



DHAKA WEDNESDAY APRIL 23, 2025

SECOND EDITION

REGD. NO. DA 781

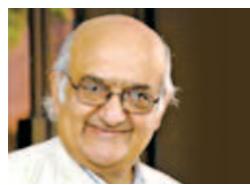
VOL. XXXV No. 95

BAISHAKH 10, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SHAWWAL 24, 1446 HIJRI

16 PAGES: TK 15.00



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ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Life term or death penalty for culprits

Proposes draft ordinance

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Government officials will face death penalty or minimum life sentence if found guilty of causing the death of enforced disappearance victims, according to a draft ordinance unveiled yesterday.

The draft "Enforced Disappearance Prevention and Redress Ordinance 2025" also has provisions for financial penalties of up to Tk 1 crore for the perpetrators.

Government officials responsible for any enforced disappearance, but not guilty of causing the victims' death, will be sentenced to life term rigorous imprisonment or minimum 10 years in jail, and will also have to pay a fine of up to Tk 50 lakh.

If approved by the president, it will be for the first time that Bangladesh will recognise state-sponsored enforced disappearance and try the perpetrators in criminal courts. Currently, abductions or kidnaps are recognised under criminal laws, but enforced disappearances are not.

The draft ordinance has also provisions for trying the culprits in absentia.

If there are reasonable grounds to believe that the accused has gone into hiding, the court may issue a notice within 20 days of taking the charge sheet into cognisance, directing the accused to appear before the court.

"If the accused does not appear before the court within the specified time mentioned in the notice, the court may proceed to try the case in the absence of the accused," it added.

The Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs yesterday shared the draft at its first stakeholders' meeting at the Judicial Administration Training Institute in Dhaka where selective jurists and rights activists offered their views on the proposed ordinance.

The draft seeks to set up tribunals, equivalent to district judges' courts, across the country within the 60 days of its formulation.

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PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Farmers are drying corn under the sun in the Matikata area of Godagari, Rajshahi. Each mound of dried corn sells for around Tk 1,100, which the farmers find satisfactory. Corn is mainly used as an additive for food items for humans and to make poultry feed. The photo was taken yesterday.

Yunus for a fresh vision for Bangladesh's future

At Earthna Summit, the CA says country close to new social contract rooted in inclusion, justice, dignity



"The exclusion of the poor from the financial system is one of the most powerful tools of disempowerment in our time. When people do not have access to capital, they cannot dream, they cannot build, and they cannot participate in shaping their own futures."

Prof Muhammad Yunus

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said Bangladesh now stands at a turning point to forge a new social contract in which financial inclusion and the empowerment of marginalised communities become integral.

In the new social contract, the state and its people, especially its youth, to create a future rooted in inclusion, tradition, justice, dignity, and opportunity, he said in his keynote speech at Earthna Summit 2025 in Doha, Qatar.

Earthna Centre for a Sustainable Future (Earthna), a member of Qatar Foundation, is organising the second edition of the summit.

Prof Yunus said financial inclusion is not a matter of charity, but justice.

"The exclusion of the poor from the financial system is one of the most powerful tools of disempowerment in our

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Interpol issues red notice for ex-IGP Benazir Says PHQ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) has issued a red notice against Benazir Ahmed, a former inspector general of police (IGP) during the Awami League regime.



"Interpol notified us about the issuance of a red notice against Benazir Ahmed recently," Enamul Haque Sagar, assistant inspector general (media) at the Police Headquarters (PHQ), told The Daily Star yesterday.

The notice was issued after the National Central Bureau (NCB) of the PHQ submitted a request to Interpol in February, following a directive from a Dhaka court based on

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Ensure CJ picked from 3 senior-most judges

BNP tells consensus commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The chief justice must be selected from among the three most senior judges of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, the BNP yesterday proposed.

Regarding judicial appointments, the party supports the proposal to form a Judicial Appointment Commission, but notes that it's important to discuss the matter in parliament.

The party also agrees with the proposal for appointment of qualified law professors as judges, BNP Standing Committee member Salauddin Ahmed told reporters after attending the third round of meetings with the National Consensus Commission at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday.

The BNP recommends amending Article 100 of the Constitution to mandate the establishment of circuit benches in divisional cities.

Salauddin said his party was committed to ensure the full independence of the judiciary.

"We want a separate Supreme Court Secretariat and the formation

because that would make "governance complicated".

These bodies should continue to operate in legislative frameworks, Salauddin said.

Besides, the party agrees with a reform proposal that says impeachment of the president should require a two-thirds majority vote from representatives of both houses of parliament.

On the issue of referendums, he said referendums should only be held for specific constitutional articles and that decisions on holding them should be left to representatives of future parliaments.

The constitution's preamble should be restored to its state prior to the 15th amendment, he said. That preamble neither mentioned secularism nor pluralism as fundamental principles of the state.

The party welcomed the commission's suggestion to include equality, human dignity, and social justice as fundamental principles.

To ensure a balance of power between the president and the prime minister, the BNP proposed

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Can Bangladesh fend off Vietnam in RMG race?

