Dumuria upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Polytechnic students vow to continue protests

### Term meeting with ministry 'unfruitful'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of polytechnic institutes yesterday expressed dissatisfaction over the outcome of a meeting with officials from the Ministry of Education and announced plans to intensify their ongoing protests to press home their six-point demand.

The meeting began around 12:00pm at the Secretariat, where Rehana Yasmin, additional secretary (technical wing) of the Technical and Madrasah Education Division, met an 18-member delegation from Karigori Chhatro Andolon, Bangladesh.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, student representative Mashfiq Islam said, "We did not receive any official documents or see any concrete initiatives from the ministry. They have been delaying progress on every issue."

"Today's discussion was not fruitful. We will announce new protest programmes soon to push for our demands," he added.

Later in the evening, the students announced that torch processions would be held across the country at 7:30pm in protest of both the unproductive meeting and the recent attack on students in Cumilla.

They said further programmes would be declared after the procession.

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## Govt may have a 'hidden agenda' Says Rizvi on prioritising reforms over polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday questioned why reforms are being considered instead of elections, expressing concern that the interim government might be working with a "hidden agenda".

"Is this government working with any agenda and planned design? This is now a big question in people's minds. That is why a smokescreen has been created," he said while addressing a doa mahfil.

The event was organised by the M Ilias Ali Goom Protirodh Committee at the BNP's central office in the capital's Nayapaltan, marking the anniversary of the enforced disappearance of BNP leader M Ilias Ali.

Rizvi warned the government that the consequences would not be good if it played tricks with people.

He also expressed regret that no steps have been taken to relieve BNP leaders and activists from the 60 lakh cases filed against them during the Awami League regime.

"I won't say the government is doing nothing -- maybe they are doing something -- but why is the voting right, for which we struggled immensely for 15-16 years, being delayed? Why is reform being positioned as an alternative to elections and voting rights?" the BNP leader questioned.

He said reforms or anything else cannot be an alternative to democracy, elections, and voting rights.



## ACC files case against ex-land minister, wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has filed a case against former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed, his wife and former United Commercial Bank chairperson Rukmila Zaman, and 21 others for allegedly securing a loan of Tk 20 crore through fraudulent means using shell companies.

ACC Director General Akhtar Hossain confirmed the information while speaking to the reporters yesterday.

According to the ACC, the accused conspired and abused their power to embezzle funds by securing a Tk 20 crore loan in the names of three fictitious entities -- Imperial Trading, Classic Trading, and Model Trading.

## First-ever civil surgeon confce on May 12-13

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The government is going to organise the first-ever civil surgeon conference next month, aiming to facilitate direct dialogue between central authorities and top district-level health officials, as well as to strengthen coordination among various government agencies.

The two-day event will be held in Dhaka on May 12 and 13, officials said.

The chief adviser is expected to inaugurate the conference, which will also be attended by other advisers and secretaries, they added.

The Health Services Division yesterday issued a letter to all civil surgeons and divisional directors of the Directorate General of Health Services, directing them to submit relevant information,

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## Army arrested 7,822 since deployment under interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Army has arrested 7,822 individuals across the country since its deployment under the interim government, as part of an ongoing effort to assist law enforcement agencies in maintaining law and order.

Of them, 2,457 were detained in the last two months alone during joint drives with other agencies, said Col Shafiqul Islam, colonel staff at the Directorate of Military Operations, Army Headquarters, yesterday.

The detainees include members of juvenile gangs, listed criminals, drug dealers, smugglers, kidnappers, fraudsters, extortionists, robbers and muggers, he said.

He said this at a press briefing held at the Officers' Mess in Dhaka Cantonment, focusing on the army's

## MURDER OF COP Arav Khan, wife jailed for life

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced eight people, including Robiul Islam alias Arav Khan, to life imprisonment for the murder of Inspector Mamun Imran Khan of the Special Branch in 2018.

The other accused are Mamun's friend Rahmat Ullah, Arav Khan's wife Suraiya Akhter Kuya, Swapan Sarkar, Didar Pathan, Mizan Sheikh,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

## LAND FOR SALE Baridhara Diplomatic Zone

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## Suspended cop sues

FROM PAGE 3

Chowdhury, Ashna Habib, Bhabna, Jyotika Jyoti, Urmila, Srabanti Kar, Devi San, Nazneen Nahar Chumki, Sushma Sarkar and Kusum Sikder were also named accused.

On April 2, 2022, Lata alleged that a policeman, later identified as Nazmul Tareque, harassed and hurled abuse at her after seeing a teep on her forehead while she was on

her way to campus.

When she protested, the constable allegedly threatened her and tried to run her over with his motorbike.

Sammaddar later filed a written complaint with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station. In his complaint, Nazmul claimed he had been subjected to harassment in various sectors because the accused had tarnished his honour over the incident.

## Every day, we walk miles

FROM PAGE 5

Md Shafiq Azam, sub-assistant engineer of Public Health and Engineering Department in Dhobaara, said they have installed over 250 pumps over the past five years to supply drinking water through reserve tanks in the hilly areas.

"However, the demand for water is several times

higher. A proper plan involving the public representatives is necessary to establish a sustainable water supply chain in these villages," he added.

Nishat Sharmin, upazila nirbahi officer of Dhobaara, said they are planning to install more submersible pumps in the locality to mitigate the water crisis.

## Krishak Dal

FROM PAGE 5

According to the complaint, ongoing family disputes led to Obaidur frequently facing physical abuse and death threats from his wife, son, and daughter-in-law.

Sirajul said, "Around 2:00am, I heard a commotion and rushed to my brother's room. Sabina told me that Obaidur had suddenly fallen ill. I immediately called 999, and with police assistance, took him to the Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead."

According to the police, Obaidur sustained fatal injuries to his head, face, and other parts of his body after being repeatedly struck with a stone mortar.

The OC said police detained his wife, Sabina Begum, 45, and daughter-in-law, Mashkara Khatun, 22, for questioning.

## First-ever civil surgeon

FROM PAGE 3

challenges, and issues requiring inter agency coordination by April 20.

A top official, seeking anonymity, said a preparatory meeting will be held next week to finalise the work plan for the event. ABM Abu Hanif, director (administration) of DGHS, said this would be the first-ever civil surgeon conference, modelled after the DC and SP conferences.

Hanif said while many patients express dissatisfaction over healthcare services, doctors and field-level health workers also face numerous challenges in service delivery.

In this context, the conference aims to improve coordination – both within the health sector and with other government agencies – to ensure better healthcare for the public," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Nirupam Das, chief

Administrator of the Bangladesh Doctors' Foundation, said the initiative would allow the government to hear first-hand accounts from field-level health professionals and take swift action to address their concerns.

## Polytechnic

FROM PAGE 3

Earlier in the day, students had postponed a planned rail blockade in consideration of the scheduled meeting with ministry officials.

On Wednesday, over 1,000 students of Dhaka Polytechnic Institute blocked the road at Tejgaon from morning till evening, severely disrupting traffic and causing public inconvenience.

Their six-point demand includes the removal of "controversial craft instructors" appointed after 2021, converting the diploma engineering programme into a full four-year course with six-month semesters, and ensuring that only diploma holders can apply for the post of deputy assistant engineer (Grade 10) and equivalent positions.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the sentence. SB Inspector Mamun was killed at a flat in the capital's Banani on July 8, 2018, and his charred body was recovered from a forest in Gazipur the next day.

On April 11, 2019, DB submitted two charge sheets.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court handed down the sentence.

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On April 11, 2019, DB submitted two charge sheets.

## Army arrested 7,822

FROM PAGE 3 activities over the past two months, from February 17 to April 17.

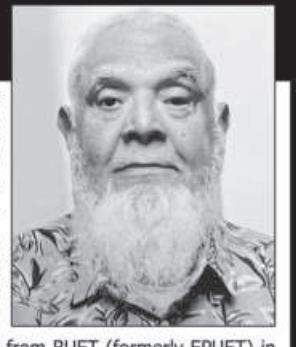
In the same period, the army recovered 320 illegal firearms and 564 rounds of ammunition. Since deployment, a total of 9,370 firearms and more than 2.85 lakh rounds of ammunition have been seized.

If it becomes a matter requiring further intervention, the army or navy will take over, and we hope this issue will be resolved soon," he added.

Addressing concerns over the display of black flags during protests, he said, "Just because someone carries a black flag doesn't make them a militant. We've removed some individuals holding such flags, but there is no evidence to link them to militancy."

Commenting on the army chief's recent overseas visits, Col Shafiqul said these are part of routine military diplomacy.

The army also said it has identified the location of five Chittagong University students who were abducted in Khagrachhari and special operations are underway to rescue them.



## Obituary

**Engr. Al-Hajj Md. Mosharraf Hussain**, retired Additional Chief Engineer of Public Works Department (PWD), breathed his last at Square Hospital, Dhaka, on Saturday, 29 March 2025, corresponding to 28 Ramadan 1446 Hijri. Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raj'Un. He was 82 years of age. He is survived by his wife, two daughters and only son, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandchildren, and numerous friends, relatives, and well-wishers who deeply mourn his loss. His namaz-e-janaza was held on the same day at Taqwa Masjid, Dhanmondi. In accordance with his wishes, he was later laid to rest at his father's grave in Banani graveyard. Md. Mosharraf Hussain earned his Civil Engineering degree from BUET (formerly EPUET) in 1964. He was a respected member of Officers Club Dhaka, Institute of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB), PWD Retired Engineers Welfare Association, and Engineers-6064. It is worth mentioning that he was the elder son-in-law of Late Mr. Shujauddin Ahmed, retired Chief Engineer of Public Works Department, and the elder brother-in-law of Md. Monowar Hossain Chowdhury, who formerly served as the Chairman of BCIC, Chief Engineer of LGED, and Chief Engineer of the Education Engineering Department. We kindly request his friends, relatives, and well-wishers to pray for the salvation of his departed soul. May Allah grant him the highest place in Jannah.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ  
রাষ্ট্র ফোর্সেস সদর দপ্তর  
কুর্মিটোলা, ঢাকা

## দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

তারিখ: ১৭ এপ্রিল ২০২৫

বার হেয়েকো/১০৬/উনিয়ন/কটীটি/১০৬

"The Public Procurement Rules-2008" মাধ্যমেক গৱেষিত ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের বার ফোর্স সদর দপ্তরে নিম্ন পরিবর্ত দেওয়ার কার্যকলাল দ্বারা বাস্তবায়নের অন্য ক্ষেত্রের বাস্তবায়নের প্রক্রিয়া পরিবর্ত দেওয়ার ক্ষেত্রে আবেদন করা যাইবে।

১. অবস্থানের বিবরণ:

২. সময়:

৩. সময়ের স্বাক্ষর করার পদ্ধতি:

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৬৫. সম

## Krishak Dal leader 'beaten to death' Wife, daughter-in-law detained

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A Krishak Dal leader was allegedly beaten to death with a stone mortar early yesterday in the Ichhapasha area of Alfadanga municipality, Faridpur.

The victim, Obaidur Rahman Munshi, 55, was the senior joint convener of the Alfadanga municipal Krishak Dal unit, said Harun-or-Rashid, officer-in-charge of Alfadanga Police Station.

Meanwhile, Obaidur's younger brother, Sirajul Haque, filed a murder case yesterday morning, naming Obaidur's wife Sabina Begum, their son Arif Munshi, daughter-in-law Mashkara Khatun, and three to four unidentified suspects.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Univ teacher suspended over rape charges

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

The authorities of Jashore University of Science and Technology have suspended one of its teachers over rape allegation.

Sujan Chowdhury is assistant professor of the Department of Chemical Engineering. The suspension order, signed by Registrar Md Ahsan Habib, was issued on Wednesday.

On April 15, a 30-year-old woman, a Chattogram resident, filed a written complaint with the registrar that Sujan raped her on October 22, 2024.