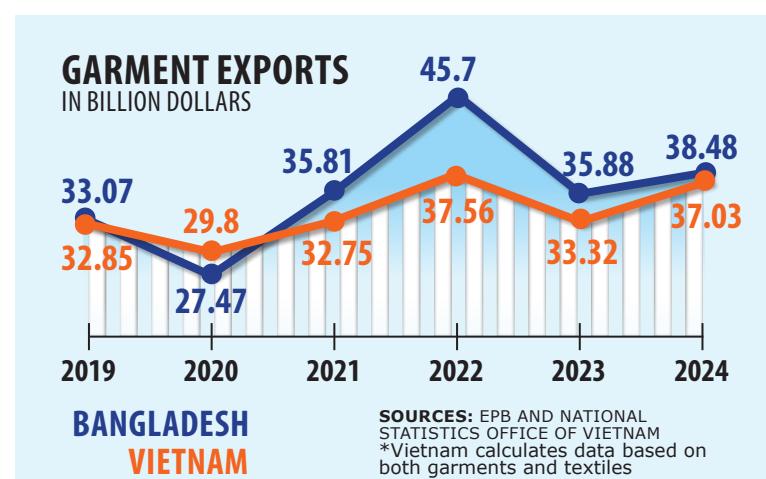
REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh's status as the world's second-largest garment exporter has become increasingly precarious, driven by a confluence of global trade shifts, regional competition and structural inefficiencies at home.

The imposition of 37 percent tariffs by the Trump administration has only intensified the pressure on Bangladesh, prompting industry leaders and analysts to express concern over the country's ability to maintain its global standing.

The country now faces a decisive test of its export resilience and trade negotiation capacity. For a sector built on cost competitiveness and heavily dependent on price-sensitive markets, the tariff escalation poses a direct threat to a business model long anchored in low-wage labour.

Many industry leaders are monitoring Vietnam's ascent warily. Although Vietnam faces a steeper tariff -- 46 percent compared to Bangladesh's 37 percent -- there is growing concern that Bangladesh's limited trade diplomacy, coupled with its slower shift towards value-added production, could allow Vietnam to surpass it in global



rankings.

"If we don't move fast, we will not be able to save the day," said Rubana Huq, former president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

In 2023, Bangladesh accounted for 7.4 percent of global apparel exports, valued at \$38 billion, according to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Only China ranked higher, with \$165 billion in exports and a commanding 31.6

percent market share. Vietnam followed closely, exporting \$31 billion of garments and holding a 6 percent share.

These rankings, however, reflect 2023 performance. The WTO's 2024 data -- yet to be released -- may offer a clearer picture of shifting dynamics. Compounding concerns, the WTO revised Bangladesh's previously reported export figures downward by \$9 billion due to discrepancies in data submitted

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Mob justice can no longer be allowed Says home adviser

STAR REPORT

Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said mob justice can no longer be allowed at a time when the law-and-order situation in the country has improved significantly.

"Enough is enough. If anyone has an issue, they must seek legal recourse," he said at a discussion with armed forces and officials from various departments at the Jashore deputy commissioner's conference room yesterday.

On the weapons looted from police stations across the country during last year's mass uprising, the adviser said the weapons have not all been recovered. "All those weapons must be recovered as soon as possible."

About notorious criminals getting out on bail, he said, "While the issue of bail is not in our hands, as judges grant bail based on their discretion,

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MORE NEWS

Stocks fall for seventh consecutive day

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Realisations aplenty, execution zero

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আমরা শোকাত

গভীর শোক ও দুঃখের সঙ্গে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, খলিল ফ্লেপের কর্মধার অবাব খলিলুর রহমান চৌধুরী (একজন বিশিষ্ট ব্যবসায়ী, সমাজসেবক, শিক্ষাব্রহণী ও মানবান্তরোপনী) আজ আমাদের মাঝে আব নেই (ইয়া লিপুর ওয়া ইন্সুলেশন রেজিউলেন)।

তাঁর মৃত্যুতে আমরা গভীরভাবে শোকাত। তিনি শুধু একজন সফল ডেনোডার নার, ছিলেন একজন মানবান্তরী, সমাজের উন্নয়নে নিবেদিত প্রাণ মাধ্যম।

তাঁর অভিব কখনো পূরণ হবার নয়। আমরা তাঁর বিদ্যু আমার মাগফিত কামনা করছি এবং শোকসন্তপ্ত পরিবারের প্রতি গভীর সমর্পণ করছি।

মরহমের জামাজ নামাজ আজ বাদ জাহর বারিধারা বায়তুল ফারজ ফেরলেস নমিব করুন।

আমিন।

খলিল ফ্লেপের সকল কর্মকর্তা, কর্মচারী ও পরিবারবর্গ।

Yunus to attend Pope Francis' funeral in Vatican

UNB, Doha

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus is set to attend Pope Francis' funeral, his Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam told UNB yesterday.

Pope Francis' funeral will be held on Saturday, with public viewing starting today.

The pope will be laid to rest on Saturday after lying in state for three days in St Peter's Basilica, where the faithful are expected to pay their respects to history's first Latin American pontiff.

Yunus expressed profound condolences on behalf of the government and people of Bangladesh at the passing of Pope Francis, describing him as a beacon of peace, humanity and unity.

In his message to Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the Holy See, Vatican City, Prof Yunus said his leadership transcended religious boundaries and inspired millions to step up efforts to build a more inclusive, tolerant and compassionate world.

"I have been honoured to meet many times with Pope Francis and to

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



A moment during the clash between Dhaka College and City College students on Mirpur Road yesterday. Inset, police use truncheons to bring the situation under control. The clash occurred in connection with a fight between two smaller groups of students from the colleges the previous day.

Story on page 3.

PHOTO: STAR

Life term or death penalty for culprits

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Crimes under the ordinance will be cognisable, non-bailable and non-compoundable, meaning once the case is filed, the matter cannot be settled outside the court.

At the discussion with the stakeholders, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said enforced disappearance is a graver crime than murder.

"In some cases, it is even more heinous," he said, adding that their top priorities are ensuring justice for enforced disappearances, murders, and crimes against humanity, particularly for the gruesome incidents that occurred during Sheikh Hasina's authoritarian regime.

"We want to make it difficult for anyone with such dictatorial ambitions to rise again. For that reason, we are enacting various laws and have already initiated judicial processes," he said.

He said they will hold further discussions on the draft with various stakeholders.

According to the draft, enforced disappearance is when any government official, or any person or persons under the authorisation, support, or silent consent of the state or any government authority (a) arrests, detains, abducts, or otherwise deprives any person of liberty; or (b) denies the deprivation of liberty of that person or conceals the fate or whereabouts of that person.

Besides, if any person attempts to commit any offence mentioned in the two subsections mentioned above; directs, assists, or incites the commission of such offence; or conspire in committing such offence would be punished under the law.

Any offence committed under this ordinance shall not be justified on the grounds of a state of war, threat of war, internal political instability, or a state of emergency; nor shall it be justified by the claim that it was committed on the orders of a superior officer or a public authority.

Sharing his opinion on the draft, M Maroof Zaman, a former diplomat and a victim of enforced disappearance himself, said the law should not include capital punishment since it has been formulated in line with an international convention, to which Bangladesh has become a signatory recently.

"The ordinance will have greater international acceptance if the provision for death penalty is dropped," he said.

Barrister Sara Hossain, executive director of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, said setting up of tribunals in every district will require a large number of courageous and skilled manpower.

Saira Rahman Khan, acting secretary of rights body Odhikar, suggested that the ordinance include provisions for compensation for the victim families.

She also demanded provisions for protection and secrecy of victims and witnesses, and a system where a victim's family could access the victim's bank accounts and other assets.

Rights activist Rezaur Rahman Lenin also spoke for compensation.

Lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir said that if incidents of enforced disappearances are widespread and systematic, then they can be prosecuted as crimes against humanity. "We need to specify which cases would be tried under

the new tribunals and which would be tried under the International Crimes Tribunal."

Chief ICT Prosecutor Advocate Tajul Islam said the ordinance should stipulate how far the investigation team could go to probe the offence.

"Specially, it should be determined how the probe body would get into organisations like NTMC [National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre] and other armed forces," he said.

On August 29, 2024, the interim government signed the instrument of accession to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances.

Soon after taking office on August 8, the government also formed an inquiry commission to investigate cases of enforced disappearances during Hasina's 15-year rule.

During her dictatorship, different law enforcement agencies held victims of enforced disappearance for days, months and even years in several secret detention cells (popularly known as Aynagar) in inhuman conditions, according to the commission report submitted to the chief adviser earlier this year.

During its investigation, the commission received 758 complaints regarding victims of enforced disappearance. Of them, more than one in every four people (27 percent) never returned. A key finding of the inquiry was that the culture of enforced disappearance "was systematically designed over 15 years to remain undetectable."

The party disagrees with a proposal barring an individual from simultaneously holding the posts of prime minister, party chief, and parliamentary leader.

"Traditionally, the prime minister is also the leader of the parliament and often the party chief. Separating these roles may not be feasible in our political culture," he said.

The BNP is against forming a National Constitution Council and reducing the minimum age for MPs to 21 from the current 25.

The party supports increasing the number of reserved seats for women and recommends holding direct elections for those seats.

The BNP supports the appointment of an Ombudsman, who represents no parties, in local government

Ensure CJ picked from 3 senior-most judges

FROM PAGE 1

amending Article 48(3) to grant the president more autonomous authority, including the ability to act without consulting the prime minister on certain matters.

Salahuddin did not go into further details about this.

He voiced support for a proposal to make internet access a fundamental right. "This is to ensure that no government can arbitrarily shut the internet down."

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elections, and establishing attorney services at the districts, he said.

Regarding a proposal to increase the retirement age of judges to 70, he said the matter required further reviews.

Regarding a proposal to limit how many times an individual can be the prime minister, Salahuddin mentioned that the commission had drafted a revised proposal on the matter at BNP's suggestion, which the party leaders would discuss among themselves.