On November 6 in 2024, she filed a rape case against him with the Chittagong Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal.

In the case and complaint, she mentioned that Sujan was pressuring her to withdraw the case.

Denying the allegations, Sujan said, "She is blackmailing me and demanding money. Her allegations are false."

### DHOBAURA UPAZILA IN MYMENSINGH

# 'Every day, we walk miles for water'

Over 500 families hit by drinking water crisis

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

More than 500 poor families, including many from the indigenous Garo community, have been hit by an acute crisis of drinking water in 15 villages under Mymensingh's Dhabaura upazila.

The crisis, which persisted for decades, only exacerbated over the recent years as there is little to no feasibility of installing tube-wells or submersible pumps to draw up water in the hilly areas of the upazila along the border, said locals.

On different occasions, local administration took initiatives for arranging safe drinking water for the people, but it has not been enough to mitigate the crisis, especially in the dry season, they added.

"There is hardly any natural source of water in this area apart from some hilly streams which stop flowing during the dry season, making life extremely difficult for the local people," said Md Humayun Kabir Sarker, chairman of Dakshin Maizpara Union Parishad.

The groundwater table in the plain land also depletes during this time, worsening the situation, he added.

Humayun Kabir said they have installed 10 deep tube-wells in the locality over the last three years, but it has not been enough.



Women collect water from a dried up stream at a village in Mymensingh's Dhabaura upazila. For decades, families in 15 villages in the upazila have been experiencing some form of water crisis, but it only got worse in recent years. Now, women, who primarily collect water for their families, are forced to walk long distances and rely on such sources for safe drinking water.

PHOTO: STAR

Women, who mainly perform the task of collecting water for their families, often have to walk long distances to find a small spring or well.

"I have to walk miles to collect water... it is exhausting. Then we have to carry the pitchers back home every day," said Amena Khatun, a resident of Gilagara village.

Eti Chisim said it is only during the monsoon that they get some

respite when the hilly streams flow again after the rains. "During this time, we collect and store water for drinking," she said.

The villagers alleged that while setting up an adequate number of deep tube-wells in these hilly areas is not a tough task, it has been ignored by local politicians despite their pledge ahead of every local and national elections.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## PARTY REGISTRATION NCP seeks 90-day extension from EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party (NCP) has urged the Election Commission to extend the deadline for new political party registration by at least 90 days and implement the reforms recommended by the Electoral Reform Commission.

The appeal was made in a letter submitted to the EC's senior secretary yesterday afternoon.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh A-Am Janata Party (BAJP) yesterday applied for an extension of the registration deadline. Party's member secretary Fatima Tasnim made this request in a letter to the EC secretary.

The NCP, in the application, said the current time-frame is insufficient for emerging political groups to fulfil the necessary registration requirements.

It called on the EC to ensure a more inclusive and participatory political process.

## Release 5 abducted CU students

### Demand indigenous students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Indigenous students from various educational institutions have strongly condemned the abduction of five students from the Chittagong University and called for their immediate release.

In a joint statement sent to the media yesterday, they expressed grave concern over the incident.

According to the statement, the five students were abducted from the Giriful area in Khagrachhari around 6:30am on April 16.

The abducted students are Maitrimoy Chakma and Aldrin Tripura of Fine Arts, Dibbyo Chakma of Drama, Rishon Chakma of International Relations, and Longngi Mro of Zoology.



### BANGLADESH BANK

Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat  
Head Office, Dhaka.  
Website: [www.bb.org.bd](http://www.bb.org.bd)

#### Invitation for Tender Through Web

Tender No.: 28 /2025

Date: 17/04/2025

Tenders are hereby invited through Electronic Media (e-Tenders) from bona fide, government-approved higher educational/training institutes for "Selection of an institution/firm for conducting recruitment examination for the post of Officer (Cash)/Officer (Teller) (Grade-10) for State-Owned Commercial and Specialized Banks" under package no. BSCS/2022/03. Detailed information and the terms and conditions pertaining to this tender are provided below:

01.	Procuring Entity	:	Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS), Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka.
02.	Source of Fund	:	Collection of fees from the applicants and funding from Bangladesh Bank and concerned Banks & Financial Institutions
03.	Invitation for Tender No.	:	28/2025
04.	Method of Procurement	:	Open Tendering Method (National).
05.	Qualification of Tenderer	:	This invitation for tender is open to all government-approved higher educational/training institutes of Bangladesh who have satisfied the following terms and conditions :  i) A minimum of 10 years of general experience as a third-party service provider in the public sector, either as a sole service provider or in a joint venture. ii) The experience of successfully conducting a recruitment examination (i.e., an MCQ test and at least a 2-hour written examination) and the preparation of results for at least 1,00,000 candidates in a single arrangement under a single or multiple contracts/work orders (with a value of at least BDT 1 crore) for government, quasi-government, autonomous institutions, or banks and financial institutions during the last seven (7) years. The Tenderer shall have to furnish certificates from competent authority in line with the experience requirements. iii) Approval (in case of a Private University/firm) from UGC/relevant government authority regarding formation of the university/firm. iv) Having a valid trade license (applicable for a private university/firm), TIN certificate, VAT registration certificate. v) Average annual turnover (in case of a private institution/firm) of at least taka 2 (Two) crores during the last 3 years. vi) No failure in carrying out any assignment during the last 10 years.
06.	Web Address Receiving Tender Document	:	<a href="http://www.bangladeshbank.org.bd">www.bangladeshbank.org.bd</a> <a href="http://www.bb.org.bd">www.bb.org.bd</a> (eTender)
07.	Name & Address of the Offices Receiving Tender security & Other Documentary Evidence	:	Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS), (16th floor, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Annex Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Motijheel, Dhaka.
08.	Last Date and Time for Online Submission of Tender Document	:	04/05/2025 up to 2:00 PM
09.	Last Date and Time for Submission of Original Tender Security & Tender Submission Letter as per Format PSN-1	:	04/05/2025 up to 2:00 PM
10.	Date, Time and Place for Tender Opening	:	All Tenders will be opened at Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat, (16th floor, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Annex Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka on 04/05/2025 at 2:30PM. (Intending Tenderer or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend.)
11.	Time for Completion of the Assignment	:	One year from the date of contract signing.
12.	Tender Security	:	Tk. 3,00,000.00 (Taka Three Lakh) only in the form of PO/BD/BG.
13.	Special Instructions	:	i. The Tenderer shall submit tender and scanned copy of documentary evidence through Bangladesh Bank web site (e- Tendering) & shall have valid e-mail address to participate in e-tendering. Original Bank Guarantee/Pay Order will be submitted in person to Director, Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat, Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka. ii. If the tender is not submitted online or incomplete, defective or without tender security, it will be considered as non-responsive. iii. Tenderer shall provide documentary evidence etc. (attested or original whichever is necessary) when requested, failing which the tender may be considered as non-responsive. iv. The Tenderer shall submit "PSN-1", "PSN-2" as per format given in tender document and attached during submission of tender online (in pdf format). v. Furnishing of any false, misleading documents may result in rejection of tender and may lead to action under Rules 127 of PPR 2008. vi. BSCS reserves all rights to accept or reject any or all the Tender without assigning any reason whatsoever. No claim will be entertained in this regard.

DCP : 48/2025-985

Date : 17-04-2025

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিম্বা  
কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নথরে ফোন করুন।

GD-913

Signed/-  
(Mizanur Rahman Akon)  
Director (BSCS), Bangladesh Bank  
&  
Member Secretary, BSC  
Phone: 88-02-9530226

GD-911

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

#### Office of the Project Director

#### Feasibility Study on 'Livestock Service Transformation (LST)' Project

Pranisampad Bhaban-2

Krishi Khamar Sarak, Farmgate, Dhaka-1215

Dated: 17 April 2025

#### Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Selection of Consulting Firms for Feasibility Study of Livestock Service Transformation

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock
2.	Agency	Department of Livestock Services
3.	Project/Procuring entity name	Feasibility Study on 'Livestock Service Transformation (LST)' Project
4.	Project Code	224406500
5.	Expression of interest for selection of	Consulting Firms for Feasibility Study of Livestock Service Transformation
6.	EOI reference no. and date	33.01.0000.109.14.512.25-03; 17/04/2025
7.	Procurement method and	Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)
8.	Budget & Source of funds	Development Budget; GOB
9.	Development Partner	N/A
10.	EOI submission last date and time	Upto 04/05/2025; at 5:00pm
11.	EOI submission place	a) Office of the Project Director, Feasibility Study of Livestock Service Transformation (LST) Project, Department of Livestock Services, Farmgate, Dhaka-1215. b) Room no. 501, Bhaban no.- 6, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
12.	Brief description of assignment	Need assessment and identification of transformation areas in livestock sector, situation analysis involving present scenario and future demand in livestock sector, time-bound investment plan, necessary data gap for market information and implementation plan for survey along with costing, implementation plan of animal traceability system along with detail costing, formulation of strategy on milk products diversification and consumption, implementation plan for climate resilience cattle house establishment along with detail costing, impact study on economically important diseases, detail engineering estimation with specific drawing-design of required physical (CVH, District Artificial Insemination Centres, Upazila Livestock Office & Veterinary Hospital, Govt. poultry farms and Central Store Building) and technological infrastructure, development of breeding plan for each livestock and poultry species, transformation plan of breeding bull stations along with costing, transformation plan of FDILs along with costing, transformation plan of Quarantine stations along with costing, transformation plan for Govt. poultry farms along with costing, formulation of strategy on food loss reduction in livestock sector, robust Artificial Insemination recording system with detail specifications and costing, development of animal nutrition program concentrating region based forage production, feeds and feeding practices, specifications and costing of required Vehicles, Machineries, Equipment and appliances, chemicals and Reagents, need assessment of animal nutrition lab at district level, SWOT Analysis, estimated cost with detail activities, logical frame work, cost-benefit analysis, technical, financial and economic analysis with Socio-economic impact, environmental impact analysis and waste management plan, risk management plan, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation analysis, operational management plan, project management with implementation modality, procurement plan, preparation of cluster based DPP's according to the approved feasibility reports and sustainable exit plan.
13.	Qualification and experience	a) The firm/company must have registration from government authorized body or authority and properly constituted managing body with clearly defined rules and responsibilities for office bearers. b) Should be capable of maintaining highest confidentiality and ability to comply with government standards. c) Must have minimum seven years overall experience d) Shall have a standard portfolio of completed similar project, including feasibility studies and DPP preparation from previous client with minimum five years of experience from the date of publication of invitation for REOI, The firm should have experience in working with Govt. organization of similar scale, scope and rules.
15.	Phasing of services	The duration of contract will be 10 months. The delivery of the assignment will be phase wise and payment will also be disbursed phase wise accordingly after being accepted by the assigned committee.
16.	Name and Designation of official inviting EOI	Dr.Rезаул Huq Khan, Project Director (Additional Charge)
17.	Address of official inviting EOI	Office of the Project Director, Feasibility Study of Livestock Service Transformation (LST) Project, Department of Livestock Services, Farmgate, Dhaka-1215.
18.	Contact details of official inviting EOI	Phone: 01776516481 Fax no: N/A Email: <a href="mailto:rezaul.khan@dls.gov.bd">rezaul.khan@dls.gov.bd</a>
19.	The Procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs.	
20.	Application must include the following information and documents (where relevant):	i) Name of firm/company, contact address (including postal address, telephone & fax No, e-mail address and name of contact person with phone/cell no.), updated Trade License, VAT Registration and Tax Clearance certificate. ii) Working experience in relevant fields (enclose valid documents). iii) Information about completed similar contact worth Tk. 320 lac or more in maximum two contacts in the last five years with appropriate documents (completion certificate or relevant documents) iv) Detailed organizational structure, manpower (attach list with educational qualifications and experiences) Organizational capacity and physical facilities of the firm/company. v) Last 03 (three) years audit report vi) Cover letter should be in letter head pad with 02 pp size photograph of Firm/Company head. vii) Registration details with reputed organizations (enclose certificate in favour of this) and viii) Similar service delivery in last 05 (five) years (enclose valid documents).
21.	All legal documents should be attested photocopy by 1 <sup>st</sup> class gazetted officer.	
22.	Request For Proposal (RFP) will be issued to the short listed firm/company selected by EOI.	