Regarding local government reforms, the BNP agrees in principle that MPs should not hold posts in local or autonomous institutions, but this also needs parliamentary debate.

Of the 208 recommendations from the Public Administration Reform Commission, the BNP fully agrees with 187, partially agrees with 5, disagrees with 11, and has given its opinions on five.

From the Constitution Reform Commission's 131 proposals, BNP agrees with 19 and has reservations or disagreements on the rest.

Out of 243 recommendations by the Electoral System Reform Commission, BNP fully agrees with 141, partially agrees with 14, disagrees with 24, and agrees with 10 offered

additional comments on 64.

Of the ACC Reform Commission's 20 proposals, the party agrees with 11, disagrees with eight, and has comments on one.

Of the judicial reform proposals, the BNP reviewed 89 and agreed with 62, had comments on nine, and disagreed with 18.

Besides Salahuddin, BNP Chairperson's Advisory Council member Ismail Jabiullah, former Supreme Court Lawyers Association General Secretary Barrister Ruhul Quddus Kajol, and former secretary Abu Md Moniruzzaman Khan, presented these views during their closed-door dialogue with the consensus commission.

Prof Ali Riaz, vice chair of the commission, said in his opening remarks, "We have found common ground with the BNP alongside some differences. The BNP will discuss the contentious issues internally and return with feedback. We will also review the proposals they have submitted."

Earlier, the consensus commission sent a spreadsheet of 166 key recommendations made by six reform commissions to 39 political parties. So far, 35 parties have submitted their feedback.

Can Bangladesh fend off Vietnam in RMG race?

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by the Export Promotion Bureau, raising questions about statistical reliability.

Despite the correction, Bangladesh retains several structural strengths: a large and affordable labour force, robust backward linkages through its \$25 billion primary textile sector, a global lead in certified green factories, and rising compliance with international safety standards.

But these are increasingly offset by entrenched weaknesses – underdeveloped infrastructure, extended lead times, high borrowing costs, bureaucratic frictions and overreliance on low-value, basic garments.

Besides, if any person attempts to commit any offence mentioned in the two subsections mentioned above; directs, assists, or incites the commission of such offence; or conspire in committing such offence would be punished under the law.

Still, concerns over looming threats persist. Anwar Ul-Alam Chowdhury, chairman of Evinc Group, pointed to two immediate risks: Trump's tariffs and Bangladesh's upcoming graduation from least developed country (LDC) status, scheduled in November 2026.

He stressed the need for proactive

diplomacy in addressing the US tariffs. "Bangladesh must address Trump's tariffs politically. And the government must take timely policy steps to offset the immediate impacts of LDC graduation."

Although countries like the EU, the UK, Canada, and Australia have pledged to extend duty-free access beyond 2026, Anwar Ul-Alam argued that Bangladesh must not be complacent.

He called for negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs) with major trading partners and enhancing engagement with Asian markets such as China, India, and Japan.

If positioned strategically, he noted, Bangladesh could attract new orders as sourcing patterns shift away from China and Vietnam under US tariff pressure. "But this will depend entirely on our diplomatic and strategic responses."

Mostafa Abid Khan, a former member of Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission, warned that even a 10 percent tariff burden could be difficult for many local exporters to absorb. He also flagged Vietnam's advantage under its free trade agreement with the EU, saying the Southeast Asian country continues to strengthen its foothold in the European market.

Mohammad Abdur Razzaque, chairman of the Research and Policy Integration for Development, echoed this concern. "Under the EU-Vietnam FTA, Vietnam's exports to Europe are bound to rise. Its presence in the US and Canadian markets is also expanding."

For years, people have been saying that Vietnam will surpass us, but that hasn't happened. Bangladesh remains competitive and continues to grow."

He added that rankings are less important than performance. "Meeting the market demand is how we can climb even higher."

Indeed, Bangladesh has maintained a strong presence in key markets. It is currently the second largest apparel exporter to the EU, with annual shipments exceeding \$25 billion, and ranks third in the US with yearly exports of over \$8 billion. In Canada and select emerging markets, Bangladesh has also

expanded its footprint significantly, with market share rising to more than 20 percent, double the level from five years ago.

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this concern. "Under the EU-Vietnam

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Canadian markets is also expanding."

Razzaque also pointed to a critical

structural difference. Vietnam's rapid

growth in the garment sector is driven

largely by Chinese investment, reportedly

\$61 billion in textiles and garments. In

contrast, Bangladesh's \$55 billion textile

and garment sector has less than 5

percent foreign investment.

"This is a relative advantage for

Bangladesh," he said, suggesting that US

buyers may be wary of Vietnam's deep

production ties with China.

He said safety of the environment

demands a new way of living that is based

on the principles of zero net carbon emissions, zero wealth concentration through the creation of social businesses, and zero unemployment by becoming entrepreneurs.

We live in a time of profound uncertainty, where multilateralism is under serious threat, climate change is accelerating, geopolitical tensions are rising, and humanitarian crises are deepening."

Prof Yunus said that in today's crisis-prone world, wars and conflicts erode rights and disrupt economies. Peace and stability are fundamental prerequisites for any meaningful and sustainable development.

The world must not ignore the humanitarian crises that affect people from Palestine to the Rohingyas in Bangladesh," he said.

He said the protracted crisis in Myanmar continues to threaten regional stability. For years, Bangladesh has hosted over 1.2 million Rohingya refugees.

While global efforts continue, world leaders must come together to ensure the safe, sustainable and dignified repatriation of the Rohingyas to their homes in Myanmar, he added.

The chief adviser reached in Doha on April 21 on a four-day visit and received a warm welcome from Qatari ministers and dignitaries as he attended the opening ceremony of the Earthna Summit yesterday.

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SINHA MURDER HC to start hearing death reference, appeals today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court is set to start hearing today the death reference and appeals filed by the convicts in the Major (retd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan murder case, said Deputy Attorney General Shamima Sultana Dipti yesterday.

On January 31, 2022, Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Ismail sentenced Teknaf Police Station's suspended OC Pradeep Kunar Das and its suspended SI Liqat Ali to death and six others to life term in the case.

The case documents reached as death reference to the HC on February 8, 2022. Sinha was killed in police firing at Baharchhara police checkpoint on Marine Drive in Teknaf on July 31, 2020. Sinha's sister filed the case on August 5, 2020.

Polytechnic
students
postpone
protests
Committee formed
to address demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The students of polytechnic institutes postponed their protests yesterday following the formation of an eight-member committee by the government to prepare an implementation roadmap for their six-point demand.

At a press conference, the student leaders said the decision was made as a gesture of goodwill towards the authorities. However, they warned that if their demands are not met or if the process is delayed, they will be compelled to intensify their protests.

Meanwhile, the government's committee -- including representatives from Technical and Madrasah Education Division, the Directorate of Technical Education, Institution of Engineers Bangladesh, Institution of Diploma Engineers Bangladesh and student leaders -- has been instructed to submit its report to the TMED secretary within three weeks.



Speakers at a roundtable on "Childhood Nutrition in Bangladesh", jointly organised by The Daily Star and icddr,b at the capital's The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

MOTHER AND CHILD NUTRITION Some progress, but challenges remain

Say experts at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although Bangladesh has made progress in regard to mother and child nutrition, the country still has a long way to go to achieve the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, nutrition and public health experts said yesterday.

They highlighted the need to reduce stunting, wasting, anaemia, low birth weight and childhood overweight, and to increase rates of exclusive breastfeeding. To achieve this, they recommended increasing budgetary allocations, ensuring proper fund utilisation, raising awareness on the necessity of breastfeeding, and involving more youths in nutrition programmes.

The observations came at a roundtable titled "Childhood Nutrition in Bangladesh", jointly organised by The Daily Star and icddr,b at the Daily Star Centre yesterday.

In his keynote presentation, Dr Tahmeed Ahmed, executive director of icddr,b, said while SDG 2 relates specifically to nutrition, six of its targets are particularly

crucial for women and children in low- and middle-income countries. These are: stunting, anaemia, low birth weight, childhood

breast milk. Even in this particular target, Bangladesh has a lot to do."

Regarding stunting, he said there has been considerable improvement -- from 41 percent in 2011 to 21 percent in 2022.

"But 21 percent still means one in five children you see are stunted. It seems unlikely at this stage that Bangladesh will be able to achieve the SDG target for stunting under the age of five years," he added.

Although the rate of wasting declined from 16 percent in 2011 to 11 percent in 2022, recent data shows it could now be as high as 18 percent. "The WHO emergency cutoff is 15 percent," he warned.

Dr Ahmed also stressed the importance of increasing the health and nutrition budget.

He recommended deploying effective grassroots-level community health workers, focusing on adolescent girls' nutrition, promoting dietary diversity, forming mothers' clubs for discussions on breastfeeding and complementary feeding, and addressing maternal depression.

Mehedi Hasan, assistant director of the Institute of Public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase budget, manpower for nutrition programmes
- Improve fund utilisation, accountability
- Deploy more community health workers at grassroots
- Promote exclusive breastfeeding
- Provide antenatal care, nutrition counselling to pregnant women

overweight, breastfeeding, and wasting.

The rate of exclusive breastfeeding in Bangladesh is now hovering around 55 percent," he said. "This means nearly half the infants under six months are deprived of perhaps the best intervention available to them --

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Set up dengue units at hospitals

DNCC administrator tells event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DNCC Administrator Mohammad Ezaz has called for the establishment of dedicated dengue units in public and private hospitals.

"Free dengue testing has been arranged at all DNCC urban health and maternity centres," he said.

He made the remarks yesterday during a discussion held at the DNCC Nagar Bhaban in Gulshan-2, aimed at combating the potential dengue outbreak during the upcoming monsoon.

The meeting involved representatives of government and private hospitals and clinics under the DNCC's jurisdiction, alongside public health experts.

Speaking to journalists, the



DNCC administrator said, "Aedes mosquito larvae breed inside homes, but our workers can't enter private residences due to safety concerns. So, public awareness is crucial. We'll launch a volunteer-led campaign next week. After a week, if larvae are still found, fines will be imposed."