Paul

17/04/2025

(DR. Rezaul Huq Khan)

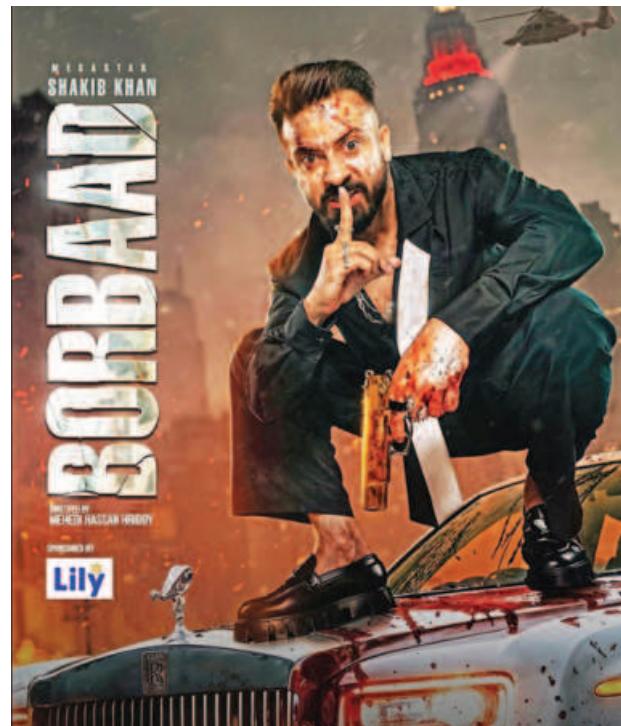
Project Director (Add. Charge)  
Feasibility Study on 'Livestock Service Transformation (LST)' Project  
Farmgate, Dhaka-1215

## Cate Blanchett plans on retiring from acting soon

Cate Blanchett, the two-time Academy Award winner, has revealed to British media that she plans to step away from acting in the near future.

In a recent interview with Radio Times, the acclaimed actor and producer questioned whether the term "actress" still applied to her, saying, "It's because I'm quitting... My family always rolls their eyes when I bring it up, but I really mean it. I'm serious about leaving acting behind. There are so many other things I want to pursue in life."

The Australian performer shared this news ahead of the BBC Radio 4 broadcast of *The Fever by Wallace Shawn* — her debut in radio drama. The play follows a wealthy woman who, after falling ill in a poor country, undergoes a personal reckoning and reflects on her life.



## SOULS to celebrate 50 years with unplugged concert



Marking 50 years of their illustrious journey, legendary Bangladeshi rock band SOULS is set to host an exclusive unplugged concert titled "Mastercard Presents SOULS Unplugged: 50 Years of Timeless Music" on May 2 at Radisson Blu Chattogram reception.

Organised by M&M Business Communications, the event will present a rare acoustic rendition of the band's iconic discography, promising fans an evening steeped in nostalgia and musical intimacy.

Tickets for the concert will go on sale from April 17 through the official ticketing site. Early bird access will be available exclusively for Mastercard cardholders from April 17 to 19, along with a 20% flat

discount on all Mastercard Debit, Credit, and Prepaid card purchases.

Physical tickets can also be collected from the Radisson Blu Chattogram reception.

The press conference announcing the event was held on April 16 at Radisson Blu Chattogram. Although lead guitarist and vocalist Partha Barua could not attend due to traffic congestion, fellow SOULS members Meer Masum and Maruf Hasan Rea were present.

With this milestone concert, SOULS not only celebrates their own legacy, but also pays tribute to the generations of fans who have supported them throughout their five-decade journey.

Actress Tasnia Farin's debut feature film *Fatima* premiered on the OTT platform Bongo yesterday.

## Tasnia Farin starrer 'Fatima' releases in Bongo

The emotional and thought-provoking film was previously released in theatres on May 24 last year.

Prior to its theatrical release, *Fatima* had its first official premiere at the 42nd Fajr International Film Festival in Iran, where Farin received the Best Actress Award for her performance.

The story of *Fatima* unfolds as a deeply moving and personal narrative, intricately woven around a woman's past and present, where dreams and reality gently intertwine.

The film features a talented cast, including Farin in the lead, with notable performances by Yash Rohan, Tariq Anam Khan, Pantha Kanai, Manas Bandyopadhyay, and others.



## NEWS

## Govt decides to amend civil procedure code

FROM PAGE 12

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, environment, forest and climate change adviser, at a press conference after the advisory council meeting.

In Bangladesh, there's a saying that if you have enmity with someone, file a land case against them, and it won't be resolved even in three generations. To ensure it doesn't take three generations but rather one, amendments to the CPC were approved."

The amendment would reduce the time and cost of litigation, she said.

Previously, after a case verdict, a separate execution petition had to be filed to implement the verdict.

Now, the execution petition will be included with the verdict itself.

Additionally, limits will be set on the number of times extensions can

## Govt stake to fall to 10% from 25%

FROM PAGE 12

"But the Nobel laureate Prof Yunus was politically targeted during the tenure of the previous government. And a lot of government control was imposed on the bank."

Established under the Grameen Bank Ordinance 1983, the microcredit institution was brought under the Grameen Bank Act, 2013, by the previous Awami League government.

The interim government has now taken the initiative to roll back many of the changes made in the Grameen Bank Act, 2013, which had effectively authorised the government to enforce regulations governing all aspects of the bank's operations.

As part of that, in early October last year, the interim government reinstated a tax exemption for Grameen Bank until December 2029.

Grameen Bank enjoyed the tax exemption from its inception in 1983, as its activities are primarily focused on poverty alleviation. The benefit was renewed every five years and was last extended until December 2020. The previous government did not extend the exemption after that period.

**FOUR OTHER ORDINANCES**  
At yesterday's meeting, the Advisory Council also approved in principle four other draft ordinances. These are: Public Audit Ordinance, Bank

be requested. The penalty for filing false cases has been increased from Tk 20,000 to Tk 50,000, she said.

Also at the meeting, it was decided to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) 1992, making Bangladesh the first country in Asia to do so.

In managing transboundary watersheds, there are two laws of the United Nations: the Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses 1997 and the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) 1992.

Although the Water Convention 1992 was adopted targeting the

countries of the EU, it was made open for all countries in 2016, Rizwana said, adding that 11 countries outside of the EU (mostly African countries) signed the convention so far.

Asked about the National Citizen Party's request to the Election Commission to extend the deadline for applying for party registration by at least 90 more days, Rizwana said that "it is the party's political stance".

Asked whether the deadline extension would affect the interim government's announcement that the next election would be held between December and June next year, she said: "How the NCP fulfils or resolves its political demand is up to the party. I don't see any reason for this to conflict with the government's election-related announcement."

## Investors not confident

FROM PAGE 12

term, target-oriented policy framework. Now everyone in the private sector is saying that they are uncertain about making investment decisions," said Debapriya, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

He was speaking at the 6th Bangladesh Economic Summit at DU.

Debapriya said the panel on the white paper and the task force on re-strategising the economy analysed various aspects of the economy and set benchmarks, but no target has been set for six months or a year, he said.

The interim government is working on the budget given by the previous government, he said.

We have not seen anything based on which we can evaluate the performance of the interim government, he said.

As part of the reform of the revenue system, the Advisory Council also approved the draft ordinance on revenue policy and revenue management, which will separate tax policy making from tax administration.

The draft ordinance was framed in line with the recommendation of an advisory committee formed by the finance ministry in October to bring about reforms in the NBR.

Rizwana said to start the trial of groups that were engaged in financial crime, a committee has been formed to probe into the allegations.

## 40 Palestinians killed

FROM PAGE 12

Two Hamas officials told AFP yesterday that the group's discussions on an Israeli truce proposal were nearly complete, with a response expected soon.

"These talks are almost complete, and the group will send its response to the mediators once they finish. It's expected the talks will wrap up soon — possibly even today," an official said, with another member of the group confirming his account.

## US pledges support

FROM PAGE 12

State Guest House Jamuna.

The US officials expressed deep appreciation for the generosity of Bangladesh in hosting 1.2 million Rohingyas and thanked the leadership of Prof Yunus for making progress over the issue of their rehabilitation.

The chief adviser termed the recent identification of 180,000 Rohingyas by the Myanmar government as fit for return to Rakhine as an important progress in resolving the crisis.

"We appreciate your vision of looking at the Rohingya issue not in isolation but in the context of Myanmar as a whole," said Chifluk.

The US officials also appreciated Prof Yunus's approach to enhance regional cooperation, connectivity, and people-to-people contacts, according to the press release.

The visit comes amid a significant policy shift in the US under Trump, particularly in foreign aid and trade. The Trump administration had imposed a 37 percent tariff on Bangladeshi exports to the US, but later paused those for ninety days for countries, barring China.

During the meeting, the chief adviser underlined the excellent bilateral relations between the two countries and reaffirmed the commitment of the interim government to work closely with the Trump administration on the entire range of bilateral relations.

He also thanked Trump for resuming aid for the Rohingyas and pausing the tariffs.

"We are continuing our work to support his trade agenda," Prof Yunus said.

On Wednesday, the US delegation, in its first official visit to Bangladesh after Donald Trump assumed power in the US, interacted with the political parties — BNP, National Citizen Party and Jamaat-e-Islam — in Dhaka. The US officials wanted to know their opinions on issues including reforms, elections, rights of the minorities, women and

labour and future foreign policy.

Yesterday, the US officials also held separate meetings with National Security Adviser Dr Khalilur Rahman, Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain and Foreign Secretary Jashim Uddin.

"We have requested the delegation to revise the US's funding policy for Bangladesh," Jashim Uddin told reporters at a media briefing at the foreign ministry.

He said the Bangladesh government is also discussing the tariff issue with various stakeholders and will further discuss how to address the trade issues raised by the US.

During an hour-long meeting with National Security Adviser Dr Khalilur Rahman, the US officials discussed key regional peace and security issues, as well as bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the US.

The Rohingya crisis and the situation in Myanmar were also discussed in detail, said the press release, without elaborating.

At the recent BIMSTEC summit in Bangkok, Prof Yunus proposed establishing a humanitarian channel in Rakhine State, which will require the Arakan Army's cooperation. Analysts say such a channel would depend on a ceasefire between Myanmar's junta and the Arakan Army, which now controls over 80 percent of Rakhine, as well as a UN Security Council resolution.

When asked whether the humanitarian channel and support for the Arakan Army were discussed, Jashim Uddin stated that these issues were not brought up.

"We focused on bilateral relations, the upcoming elections, and US cooperation. The Rohingya issue was a key topic. We sought continued political and humanitarian support and discussed a planned high-level Rohingya conference in New York this September," he said.

"We also conveyed concerns over US tariffs and highlighted the reforms Bangladesh has undertaken to reduce the trade imbalance."

## Nate Bargatze to host 77th Emmy Awards



American stand-up comedian Nate Bargatze is set to host the 77th Emmy Awards, scheduled to take place on September 14, 2025, at the Peacock Theatre in Los Angeles, according to CBS.

Widely recognised for his observational comedy and multi-generational appeal, Bargatze has become one of today's most sought-after comics, with three Netflix specials—most recently *Your Friend, Nate Bargatze*—and a guest-hosting stint on *Saturday Night Live*.

In 2024, Bargatze sold over 1.2 million tickets worldwide, earning the title of top-grossing comedian, according to Pollstar.

This marks his first time emceeing a major awards show. Last year's Emmys, hosted by Eugene Levy and Dan Levy, drew 6.87 million viewers. Television Academy chair Cris Abrego praised Bargatze's ability to connect with global audiences.

## WHAT'S THE HAPS?

## Exhibition: 'KROMOSHO'

The Bengal Arts Programme presents *Kromosho*, a solo visual art exhibition by photographer Munem Wasif, opening today at 6pm.

The collection delves into the shifting soul of Old Dhaka, with opening remarks by Kazi Khaleed Ashraf and Shahidul Alam scheduled for the day.

For over two decades, Munem Wasif has explored the evolving pulse of Old Dhaka, consistently drawn back to its timeless and unshakable soul.

**Date:** Friday | **April 18**  
**Time:** 6pm onwards  
**Venue:** Bengal Shilpalay (Level 1), Bengal Boi, Dhanmondi



## Strongest evidence yet of life found on alien planet

FROM PAGE 12

however, that they are not announcing the discovery of actual living organisms but rather a possible biosignature — an indicator of a biological process — and that the findings should be viewed cautiously, with more observations needed.

Nonetheless, they voiced excitement. These are the first hints of an alien world that is possibly inhabited, said astrophysicist Nikku Madhusudhan of the University of Cambridge's Institute of Astronomy, lead author of the study published in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

K2-18 b is 8.6 times as massive as Earth and has a diameter about 2.6 times as large as our planet.

It orbits in the "habitable zone" — a distance where liquid water, a key ingredient for life, can exist on a planetary surface — around a red dwarf star smaller and less luminous than our sun, located about 124 light-years from Earth in the constellation Leo. A light-year is the distance light travels in a year, 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion km). One other planet also has been identified orbiting this star.

## Man beaten to death

FROM PAGE 12

was returning home from private tuition when Nantu verbally harassed her near the Talaimari Shaheed Minar area. After she informed her parents, Akram went and complained to Nantu's parents.

Around 10:30pm, Nantu and his associates attacked his son Ononto near his house. When Akram rushed to the scene to save his son, the attackers turned on him. One of them struck Akram on the head with a brick.

Critically injured, Akram was rushed to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The OC added.

The body was handed over to the family after an autopsy.

"We have launched drives to arrest the culprits," the OC said.

## NYT REPORT Trump blocked Israeli plan to strike Iran nuke sites

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump scuppered an Israeli plan to strike Iranian nuclear sites, the New York Times reported on Wednesday, as Washington attempts to reach a deal to curb Tehran's weapons program.

The US and Iran are seeking a new nuclear deal after Trump pulled out of a landmark agreement during his first term.

US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi are due to meet in Rome on Saturday, a week after they held the highest-level Iranian-US nuclear negotiations since the collapse of a 2015 accord.

In March, Trump sent a letter to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urging talks but warning of possible military action if they failed to produce a deal.

## WARMING TIES Russia scraps Taliban's 'terror' label

AFP, Moscow

Russia's Supreme Court yesterday removed the Taliban's designation as a "terrorist organisation", a symbolic gesture aimed at building friendly ties with Afghanistan's de facto rulers.

The group seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021, when American forces supporting the country's internationally recognised government pulled out.

Moscow, which called the US withdrawal a "failure", has taken steps to normalise relations with the Taliban authorities since then, seeing them as a potential economic partner and ally in fighting terrorism.

"The previously established ban on the activities of the Taliban -- included on the unified federal list of organisations recognised as terrorist -- has been suspended," Supreme Court Judge Oleg Nefedov said in a ruling, according to the TASS state news agency.



Children gather near the remains of a tent shelter reportedly struck by an Israeli attack in Khan Yunis, located in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday. Inset, a boy salvages flour amidst the aftermath of the strike on the tent shelter.

PHOTO: AFP

## 'Resist protectionism'

China's Xi tells Cambodia amid US tariff standoff

REUTERS



Cambodia expects more support on infrastructure

Phnom Penh seeks China backing for major Mekong canal project

the eve of Xi's arrival in the capital Phnom Penh.

He was answering a question about whether Cambodia expected Beijing to announce financial support for a 180 km (111.85 miles) canal, which is the country's most ambitious infrastructure project.

Xi, who has a road named after him on the outskirts of the capital, extolled the positive economic impact of past Chinese infrastructure projects, pledged to continue to "unswervingly support" Cambodia's

development, but mentioned no new specific project in his statements yesterday.

The Cambodian government has said China would pay for the Funan Techo Canal, which would run from the Mekong River, from a site near Phnom Penh, to the coast on the Gulf of Thailand, diverting water from the fragile rice-growing Mekong Delta and reducing Cambodian shipping through Vietnamese ports.

China has so far made no public financial commitment to the project, while Phnom Penh has changed its statements on Chinese engagement from covering 100 percent to 49 percent of total costs, estimated at \$1.7 billion, nearly 4 percent of Cambodia's annual gross domestic product.

Beijing signed no new loans to Cambodia last year, according to Cambodian official data, a marked contrast with previous years when it lent the country hundreds of millions of dollars.

The drop in funding came as China reduced overall overseas investments amid domestic economic woes and concerns over unsuccessful projects.

Xi's visit to Cambodia has been seen as a charm offensive in Southeast Asia, in the wake of the US tariffs that hit the region hard.

## Myanmar towns hit by fighting amid quake truce

AFP, Yangon

Two Myanmar towns on a lucrative trade route to Thailand have been besieged by fighting despite a truce declared after last month's massive earthquake, residents told AFP yesterday.

A 2021 coup sparked a multi-sided civil war between Myanmar's military, pro-democracy guerillas and ethnic rebel groups that have long been active in the country's fringes.

The junta and numerous opposition groups declared a ceasefire to ease relief efforts after a 7.7-magnitude quake hit central Myanmar on March 28, killing more than 3,700 people.

However, three eastern Myanmar residents told AFP fighting has been raging for days around the junta-held towns of Kyondoe and Kawkareik, which sit on a highway leading to the western Thailand border town of Mae Sot.

"We're evaluating the reform commission's work from that perspective. Good proposals are coming in,

and we'll adopt those that will serve public interest."

He emphasised that BNP's 31-point programme is not just a declaration but a firm commitment.

"Even if the commission does not produce a formal charter, the BNP already has one - the Charter of Reform. So, we are clearly in favour of reforms," he said.

Nazrul expressed optimism about the commission's intentions. "We believe these proposals are being made in good faith. Reform is a continuous and inevitable process - it must happen and will evolve."

He also mentioned that the BNP delegation asked the chief adviser during Wednesday's meeting whether any party has undertaken more reform initiatives than BNP.

"BNP has brought changes across the board - both politically and democratically. We're engaging with the commission to make the most of the opportunities created by the recent mass uprising," he added.

Earlier, while opening the dialogue, Prof Ali Riaz, NCC vice-chairman, said the objective of the discussions is to formulate a national charter that will serve as a foundation for a sustainable democratic system in Bangladesh.

"Democracy has stumbled repeatedly in our country. These talks aim to institutionalise our long-standing democratic struggles and prevent future setbacks," he said.

Prof Riaz added that a consensus had already been built with the BNP on many issues and expressed hope that remaining differences could be resolved through dialogue.

The five-member BNP delegation also included Ismail Jabullah, BNP chairperson's advisory council member, its leaders Abu Md Muniruzzaman Khan, former public administration secretary and Ruhul Quddus Kajol, ex-Supreme Court Lawyers Association general secretary.

The NCC officially began its journey on February 15 through a meeting with political parties.

A "July Charter", which will outline a roadmap for the future of Bangladesh, is expected to be finalised based on a consensus around reform proposals ahead of the next national election.

Earlier, the commission sent a spreadsheet with 166 reform recommendations to 39 political parties, seeking their opinions.



## Chattogram City Corporation

Tigerpass, Chattogram  
www.ccc.gov.bd

Memo No:46.11.1600.002.36.25-422

Dated:16.04.2025

### e-Tender Notice-CCC/XEN-2/2024-25/01

This is an online LTM (Limited Tender method) where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents of following packages from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank branches up to 11.00 AM , 04-May-2025.

Sl no	Package No	Name of works	Tender ID	Last date & Time of selling Documents	Last date & Time of submissio Documents
1	CCC/SE-1/Z-2/W-01/2024-25	Development of Mia khan nagar , Ratu peshkar road and char chakta school by lane at 19 no ward	1077393	04-May-2025 11:00	04-May-2025 12:00
2	CCC/SE-1/Z-2/FW-02/2024-25	Repair and maintenance works of Building under Zone-2 of Chattogram City Corporation by Framework Contracting for fiscal year 2024-2025	1077080	04-May-2025 11:00	04-May-2025 12:00
3	CCC/SE-1/Z-2/FW-01/2024-25	Repair and Maintenance works of road, drain and other infrastructure by Framework Contracting under Zone-2 of Chattogram City Corporation for fiscal year 2024-2025	1077078	04-May-2025 11:00	04-May-2025 12:00

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (<http://www.helpdesk.eprocure.gov.bd>)

CCC/PRD-78/24-25 (7x4)

GD-908

Mahmud Sarker Amin  
Executive Engineer (A.C.)  
Chattogram City Corporation  
Tigerpass, Chattogram

## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

শ্রম ও কর্মসংস্থান মন্ত্রণালয়  
কলকারখানা ও প্রতিষ্ঠান পরিদর্শন অধিদপ্তর  
শ্রম ভবন, ১৯৬, শহিদ সৈয়দ নজরুল ইসলাম সরণি  
বিজয়নগর, ঢাকা

### ত্রিম ফ্যাট্রি অ্যাওয়ার্ড-২০২৫

#### বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নিরাপদ ও শোভন কর্মপরিবেশে পরিবেশাদৃক প্রযুক্তি ও দক্ষ জনশক্তি ব্যবহারের মাধ্যমে উৎপাদনশীলতা বৃদ্ধি ও টেকনো উন্নয়নে অবদানের স্বীকৃতিস্বরূপ গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের শ্রম ও কর্মসংস্থান মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক প্রতি বছরের ন্যায় এবারও দেশিয় পৰিভ্রমিত শিল্প সেক্টরের কারখানাসমূহকে 'ত্রিম ফ্যাট্রি অ্যাওয়ার্ড-২০২৫' প্রদান করা হবে। এ লক্ষ্যে এ বছর ২৩টি শিল্প সেক্টর চিহ্নিত করা হয়েছে যথা: ১. তৈরি পোশাক (ওভেন), ২. তৈরি পোশাক (মিট), ৩. টেক্সটাইল, ৪. চামড়া শিল্প (ফিনিশড গুডস), ৫. চামড়া শিল্প (ট্যানারি), ৬. ফার্মাসিউটিক্যাল ইভান্টিজ, ৭. খাদ্য প্রক্রিয়াজাতকরণ কারখানা (ফুড এন্ড বেভারেজ), ৮. চামড়া শিল্প (ফিনিশড গুডস), ৯. প্লাস্টিক কারখানা, ১০. সিমেন্ট কারখানা, ১১. টাইলস এন্ড সিরামিক ইভান্টিজ, ১২. ইলেক্ট্রিক এন্ড ইলেক্ট্রনিক্স পণ্য প্রস্তুতকারক ইভান্টিজ, ১৩. সিল মিল, ১৪. আইটি শিল্প, ১৫. রাইস মিল, ১৬. জুট মিল, ১৭. চিংড়ি শিল্প, ১৮. কেমিক্যাল ইভান্টিজ, ১৯. প্রসাধনী কারখানা, ২০. অটোমোবাইল ইভান্টিজ, ২১. শিপ বিল্ডিং এন্ড শিপ ব্রিকিং ইভান্টিজ, ২২. লাইট ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং এন্ড মোটোর কারখানা, ২৩. এক্সেনরিজ এন্ড ব্যাকওয়ার্ড লিংকেজ কারখানা। উক্ত কারখানাসমূহকে আগামী ৩০ এপ্রিল ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম যথাযথ নিয়মে (আবেদন ফরমে উল্লিখিত) প্ররূপূর্বক আবেদনের হার্ড কপি নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী বরাবর (শ্রম ভবন, ১৯৬, শহিদ সৈয়দ নজরুল ইসলাম সরণি, বিজয়নগর, ঢাকা) এবং সফট কপি ই-মেইল [ig@dfe.gov.bd](mailto:ig@dfe.gov.bd) অথবা [jig.safety.dfe@gmail.com](mailto:jig.safety.dfe@gmail.com) প্রেরণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে। এছাড়া সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে বিস্তারিত তথ্য এবং সহযোগিতার জন্য নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর দণ্ডের যোগাযোগের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

শ্রম ও কর্মসংস্থান মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট ([mole.gov.bd](http://mole.gov.bd)) এবং কলকারখানা ও প্রতিষ্ঠান পরিদর্শন অধিদপ্তরের ওয়েবসাইট ([dfe.gov.bd](http://dfe.gov.bd)) হতে 'আবেদন ফরম' ডাউনলোড করা যাবে।

শ্রাকরিত  
ওমর মোঃ ইমরুল মহসিন  
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## Don't hold the public hostage via blockades

Polytechnic students must show restraint

We respect the right of students from polytechnic institutes to protest for their cause. In a country where technical education is often neglected, their six-point demand—including the removal of “controversial” craft instructors recruited after 2021, restructuring the diploma engineering programme into a four-year course, reserving 10th grade engineering posts for diploma graduates, establishing a separate Ministry of Technical and Higher Education, etc.—merits both policy consideration and constructive dialogue. However, we cannot condone the manner in which they exercised their right to protest, infringing on the public's right to free movement.