At the meeting, public health expert Prof Benazir Ahmed emphasised the need for proper counselling in hospitals for dengue patients and called for free dengue testing in all hospitals.

Entomologist Kabirul Basar of Jahangirnagar University said, "We need to study why the death toll is so high in our country. Hospitals must follow effective guidelines to ensure proper treatment."



Around 32 Kuet students observed a hunger strike for the second consecutive day yesterday, demanding the resignation of the university vice-chancellor. The strike has left many of them physically weakened. The photo was taken in front of the university's Student Welfare Centre.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Kuet students continue hunger strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 32 students of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet) yesterday observed their hunger strike for the second consecutive day, demanding the resignation of Vice-Chancellor Prof Mohammad Masud.

The hunger strike began around 4:00pm on Monday.

During a visit to the Student Welfare Centre's main gate in the morning, several students on hunger strike were seen resting under a mosquito net, while others read books. A white ambulance remained parked nearby.

One of the students fell ill and is receiving medical treatment, said the protesters.

The in charge of the media cell for the protesting students' group, requesting anonymity, confirmed the matter to The Daily Star.

He said, "If doctors say so, we will

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

10 hurt as Dhaka and City college students clash

DU CORRESPONDENT

At least 10 students were injured in a clash between Dhaka College and Dhaka City College yesterday, which broke out around noon and continued till 3:00pm with a brief pause.

Both institutions announced suspension of all classes for Wednesday and Thursday.

Injured students from both colleges received primary treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Mohammad Faruk, in charge of the DMCH police outpost.

Tension had been simmering since around 11:00am and quickly escalated into a chase and counter-chase by midday. As the violence intensified, traffic on both sides of the road came to a standstill.

Meanwhile, a viral video showed a group of students attacking a youth inside a bus. Police later removed them from the vehicle.

According to eyewitnesses, students of City College initially gathered under the footbridge near the Science Laboratory intersection, while Dhaka College students assembled in front of the nearby Teachers' Training College.

Clashes reignited around 2:00pm when students returned to the streets at the intersection. Police charged batons to push City College students back onto their campus. Officers were also deployed in front of the college gate and under the footbridge

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

RANA PLAZA TRAGEDY

Ensure justice, compensation for the victims Demands BLAST

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An accused in the murder case of Zahidul Islam Parvez, a student of Primeasia University, was arrested early yesterday from Titas upazila in Cumilla.

A team of Rab-11 and police arrested Hridoy Mazi, 23, from Monairkandi village, said Titas Police Station OC Md Shahid Ullah.

Tipped off, a team raided the house of the accused's uncle, the OC added.

Hridoy is the joint member secretary of the Banani Thana Committee of Students Against Discrimination (SAD), said police.

Rab later handed him over to Banani Police Station, said the station's OC Russel Sarwar. He will be produced before a court today.

Parvez, 24, was stabbed to death on Saturday. His cousin filed a case with Banani Police Station early Sunday, naming eight individuals -- including two SAD leaders -- and 25 to 30 unidentified others.

A Dhaka court on Monday placed three persons on a seven-day remand in connection with the case.

As the 12th anniversary of the Rana Plaza tragedy approaches, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) has urged the government and judiciary to immediately resolve the long-delayed legal proceedings, ensure fair compensation for victims, and memorialise the lives lost in one of the deadliest industrial disasters.

In press statement yesterday, BLAST outlined 10 specific demands aimed at addressing the ongoing injustices faced by the survivors and families of the 1,138 workers who died and the nearly 1,800 who were injured when the building collapsed on April 24, 2013.

The organisation called for the swift disposal of all pending cases in both labour and criminal courts. Despite the gravity of the disaster, cases filed under the Bangladesh Labour Act, Building Construction Act, and Penal Code remain unresolved more than a decade later, it said.

BLAST pointed out that most of the accused are out on bail, while victims' families continue to wait for justice.

It also called for the formation of a multi-stakeholder monitoring team, comprising lawyers, journalists, and trade union representatives, to track the progress of these cases and ensure transparency.

One of BLAST's most urgent demands is a reform of the current compensation structure, which provides only Tk 2 lakh for deceased workers and Tk 2.5 lakh for the injured.

It also called for the publication of annual workplace safety inspection reports and full implementation of the National Occupational Health and Safety Policy.



Senora, OGSB unite to promote menstrual hygiene

CITY DESK

To raise awareness about women's physical safety and menstrual hygiene management, the Obstetric and Gynecological Society of Bangladesh (OGSB), in collaboration with Senora, a brand under Square Toiletries Limited, organised an event titled "Ensuring Safe Menstrual Hygiene" at a hotel in Dhaka on April 21.

The programme was attended by prominent figures, including Prof Farhana Dewan, president of OGSB; renowned gynecologists; OGSB members; media representatives; and key officials from Square Group, according to a press release.

The event outlined the initiative's objectives and future plans.

Malik Mohammad Sayeed, managing director of Square Toiletries Limited, emphasised the joint goal of Senora and OGSB: to bring 60 percent of Bangladeshi women under safe menstrual hygiene protection by 2030.