Wednesday's road and railway blockades, halting communications in more than a dozen districts as part of a coordinated movement, were yet another example of how disruptive such protests can be. According to a report by this daily, in Dhaka, over 1,000 students from Dhaka Polytechnic Institute blocked the Satrasta intersection in Tejgaon for nearly eight hours. In Cumilla, over 500 students blocked the Dhaka-Chittogram highway for hours. Similar protests were also reported in Chattogram, Rajshahi, Barishal, and elsewhere. As a result, public transport systems broke down, emergency services were delayed, and gridlocks paralysed key intersections and highways, causing massive suffering. In one instance, the military had to be deployed to disperse protesters. Whether their firing of blank shots was necessary or even authorised may be debated, but the mere fact that such measures were needed shows how unmanageable the situation had become.

While the protesters later announced a relaxation of a pre-planned “rail blockade” on Thursday, pending the outcome of a meeting with the relevant authorities, they eventually expressed dissatisfaction with the discussions and declared plans to launch even tougher programmes. If executed, it can only mean more suffering. This is not constructive activism; this is holding the public hostage with the sole intention of forcing a decision, which is unacceptable. We cannot allow legitimate grievances to be pursued through illegitimate means. We have seen this tactic used repeatedly since the July uprising, as numerous groups—students in particular—embraced their newfound freedoms of speech and assembly in ways that often caused chaos and unrest.

It must be acknowledged that this government, unlike its predecessor, has shown greater responsiveness to protest-driven demands. For instance, soon after Wednesday's protests, Mostafizur Rahman Khan, the principal of Dhaka Polytechnic Institute, was removed from his post. This is not the kind of response students would have received under the old order. So they, too, must show greater restraint, and pursue their cause through peaceful means. We also urge the government to send a stronger message against public disruptions. As the country edges closer to the next election, disruptive protests and blockades may likely continue. So the government must enable the police to act decisively in such situations. It may also consider designating specific areas for protest gatherings, which would protect both the protesters' rights and the public's.

## Why is Anwara Park still occupied?

Authorities must honour their word on park restoration

It is disappointing that the metro rail authority's installations and equipment have yet to be removed from the Shaheed Anwara Park in the capital's Farmgate area. Since 2018, the park has been used by the Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) as a project site office and storage area for construction materials. Initially, it was agreed that the park would be restored to its original condition upon completion of rail construction. However, in 2023, DMTCL announced plans to construct an on-site station plaza, including shops, hotels, restaurants, entertainment centres, and so on.

Naturally, the announcement came as a shock, forcing urban planners, environmental activists, and local residents to launch a protest movement. In December, three advisers from the interim government met with the protesters. During the meeting, it was assured that all the installations and equipment at the park would be removed by March 26. However, more than two weeks have passed since the deadline, but that promise still remains unfulfilled. Moreover, the government had pledged that the park would be restored, re-greened, and reopened to the public. This is critically important given Dhaka's current state, where green spaces are rapidly disappearing, leaving few parks or playgrounds available.

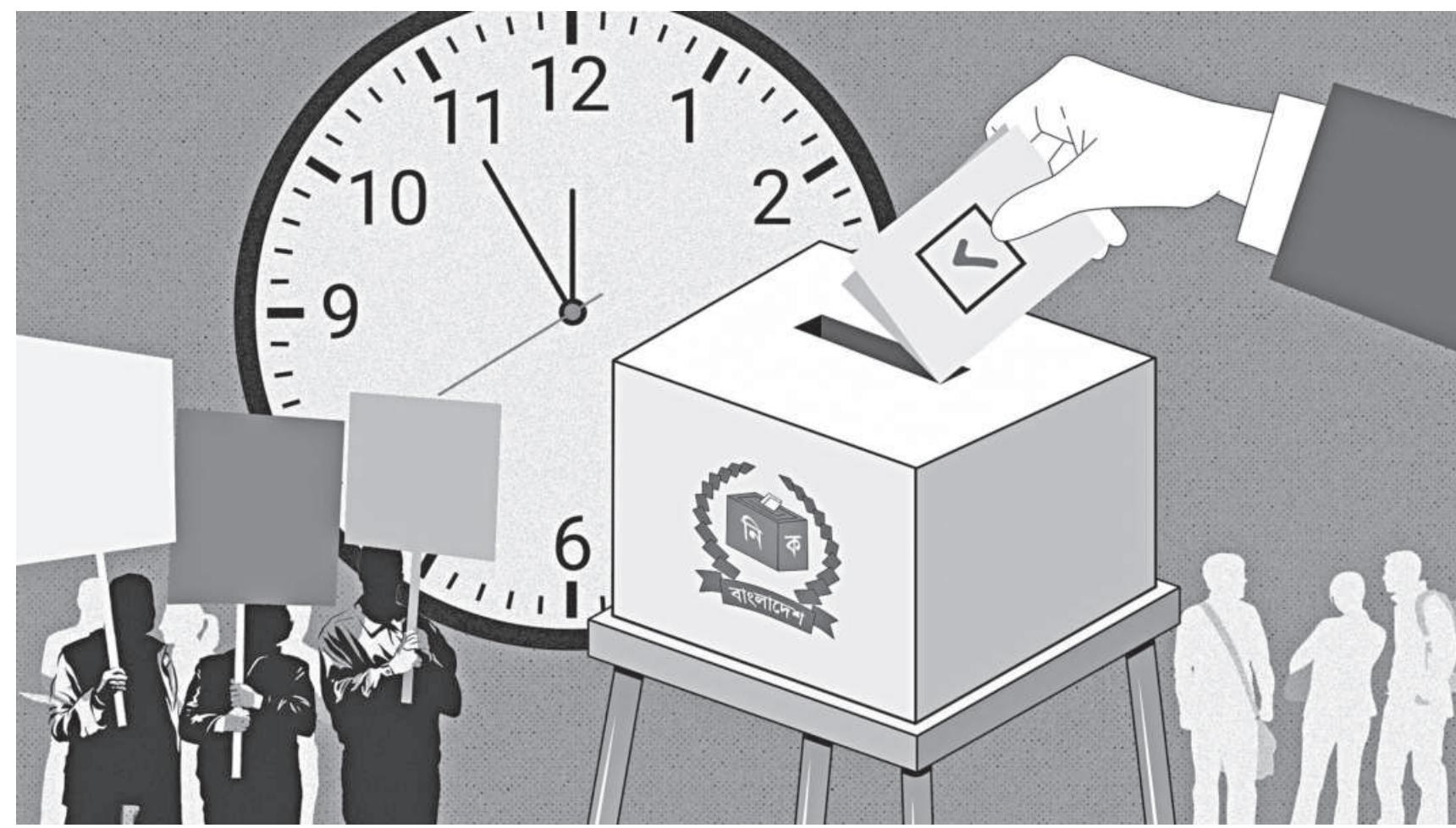
According to urban planners and environmental activists, the metro installations and equipment currently occupying the park could be cleared within a week if the will existed. Even if twice that time were required, there can be no justifiable reason for the delay in clearing the site and reopening it to the public. What is equally concerning is that the authorities have offered no clear explanation for the delay being caused. Speaking to *Prothom Alo*, Fauzul Kabir Khan, adviser to the Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges, said he had consulted the relevant officials, claiming that some remaining work in the park was yet to be completed. They are now saying that the western part of the park will be vacated by June.

This is unacceptable. The authorities must understand that seven years have already passed since the park was closed. So, they must expedite the efforts to clear the park of all stored materials, proceed with restoring it as promised, and reopen it to the public at the earliest opportunity. The lack of importance placed by the authorities on preserving open spaces and parks in Dhaka must also change.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Zimbabwe gains independence

On this day in 1980, Zimbabwe achieved independence from the United Kingdom.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

## Unhealthy election controversy must be resolved

It is creating uncertainty, suspicion, and discord



### THE THIRD VIEW

Mahfuz Anam  
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MAHFUZ ANAM

The eagerly awaited meeting between Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and the BNP ended, as expected, with a major difference of opinion on the election dates. The CA stuck to his well-known stance that the election will be held anytime between December 2025 and June 2026, and the BNP stuck to its position that the polls must be held by the end of this year. In contrast to most of their previous meetings, the BNP, for the first time, expressed serious dissatisfaction afterwards.

However, Dr Asif Nazrul, law adviser to the interim government had his own narrative that the BNP did not “appear dissatisfied” and stressed that “under no circumstances will the

that only an elected government with the people's mandate can provide.

At present, the world is dealing with us mostly because of the personal prestige and stature of one person, Prof Yunus, and not due to the legitimacy of the government he heads. Whatever the extent of our pride for having a leader of his stature may be, it cannot substitute for the prestige and acceptance of a government with people's mandate. Genuine democracy has been our source of pride from the time of our Liberation War, and we condemned Sheikh Hasina for having deprived us of that. Thus, restoration of democracy and getting an elected government



A delegation of BNP led by Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir meets with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and other members of the interim cabinet to discuss the election schedule on April 16, 2025. PHOTO: PID

election go beyond June next year.” Prior to that, he said the election cannot be held until the trial for the crimes against humanity committed during the July uprising is completed. This raises the legitimate question: can a judicial process be set in a time-barred manner, and if so, will it be acceptable internationally? The chief prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), Advocate Tajul Islam, had objected earlier when such a time limit was set for the crucial trials.

The Jamaat-e-Islami ameer, on his part, has said that the election should not go beyond the next Ramadan, which, in calendar terms, means that it should occur before the last quarter of February 2026. It sounds like a well-thought-out middle ground.

The election proponents think setting up a democratically elected government is the most important task at hand. It will restore the people's right to choose their own leaders, to get a parliament where policies will be transparently discussed and adopted, and to get a government that can be held accountable. The interim nature of our present governance process will come to an end, and we will be able to relaunch our democratic journey. Most importantly, the feeling of uncertainty will come to an end and be replaced by a sense of stability

Those who are opposed to having the election by December this year feel that time is inadequate for reforms and holding the election will mean restoring the rotten practices of the past, which included dynastic politics and one-person rule. The argument they use—one which has a strong emotional appeal—is that moving to the old-style politics will make a farce of the sacrifice of 1,400 lives during the uprising.

should not be unnecessarily delayed. Those who are opposed to having the election by December this year feel that time is inadequate for reforms and holding the election will mean restoring the rotten practices of the past, which included dynastic politics and one-person rule. The argument they use—one which has a strong emotional appeal—is that moving to the old-style politics will make a farce of the sacrifice of 1,400 lives during the uprising. This sentiment is very

strong and should by no means be ignored. Whatever we do, we must incorporate the fundamental values—democracy, freedoms, rights of all groups and individuals, equality, anti-discrimination, a nation under law, political accountability, etc—that the uprising tried to evoke in all our future actions.

But the need for reforms, which is

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a widely accepted notion, should not be used as an excuse to postpone the election. Just as these fundamental reforms are necessary, so is an elected government. This author and this newspaper have repeatedly written about how we need and can have both the reforms and election by December.

We have not been able to decipher why the CA insists on the six-month time variation. One could understand this position during the early days, when it was uncertain how much time would be required by the reform commissions. But now all the reform recommendations are in. The follow-up process—dialogue with the political parties—has also been very efficiently started. We think Prof Yunus's approach has so far been hugely effective. If the same pace is followed, then within the eight months that is left before the December deadline, significant reforms can be agreed upon and instituted. If we accept the two and half months delay as proposed by Jamaat—till before next Ramadan—then the interim government should have no reason not to announce the election roadmap. The Election Commission has announced its preparedness.

From this newspaper's point of view, June does pose a lot of challenges for holding the elections in terms of weather conditions. Except for one election in June 1996—following the resignation of Khaleda Zia's government in February 1996 and the constitutional requirement to hold an election within 90 days—all the elections since 1990 have been held in winter months. The arguments for elections in winter are solid: no rain, no floods and pleasant temperature, all of which contributes to giving the national polls a festive colour and mood. So why the CA wants to take the risk of facing natural calamity that may jeopardise his fundamental commitment to the people is not really clear.

The election uncertainty has been further exacerbated by a social media

campaign that Prof Yunus should continue in power for several more years. This, of course, is a tribute to his stature, prestige, and the public confidence in his leadership. But there are many other forces, with not the best of intentions for the CA, who may be working behind it. There is a public perception that a section of his interim cabinet, who will have to relinquish their coveted position the moment the CA hands over power to an elected government, is adding fuel to this campaign. This suspicion has unnecessarily been given credence by the home affairs adviser, who said people had gone to him saying, “Prof Yunus should prolong his stay for five years.” Social media campaigns are one thing, but comments made by a senior cabinet member—which he tried to explain saying that it was not his opinion and that he was only repeating what ordinary people were telling him—generate doubts.

Whether such a step, however well-intentioned, is politically wise, institutionally possible, legally acceptable, and good for Prof Yunus's national and global reputation, is something that should be seriously thought about. As we all know, the legal thread on which the legitimacy of this government hangs is an opinion (not a judgment) by the Appellate Division, made to address a special circumstance. As his lifelong admirer and sincere well-wisher, I think that an undue extension of his tenure would mire Prof Yunus into unnecessary and, for him, undignified controversies.

We understand the BNP's eagerness for an early election, and that not all of it is based on altruism. We also understand that the reluctance of the National Citizen Party (NCP) regarding the election being held before significant reforms and trials of Sheikh Hasina and others has a lot of partisan considerations behind it. Jamaat's ambivalence is also based on partisan factors. So our national interests are not getting the priority that they deserve.

We have three stakeholders on the issue of election: the interim government; the political parties of all shades; and the voters. The viewpoints that we have so far heard belong to the first and second groups of stakeholders. As to what the general public wants, we do not yet know and have heard very little. That has been a major flaw of us journalists. We cannot claim to know. On the bases of our past reporting and experience, we can make an educated guess that they would want their right to vote—which they have been deprived of since 2014—restored. But they would also want stability, economic growth, price stability, employment, etc, all of which is linked to the economy, which in turn needs stability to bear fruit. So both the right to vote and economic growth can be triggered and sustained mainly through the return of an elected government.

Hence, our argument is in favour of an election by December 2025, with an additional six weeks to accommodate Prof Yunus's wish for more time, till the middle of February 2026.

# Why landscape-based knowledge is critical for Bangladesh

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**MD MUSTAFIZ AL MAMUN and KHONDAKER HASIBUL KABIR**

What happens when a land that thrives on water starts drowning in mismanagement? How can a country, built on the blessings of rivers, fail to protect them? The Bengal Delta, recognised as one of the most dynamic and complex landscapes in the world, has been shaped over thousands of years by the convergence of the Ganges, Brahmaputra, Meghna and other rivers. This intricate network of rivers, wetlands, and floodplains is fundamental for Bangladesh, whose geography and development are closely linked to its deltaic origins.

Despite its significant natural resources and ecological importance, the Bengal Delta is highly vulnerable. It faces the impacts of unsustainable urbanisation, inappropriate water management, and a lack of a comprehensive knowledge system regarding the landscape. It is ironic that a riverine delta, with its geographical and climatic advantages, faces a water crisis and biodiversity loss. The solution lies in efficient management and a shift of mindset from land-based development to landscape-based development for inclusive habitat co-creation—in our context, with and by our people. Is this ever-shifting and ever-increasing delta “lands in waters” or “waters in lands”? Shouldn’t we let the waters flow and the lands grow here? The challenge lies in the disconnect between landscape management and the perception of development. There is a pressing need for a shift in educational priorities and governance structures to promote a resilient and sustainable future.

The Bengal Delta is not just a geographical area; it is a living system that sustains the livelihoods of millions. The seasonal rise and fall of water shape the landscape, influencing agricultural cycles, fisheries, and settlements. People in this region have historically adapted to the delta's rhythms, developing indigenous knowledge systems that work in harmony with nature. The traditional dig and mound

process, stilt houses, floating agriculture, and water-centric urban designs are evidence of an intrinsic understanding of the relationship between land and water. However, modern development trends often overlook this deep-rooted connection, favouring rigid infrastructure that disrupts natural processes, instead of complementing them.

Bangladesh has experienced rapid urbanisation and industrialisation. However, this growth often lacks sensitivity to the landscape. Cities like Dhaka, Chattogram and Khulna are expanding without a cohesive plan to integrate the natural water network into the urban environment. Rivers are being encroached, wetlands are being filled, and green spaces are being diminished, all of which exacerbate flooding and environmental degradation. The lack of landscape-based urban planning has resulted in a decline in ecological resilience, leading to urban areas struggling with waterlogging, pollution, and loss of biodiversity. Without adopting a landscape-oriented approach, the country risks losing the very environmental assets that have historically sustained it.

It is time for Bangladesh to learn from the traditional good practices adopted in this deltaic land. We have borrowed knowledge and technologies from other countries regarding water management, agriculture, and urbanisation, which are not appropriate for our land and have created long-term problems both for the landscape and the psyche of the people. Building embankments in a top-down process has had disastrous consequences in the southern part of Bangladesh, so have “green revolution” and the underground water extraction in a top-down process in the northwestern region. Road development has led to the death of waterscapes, especially rivers and ponds.

However, we should still be open to exchanges of appropriate knowledge

and experience. Bangladesh should draw inspiration from appropriate global examples for integrating water-sensitive urban development. The Netherlands, for instance, has implemented measures such as floating neighbourhoods, stormwater retention parks, and an extensive network of dikes and canals. Their “Room for the River” programme, which allows floodplains to absorb excess water instead of obstructing it, serves as an

architecture, engineering, and urban planning receive institutional support, landscape architecture has not yet gained full recognition. There is no widespread integration of landscape knowledge in primary or secondary education, leaving young people unaware of the essential relationship among land, water, and human settlements. How will we build our country without this knowledge?

ecological thinking, architects encounter challenges in large-scale landscape design. Landscape architects can help fill these gaps within the design community.

It is very important to understand that the problem is too big and complex to be solved only by professionals and relevant research expertise. People are designing and building their habitats in a co-creation process. The experts' role would be to understand people's processes and engage with them by exchanging visions, knowledge, and experiences to co-create better habitats for human and non-human communities. People's engagement is crucial to addressing these issues efficiently and scaling up this landscape-mindset nationwide.

A strong academic framework focused on sustainable land management, ecological restoration, and climate responsive design will equip graduates to implement landscape-based solutions in both urban and rural settings. Bangladesh needs a new generation of architects, landscape architects, planners, and policymakers who can integrate natural processes into development strategies rather than working against them.

A robust institutional framework is essential for successfully implementing landscape-based planning and policies. The formation of a ministry for landscape would establish a dedicated governmental body responsible for overseeing sustainable land and water management initiatives. This ministry could coordinate efforts among urban planning authorities, environmental agencies, and local governments to promote a comprehensive approach to development. Furthermore, an institute for landscape architects in Bangladesh could regulate the field, set industry standards, and encourage research in landscape architecture.

By adopting comparable landscape strategies, Bangladesh can develop flood-resilient, ecologically sustainable, and socially vibrant cities. Many challenges faced by the Bengal Delta arise from the neglect of its landscape and the knowledge of its people. It is time to re-evaluate development through the lens of landscape architecture, integrating education, policy, and planning into a cohesive vision. Doing so will help mitigate environmental degradation and improve the quality of life for millions, ensuring that the Bengal Delta continues to thrive as a resilient homeland for our future generations.



FILE PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

**The polluted Buriganga River with unplanned urban growth on its banks.**

excellent model for Bangladesh's flood-prone cities.

One of the most pressing needs is the incorporation of landscape-oriented urban and town planning. The existing planning frameworks must be revised to include nature-based solutions, flood-adaptive designs, and green infrastructure. Riverbanks should be protected as public spaces rather than being commercialised, wetlands must be preserved for their ecological functions, and green corridors should be integrated into cityscapes to enhance resilience. Local governments and planning bodies should collaborate closely with landscape architects and urban planners to develop master plans that prioritise environmental sustainability and economic growth.

In Bangladesh, while disciplines such

To address this issue, Bangladesh must incorporate landscape-based education at all levels, starting from early childhood through higher education. The curricula for primary and secondary schools should include modules on landscape ecology, hydrology, and sustainable land-use practices. Early exposure to this knowledge will help foster a sense of environmental stewardship, creating a generation that understands the importance of preserving and adapting to the deltaic environment. This foundational education will serve as a stepping stone for more specialised studies at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Urban planners and architects are striving to improve the conditions in Bangladesh in the face of ongoing urbanisation and the climate crisis. While there is a movement towards

greater diplomatic pressure on Israel and its allies. While the OIC's track record on Palestine has been limited, it represents a significant bloc that could unite to demand international sanctions against Israel.

On April 12, 2025, millions in Bangladesh took part in the March for Gaza, where one of the key demands was for OIC member states to sever diplomatic ties with Israel and impose trade embargoes on it and its supporters. Despite wielding considerable economic leverage through oil, many Muslim-majority countries, such as Saudi Arabia, have not used these resources strategically.

Another reform proposal involves selecting UNSC members based on their contributions to global peace, rather than their nuclear capabilities. A more inclusive and representative structure could foster a fairer and more just approach to international issues. Some advocate for proportional representation based on population or religious affiliation, arguing that this could help prevent conflicts driven by religious divides.

Would the world remain silent if Palestinians were Christians instead of Muslims? Some may argue not.

Despite Muslims comprising the world's second-largest religious group and the existence of 57 Muslim-majority countries, there is currently no Muslim representation on the UNSC. This glaring omission highlights the urgency for Muslim states to take a more active role in pushing for UNSC reform. With Muslim representation, the plight of Palestinians—and other oppressed Muslim communities—might have received more meaningful international attention.

**The political fragmentation of the Arab world**

Without reform of the UNSC, what alternatives remain? One potential solution is the strengthening of regional coalitions, such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). To apply greater diplomatic pressure on Israel and its allies. While the OIC's track record on Palestine has been limited, it represents a significant bloc that could unite to demand international sanctions against Israel.