He stressed that collective efforts are vital to building a healthier and more equitable society.

Kuet students

FROM PAGE 3
shift him to Khulna Medical College Hospital or another facility."

SM Arif Iftekhar, deputy chief medical officer at the Kuet Medical Center, said, "One of the students had a pre-existing liver disease. While he was on hunger strike, we visited him and advised him not to take such a risk due to his liver issues."

"We provided him initial treatment. He was taken to an outside hospital," he added.

Two other students were provided primary treatment at the centre, he informed.

Meanwhile, Education Adviser Prof CR Abrar urged the students to withdraw their hunger strike.

Speaking to the protesters on phone yesterday, he said the strike could seriously affect their well-being, as per an education ministry press release.

Prof Abrar said the government is aware of their demands, and a high-level delegation will soon visit Kuet to meet all stakeholders and take steps to resolve the crisis.

Woman tied

FROM PAGE 5
case statement said.

Speaking to The Daily Star at the police station, the woman said, "They suddenly stormed into my room while I was talking to my husband over the phone. They dragged me to the yard and started beating me. When my children tried to save me, they beat them too."

"Then they tied me to a coconut tree and tortured me for nearly three hours," she said. "A local union parishad member rescued me and arranged treatment at the district hospital," she added.

Ripon Miah, a member of Sultanpur Union Parishad, said he went to the spot on information from locals and rescued her.

The OC said based on the woman's complaint, they arrested Mangal and Zainal.

Lost

I have lost my BSc in Chemical Engineering original certificate of SUST, Reg No: 2014332008, Passing year: 2022. A GD has been filed under Mohammadpur Thana, GD No: 663. Ahmed Nahyan Chowdhury.

Some progress, but challenges

FROM PAGE 3
Health Nutrition, said exclusive breastfeeding declined to 53 percent in 2022 from 65 percent in 2017.

"Many mothers are not adequately aware of the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, and many working mothers, including garments workers, are forced to turn to supplementary feeding," he said.

Dr Fahmida Sharmin Joti, associate professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at Bangladesh Medical College, said only 41 percent of pregnant women receive antenatal care.

"If more women received antenatal care, they could be advised properly on child and maternal nutrition. This would help reduce the incidence of low birth weight babies," she said.

Saiful Islam, additional secretary at the health ministry, said, "Child nutrition must be ensured from the stage of pregnancy."

He stressed the importance of safe water and proper sanitation.

Prof Salahuddin Mahmud of the paediatric gastroenterology department at Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute said a family's education and financial condition also play a major role in ensuring nutrition.

Prof Anjuman Ara Sultana, line director of National Nutrition Services at the Directorate General of Health Services, said, "Budgetary allocation and manpower must be increased, and we must ensure proper fund utilisation to improve the nutrition situation."

Deepika Mehrish Sharma, chief of nutrition at Unicef Bangladesh, said in the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, the number of children suffering from severe wasting increased by 27 percent in the past year since February.

She cited reasons such as last year's flooding, diarrhoea outbreaks, and ration cuts caused by reduced funding.

"Malnutrition requires a life-cycle approach, and the response cannot come solely from the health sector," she said. "The private sector and especially policymakers must contribute to solving the problem."

Rudaba Khondker, country director of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), said innovative approaches must be explored, and more young people should be engaged in tackling nutritional issues.

Abu Jamil Faisal, president-elect of the Public Health Association of Bangladesh, highlighted several threats to nutrition.

that are often overlooked: plastic use, pesticides, chemical fertilisers, and lead poisoning.

"These are the unseen enemies that interfere with nutrient intake," he said.

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, said, "On one hand, we are failing to provide enough nutrition to our children. On the other, we are poisoning them with plastic, pesticides, and chemicals."

"What sort of society are we? I am sad that this is how we treat our children," he said.

He said The Daily Star would commit more strongly to this issue. "We will follow up with investigative reports and editorials," he said.

Other speakers included Chowdhury Ali Kawser, former professor at Bangladesh Medical University; Farzana Rahman, deputy director of the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council; Thaddaeus David May, senior director of the nutrition research division at icddr,b; and Muhammad Habibur Rahman, line director of Community Based Health Care at DGHS.

The session was moderated by Tanjim Ferdous, in charge of NGO and foreign missions at the business development team of The Daily Star.

FROM PAGE 3
to block Dhaka College students from advancing.

After nearly 10 minutes of confrontation, the situation temporarily calmed.

However, a fresh bout of violence erupted at around 2:45pm. Police responded by charging batons and firing tear gas shells and sound grenades to disperse the students.

Witnesses said a group of Dhaka College students attempted to approach the City College building, defying police barriers. In response, City College students came out of their campus, leading to renewed clashes in the Science Laboratory area.

Mohsin Uddin, officer-in-charge of New Market Police Station, said additional police forces had been deployed to bring the situation under control.

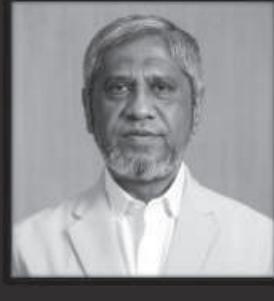
City College's acting principal FM Mobarak Hossain, alleged around 50 to 100 police officers stood by during the attack on the college premises without taking any action.