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An oil embargo could severely disrupt the economies of countries that support Israel, potentially impeding weapons manufacturing and imposing other costs. While such a measure might be seen as a last resort, the question remains: do Muslim leaders possess the courage, strategic vision, and unity needed to impose such sanctions and to gain support from influential nations in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America?

Long-standing rivalries within the Muslim world, such as the tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran, have hindered unified action. Overcoming these divisions is crucial if a coordinated response to Israel's actions is to be achieved.

As the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, “The entire Muslim community is like one body. If one part of it feels pain, the whole body feels the pain.” If the Ummah truly believes in this, it must take decisive action to end the violence and support Palestinian independence.

**Western hypocrisy and the 'self-defence' narrative**

For too long, Western nations have prioritised geopolitical interests over human lives in the

Israel-Palestine conflict. They are quick to condemn human rights abuses elsewhere, yet remain silent or supportive when it comes to Israel. The widely accepted narrative of “self-defence” masks the reality: this is not defence, but occupation, displacement, and the forced refugee status of Palestinians within their own land.

#### The power of public opinion

The international community can no longer ignore the atrocities occurring in Palestine. Global public opinion, especially through grassroots movements, has the power to influence policy. Protests, social media campaigns, and petitions can place pressure on governments to reconsider their support for Israel. In extreme cases, citizens may feel compelled to hold their own governments accountable if they continue to endorse actions viewed as crimes against humanity.

While humanitarian aid is crucial, it must not be seen as a substitute for political advocacy. It should instead work alongside efforts to pursue justice for Palestinian victims of aggression.

#### A global moral responsibility

The struggle for Palestinian rights is not merely a regional issue; it is a global moral imperative. The time to act is now, before yet another generation is lost to conflict and suffering. Continued inaction represents a failure of leadership, of humanity, and of justice.

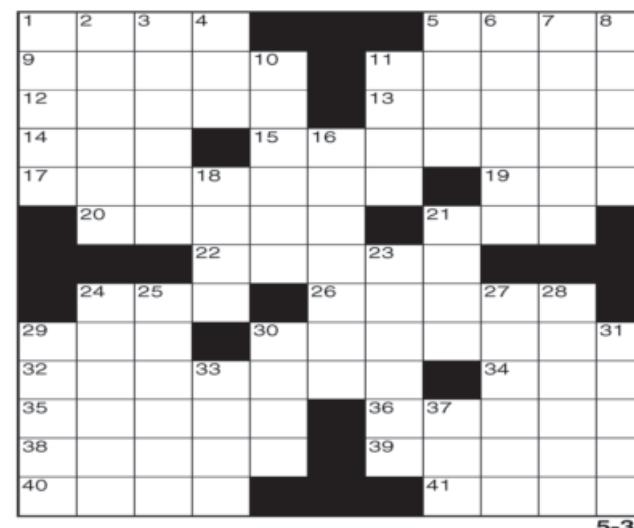
Nations, particularly those with global influence, must demand accountability, support Palestinian self-determination, and work towards a just and lasting peace. There can be no lasting peace in the Middle East without an independent, sovereign Palestine. The world must act to stop this cycle of violence.

## CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS**  
1 Farm crops  
5 Poky  
9 Justice Kagan  
11 Incline  
12 Permit  
13 Like some roofs  
14 Up to, briefly  
15 Furnace work  
17 Curative  
19 Casual shirt  
20 Motionless  
21 Misbehaving  
22 Knightley of “The

Imitation Game”  
24 Tiny  
26 Words of action  
29 Cowboy  
nickname  
30 Chapter start  
32 Senate event  
34 Rawls or Reed  
35 Harbor  
36 Dote on  
38 Solemn  
ceremonies  
39 Vetoos  
40 Editor's base

41 Rainbow maker  
**DOWN**  
1 Moor growth  
2 Axis foes  
3 Harangue  
4 Start for cone or  
Caps  
5 Narrow cut  
6 Nabokov novel  
7 Started the bidding  
8 Cheese buy  
10 Some time  
11 Antlered animal  
16 Pep up  
18 Similar  
21 Poet-singer  
23 Carter's successor  
24 Hot dog  
25 Glorifies  
27 Mississippi port  
28 Saws wood  
29 One of the bases  
30 Top 10 records  
31 Hotel patron  
33 Smell awful  
37 Poorly lit



## YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

S	T	R	A	I	T	H	A	N	D
P	A	E	L	L	A	O	E	E	O
A	P	P	L	I	C	A	T	I	C
N	A	K	E	D					
S	L	E	D		S	O	A	P	
S	P	E	W		L	O	G	S	O
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T	R	I	P	U	P	M	E	E	T
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I	M	P	L		L	A	S	E	R
T	O	T	E				A	C	A
S	W	A	Y				M	E	R

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## ACCESS TO JUSTICE

# Legal aid, systemic barriers, and access to justice in Bangladesh

**Access to justice in Bangladesh depends on an effective legal aid system, yet financial barriers and bureaucratic inefficiencies continue to exclude many from legal support. Despite constitutional guarantees, the reality remains far from equitable. By adopting international best practices and implementing targeted reforms, Bangladesh can create a more accessible and efficient legal aid framework.**

DR. UMMEY SHARABAN TAHURA and PROFESSOR SHAWKAT ALAM

Access to justice is not only a fundamental right but also a cornerstone of a fair and democratic society. It ensures that every individual, regardless of their socio-economic background, can seek remedies for grievances, claim their rights, and participate in legal processes. In Bangladesh, while the Constitution guarantees equality before the law, the reality is starkly different for millions of people who are unable to navigate the justice system due to financial, procedural, and systemic barriers.

Legal aid is designed to bridge this gap by providing free or subsidised legal assistance to those who cannot afford legal representation. In Bangladesh, legal aid is provided through the Legal Aid Services Act 2000, which led to the creation of the National Legal Aid Services Organisation (NLASO) and district-level legal aid offices. These institutions are responsible for administering legal aid to indigent litigants by covering court fees, providing legal representation, and facilitating access to justice. However, despite these provisions, the legal aid system remains underutilised and often fails to reach those who need it the most in our country.

Recently, the interim government of Bangladesh has undertaken reforms across all sectors, including the judiciary. The Judicial Reform Committee has been established in this regard. To prepare its report, the committee sought public opinion on judicial reforms, and 89.60% of respondents expressed that the current legal system should be further strengthened. The committee identified several areas in need of reform, such as the lack of logistical support for legal aid offices, insufficient infrastructural development, and the need for organisational restructuring. Accordingly, the committee suggested various reforms, including expanding the role of legal aid offices in mediation, improving organisational structures, and implementing additional measures. Further potential reforms that could be highlighted by the committee are mentioned below.

One of the key challenges in Bangladesh's legal aid system is its rigid income-based eligibility criteria, which fail to account for the broader socio-economic realities faced by many disadvantaged individuals. Currently, to qualify for legal aid, an applicant must earn less than BDT 100,000 (USD

928) annually, with a slightly higher threshold of BDT 150,000 (USD 1,392) for cases before the Supreme Court. Additionally, specific vulnerable groups, such as acid attack victims, trafficking survivors, and destitute women, automatically qualify for legal aid services.

However, this approach does not consider the financial burdens faced by households where a single earner supports multiple dependents. Given the high cost of litigation, even individuals who exceed the income threshold may struggle to afford legal representation. Furthermore, the absence of a mandatory income verification process makes room for misuse of the law while simultaneously excluding many genuinely needy individuals who fail to navigate the system effectively.

To make legal aid more accessible, Bangladesh must adopt a more comprehensive eligibility framework. Countries such as Australia and the UK implement a three-tiered system that assesses an applicant's financial condition, the merit of their case, and the potential legal costs involved. A similar model in Bangladesh could ensure that legal aid reaches those who truly need it.

Second, although the legal aid budget in Bangladesh has increased in recent years, it remains insufficient to meet the rising demands for free legal services. In the 2023-24 fiscal year, the budget was raised to BDT 57.7 million (from BDT 50.9 million in 2022-23). However, a significant portion of these funds is spent on administrative costs, leaving limited resources available for direct legal assistance. This imbalance restricts the impact of legal aid services, preventing many eligible individuals from receiving adequate support. The scope of legal aid funding is also limited, covering only specific expenses such as court fees and lawyer remuneration. Crucial litigation costs, including expert opinions, witness fees, and travel expenses are excluded.

Third, the legal aid application process in Bangladesh is complex and discourages many potential beneficiaries from seeking assistance. Applicants must navigate multiple approval stages involving legal aid committees composed of judges, police officials, social workers, and politicians. These committees, responsible for reviewing and approving applications, often fail to meet regularly, resulting in prolonged delays. This bureaucratic inefficiency forces many indigent litigants to either give up on their cases or seek



alternative, often exploitative, legal assistance.

Additionally, in the event an application is rejected, the appeal process becomes cumbersome and costly. Applicants must travel to Dhaka to file an appeal with the National Governing Board, incurring expenses for transport, accommodation, and other associated costs—expenses that many poor litigants simply cannot afford. While Bangladesh has introduced digital legal aid platforms, such as online applications and helplines, their adoption remains low due to technological barriers, limited internet access in rural areas, and a general lack of awareness.

Fourth, public awareness of legal aid services in Bangladesh remains alarmingly low, especially among marginalised and rural communities. While awareness campaigns using billboards, brochures, and media advertisements exist, they are primarily concentrated in urban areas, leaving many rural residents unaware of their

right to free legal aid. Misinformation and mistrust further prevent people from seeking these services.

Fifth, legal aid services in Bangladesh are significantly undermined by lower participation of lawyers, primarily due to inadequate remuneration. Many experienced lawyers opt out of legal aid cases, leaving them at the hands of less skilled practitioners, which compromises the quality of representation. Additionally, reports suggest that some legal aid lawyers demand extra fees from clients, violating the fundamental principle of free legal assistance. This not only discourages individuals from seeking aid but also erodes public trust in the system.

In contrast, legal aid lawyers in Australia and the UK receive competitive compensation, which ensures high-quality legal representation for indigent clients. To improve Bangladesh's legal aid services, lawyer fees should be increased, and performance-based

incentives introduced to encourage commitment and accountability. Additionally, pro bono work should be institutionalised, requiring law firms to dedicate a portion of their practice to legal aid as part of their corporate social responsibility. Strengthening monitoring mechanisms can also ensure ethical standards and prevent exploitation.

Access to justice in Bangladesh depends on an effective legal aid system, yet financial barriers and bureaucratic inefficiencies continue to exclude many from legal support. Despite constitutional guarantees, the reality remains far from equitable. By adopting international best practices and implementing targeted reforms, Bangladesh can create a more accessible and efficient legal aid framework.

**The writers are Additional District Judge, Bangladesh Judicial Service and Professor, Macquarie Law School, Australia, respectively.**

## LAW AND POLITICS

# On sustainable repatriation of the Rohingyas

KANAK KANTI KARMAKAR

**Achieving reconciliation and peaceful coexistence between Rohingya and Rakhine communities is crucial for Rohingya repatriation or a long-lasting solution to the crisis.**

Safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation is significant and will potentially be a decisive step in dealing with the Rohingya refugee crisis. However, its implementation is immensely complex and multi-resistant. Myanmar Government has not yet granted citizenship to the Rohingyas, which is theoretically the prime condition for their safe and dignified repatriation. Violence and discriminatory laws still persist in the Rakhine State. As a result, Rohingya repatriation and its aftermath continue to look extremely challenging. After the military coup in Myanmar in 2021, political unrest has increased manifold in the country, adding to the uncertainty of internal political stability. Moreover, the situation in the Rakhine state has become even more complicated due to the clashes between the army and the rebel groups. To date, safe areas within the Rakhine state have not been specified either. Hence, there is a legitimate fear that the Rohingyas may face torture if they return to Myanmar.

Besides the internal crisis, there is an international dimension to the complexities as well. Although the international community occasionally puts pressure on Myanmar for Rohingya repatriation, countries such as China and Russia have been by far reticent when it comes to holding the military



government accountable. Adding to the complexity, the case of Rohingya genocide stands ongoing in the international criminal court, and its effective solution is still uncertain. Thus, the Rohingya crisis is currently not just a bilateral issue between Bangladesh and Myanmar; it is a complex issue encompassing multinational interests, where different countries and international organisations are playing a

crucial role based on their own strategic and economic interests. Especially, due to the interests of India, China, Russia, and the West, Rohingya repatriation continues to look unsustainable as an option.

To effectuate safe and dignified repatriation of the Rohingyas, certain diplomatic measures are to be adopted. First, pressure must be increased on Myanmar from the

United Nations, ASEAN, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and other international human rights organisations. Effective negotiations with the regional powers (e.g., China, India) for this purpose will also be key. Indeed, the goal here is to compel Myanmar through bilateral and multilateral negotiations to ensure a safe environment for the Rohingya community so that repatriation

becomes sustainable in the longer run. Furthermore, crimes that were perpetrated against the Rohingya community—genocide, crimes against humanity, etc.—must be recognised by the international community. Credible accountability efforts must be supported to ensure justice for the victims of crimes and to prevent the recurrence of violence. And attention needs to be given to enhancing the Rohingya's educational opportunities and providing technical training to them so that they can return to Myanmar and become self-reliant. Calls for increased humanitarian assistance from the UN agencies to support this cause will be useful. Lastly, achieving reconciliation and peaceful coexistence between the Rohingya and the Rakhine communities is crucial for a lasting solution to the crisis. Necessary diplomatic steps should be taken in this pursuit too.

In sum, it is incredibly important to increase international pressure on Myanmar, ensure the basic rights of Rohingyas and take coordinated initiatives with Bangladesh and other countries. It is more about these tactics than laws. A safe, dignified, and sustainable repatriation of the Rohingyas can be achieved through the integrated application and combination of all the above strategies.

**The writer is Lecturer, Department of Law & Justice, North East University.**

## Tigresses in tight spot after WI loss

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's impressive run in the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier took a hit as they were handed a three-wicket defeat by the West Indies in Lahore yesterday.

Despite the loss, Bangladesh remain in contention for qualification but must overcome hosts Pakistan in their final match on Saturday to stay in the race. A loss, however, will put the Tigresses in a pickle as they will have to hope that West Indies and Scotland do not win their respective matches by significant margins.

Chasing a target of 228, the West Indies were in trouble at 147 for 5, but a composed unbeaten 51 off 48 balls from Chinelle Henry guided them to victory with four overs to spare. She was supported by steady contributions from Stafanie Taylor (36) and Hayley Matthews (33), which laid the foundation for the successful chase.

Earlier, Bangladesh, buoyed by the confidence of three consecutive wins, looked poised for a big total after electing to bat first.

A commanding 118-run partnership between Sharmin Akhter (67) and Farzana Hoque (42) took the score to 134 for one by the 28th over. However, Aaliyah Alleyne turned the tide with a devastating spell, removing both set batters in the same over and triggering a collapse.

The Tigresses slumped to 183 for eight in the 44th over, but late contributions from Nahida Akter (25) and Rabeya Khan (23 not out) helped them cross the 200-run mark, eventually finishing on 227-9.

## Bangladesh women target gains in Jordan friendlies

SPORTS REPORTER

As part of their build-up to the AFC Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers, Bangladesh will face Jordan and Indonesia in a tri-national FIFA friendly series in Amman on May 31 and June 3.

"Jordan (74) and Indonesia (94) are ahead of Bangladesh in FIFA ranking. We wanted to face strong opponents before starting the Asian Cup Qualifiers campaign, so that the coach can understand how to better prepare the girls before the Qualifiers," Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) women's wing chairman Mahfuza Akter Kiron told reporters at the BFF House today.

National team training had begun on April 6 under English head coach Peter Butler, with over 40 players in camp. Meanwhile, nine senior players have temporarily joined various Bhutanese clubs to take part in the Bhutan Women's Football League, prompting questions about the coach's squad selection for the friendlies.

Kiron assured that appropriate action would be taken if the coach wished to include those players.

In the Asian Cup Qualifiers, scheduled for June 29 to July 5, Bangladesh have been drawn in Group C alongside hosts Myanmar, Bahrain and Turkmenistan. Only the group winners will advance to the 12 team final round.

She also addressed questions over the logic behind releasing players for foreign club duty so close to a major international campaign.

"It has been logical because you know they have been going through a matter and they needed a mental recreation and change, so they also wanted to play there for their change and return to better form. That's why they were given permission to play there," Kiran said.

She confirmed that the nine players in Bhutan would rejoin the national team when called up and noted that all of them, along with eight others, would be brought under BFF contracts.



Bangladesh batters Mominul Haque, Mahidul Islam Ankon, and Shadman Islam take a break after a gruelling batting session yesterday, ahead of the first Test against Zimbabwe, which starts Sunday at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium.

PHOTO: BCB

## 'It will be even contest between Ban-Zim pacers'

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Bangladesh's pace unit has been their strength in recent times. From historic first-ever Test victory over hosts New Zealand in 2022 to whitewashing Pakistan in a two-Test series on Pakistan soil last year, pacers have delivered the goods for the Tigers in the longest format for a while now.

And, it is no wonder that Bangladesh will once again hope that pacers Hasan Mahmud, Nahid Rana, Khaled Ahmed, and uncapped Tanzim Sakib step up against Zimbabwe in the upcoming two-Test series, especially since the series is set to be played in Sylhet and Chattogram -- venues that favour fast bowlers.

However, Zimbabwe veteran Sean Williams thinks their pace trio of Blessing Muzarabani, Richard Ngarava, and Victor Nyachi will be able to match the level of the Tigers' quicks.

"I think it will be a like-for-like contest when it comes to the pacers," Williams told The Daily Star yesterday.

Zimbabwe, who had their first training session at Sylhet Outer Stadium yesterday after arriving in Bangladesh on Tuesday, haven't enjoyed much success in red-ball cricket in recent years. Since their 10-wicket win over Afghanistan in March 2021, the African side have failed to win any of their last 10 Tests, losing eight and drawing two.

The team is currently undergoing a transitional phase, with most



players being relatively new to the set-up. Only captain Craig Ervine (23 Tests), Williams (17), and Muzarabani (10) possess experience of 10 or more Tests in the current squad.

However, with some exciting players like Ben Curran, Brian Bennett, Johnathan Campbell, and Ngarava, Zimbabwe hope to play more fearless cricket.

"Yes, it's a young side. Hopefully, they will be a little bit more fearless and clever," said Williams, who returns to the team after missing the one-off Test against Ireland in February due to a back injury.

"Test cricket -- and cricket in general -- is evolving. Players are scoring faster, trying new things, and exploring different dynamics. Tactically, a lot is happening in Test cricket right now. So, it'll be exciting to see what the youngsters can do,"

added the 38-year-old veteran.

Williams also emphasised the importance of starting the series well, expressing optimism about reversing their fortunes against Bangladesh.

Zimbabwe last won a Test series against Bangladesh in 2011, and their most recent Test victory over the Tigers came in 2018.

Interestingly, that win -- by a margin of 151 runs -- was also in Sylhet, where the upcoming Test series will begin on Sunday.

"I think it depends on how the first innings goes," Williams noted.

"Yes, of course. We always play to win. Preparation ahead of these two Tests is crucial," he added.

Zimbabwe may also benefit from the insights of their pace-bowling coach Charl Langeveldt, who briefly served as Bangladesh's bowling coach in 2019.

## Nepal Tests to sharpen women's kabaddi before WC

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's team will play a five-match Test series against hosts Nepal next week, running from April 20-25, as part of their build-up for the Women's Kabaddi World Cup.

The women in red and green, who have been training since early February in preparation for the 14-team global event, are set to depart for Kathmandu on Saturday. The World Cup is scheduled for June 1-8 in Bihar, India.

Despite past bronze finishes at the Asian Games, they returned empty-handed in 2018 and 2023, failing to an improving Nepal on both occasions.

This upcoming series -- where the visitors will be sponsored by Fortune Barishal, a cricketing franchise from the Bangladesh Premier League T20 -- is also seen as a chance to restore pride ahead of the World Cup.

"Nepal are now a better side than Bangladesh... but I think the current Bangladesh team are also good compared to the previous ones," said former captain-turned-coach Arduzzaman Munshi at a press conference at the BOA conference room yesterday.

Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation (BKF) general secretary Shah Newaz Shohag said "we want to win a medal in the upcoming Women's Kabaddi World Cup."

## AHF CUP

### Bangladesh eye winning start

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh hockey team will begin their AHF Cup title defence as they take on Kazakhstan in a Group B encounter in Jakarta today (6:00pm Bangladesh time).

Bangladesh are also targeting qualification for the upcoming Asian Cup, with only the top two teams advancing to the main event.

The men in red and green had trained for over a month under coach Mamun Ur Rashid, who expects a strong start against Kazakhstan -- a side Bangladesh beat 8-1 in the 2022 AHF Cup and 6-1 in the 2018 Asian Games.

"It seems all opponents are good this time," captain Pushkor Khisa Mimo told The Daily Star over phone from Jakarta yesterday.



Legends of Rupganj left-arm spinner Tanvir Islam celebrates one of his three wickets against Mohammedan Sporting Club during their nine-wicket victory in a Dhaka Premier Division Cricket Super League match in Mirpur yesterday. Abahani and Gulshan Cricket Club also won their respective rain-interrupted matches.

## Arsenal come of age with Real masterclass

AFP, London

Mikel Arteta's Arsenal side came of age as they dethroned Champions League kings Real Madrid with ease to reach the semifinals for the first time since 2009.

A commanding 3-0 first-leg victory last week, lit up by two stunning Declan Rice free-kicks, laid the foundations in London.

But a 2-1 win in the cauldron of the Santiago Bernabeu to complete the job on Wednesday was a significant milestone for Arteta's rising stars.

Arteta's only major trophy in five and a half years in charge remains the 2020 FA Cup, just months into his reign.

But the Spaniard has transformed a sleeping giant back into serial contenders for major honours.

"I sensed before I signed for the club that we were on an upwards trajectory," said Rice.

"This club is going to do special things in the coming years. We all fully believe in it, we have full trust in this manager -- he's unbelievable."

Arteta rebuilt Arsenal back into a force around a core of promising talent now coming into their prime.

Not for the first time in his



young career, Bukayo Saka did not let a missed penalty on the big stage affect him.

The winger's early spot-kick was saved by Thibaut Courtois, giving Madrid belief that another miraculous Champions League comeback was on for the Spanish giants.

But the England international extinguished that hope with a sumptuous dink over the giant Belgian goalkeeper 25 minutes from time to give Arsenal the lead

on the night.

William Saliba's error that allowed Vinicius Junior to pull Real level tarnished an otherwise flawless display over two legs in which he shut down his French international team-mate Kylian Mbappe.

But even then Arsenal were unflustered and quickly snuffed out any Madrid momentum.

With the Premier League seemingly out of Arsenal's grasp yet again, the Champions League

offers Arteta the chance to deliver the piece of silverware that he is still missing.

"It's such a special night for this club, it's a historic night for this club," said Rice.

"We have an objective in this competition. We want to play the best teams and we want to win this competition."

One of Arteta's former clubs as a player, Paris Saint-Germain, await in the last four of a wide-open competition.



Inter captain Lautaro Martinez celebrates after scoring an equaliser in a 2-2 draw in their Champions League second-leg quarterfinal against Bayern Munich at the San Siro yesterday. The ball fell to the Argentinian striker inside the box and he made no mistake unleashing a snapshot to bring Inter level just six minutes after Harry Kane's opener. Martinez, who also scored in the first-leg in Germany, led Inter to a 4-3 aggregate win and into the semifinals where they will face Barcelona.

PHOTO: AFP