PRAYER TIMING APRIL 23

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-25	12-45	4-45	6-27	8-00
JAMAAT 5-00	1-15	5-00	6-31	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

4th DEATH ANNIVERSARY!

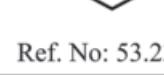


It's been 4 years we lost our honorable former Director, Veteran Industrialist Mr. REZAKUL HAIDER

on 23rd April 2021.
We remember him on this day.

We all pray to Almighty Allah for granting him Jannat.

Directors and All Employees of

AUSTRALIAN
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)

PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Dhaka-1207
Tel: 880-0222218331-33, 0222218335-39; Fax: 880-0222218341, 0222218343
e-mail: pksf@pksf.org.bd; Website: www.pksf.org.bd

Ref. No: 53.23.0000.001.03.037.25-2353

Date: 22 April 2025

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

(Selection of Consulting Firm: National)

A. Basic Information (Procuring Entity, Assignment, Procurement Method, Source of Fund, etc.) for the Consulting Firm:

1 Name of the Organization	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
2 Procuring Entity Name & Designation	Dr. Md. Jashim Uddin, Additional Managing Director
3 Expression of Interest for Selection of	A Consulting Firm to Conduct 'End-Project Impact Studies' under RMTF of PKSF
4 EOI Ref No.	53.23.0000.001.03.037.25-2353
5 Package No.	PKSF/RMTF/2024-25/SD-17
6 REOI Publishing Date	23 April 2025
7 Procurement Method	Quality and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS)
8 Source of Fund	PKSF & IFAD
9 Development Partner	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
10 Project Name	Rural Microenterprise Transformation Project (RMTF)
11 EOI submission closing date, time, and place	Date: 8th May 2025; Time: 2:00 PM PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

B. Key Information for the Consulting Firm:

12 Brief description of the assignment	The REOI document including Terms of Reference (TOR) are obtainable from the office of the undersigned during office hours: 9:30AM to 2:30 PM at free of cost. It will be also available at PKSF website https://pksf.org.bd/tender . Interested eligible consultants are requested to submit their applications along with all necessary documents in sealed envelope to the office of the undersigned directly or by courier/mail by 2:00 PM on or before 8th May 2025.
--	--

13 Experience, resource, and delivery capacity required of the Consulting Firm	
14 Other Details	

The Procurement Entity reserves all the rights to accept or reject all applications.

(Dr. Md. Jashim Uddin)
Additional Managing Director & PE

Some progress, but challenges

FROM PAGE 3
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AZAN 4-25	12-45	4-45	6-27	8-00
JAMAAT 5-00	1-15	5-00	6-31	8



A young girl looks at clay toys on display at a local fair in Baraihali village of Barishal's Babuganj upazila. Artisans and vendors from various areas gather at the fair to sell handcrafted clay and bamboo items. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

HABIGANJ MUNICIPALITY Road or dumpsite?

MINTU DESHWARA

The Habiganj Bypass has turned into a dumping ground for municipal garbage, causing serious disruptions to traffic and posing health risks to residents and commuters alike.

Garbage dumped along the roadside is now spilling over onto the main carriageway while the stench from the growing piles of waste has made the road nearly impassable for both pedestrians and vehicles.

"This is one of the busiest roads in the city, but every day we are forced to cover our nose and mouth even while inside vehicles," said Bappy Rahman, a pedestrian.

The bypass road runs past key landmarks including Brindaban Government College, Habiganj Modern Stadium, and the Ansar Academy.

Abdul Hakim, a professor in the accounting department of Brindaban Government College, said teachers and students travelling on the bypass road are suffering due to the pile of garbage.

"When there is a lot of wind, a bad smell spreads throughout the campus," he said.

This is not the first time the issue has surfaced. During the tenure of



former mayor Ataur Rahman Selim, the municipality, in coordination with the district administration, had temporarily shifted the dumping site to a designated area outside the city. However, the effort failed to yield long term results, as garbage returned to the bypass within weeks.

Tofazzal Sohel, general secretary of the Habiganj unit of Bapa (Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon), recommended three immediate actions: the municipal authorities must urgently allocate and secure a permanent, environmentally approved landfill site outside the city; implement a door-to-door

Appeal hearing of Azharul deferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday deferred to May 6 the hearing of an appeal filed by Jamaat-e-Islami leader ATM Azharul Islam challenging his death penalty for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

A full bench of the Appellate Division comprising all the seven judges including the chief justice will hold the hearing on May 6 considering the importance of the case, his lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir told reporters.

Several Jamaat leaders and activists including its Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar were present in the court yesterday.

On February 27, the apex court allowed Azharul to move a fresh appeal before the court.

-Signed-
(Md. Farid Hasan)
Deputy General Manager (ICT)
(Additional Charge)

 Bangladesh Krishi Bank Head Office 83-85 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000. ADC Management Department Phone: 02-223356651; E-mail: dgmadc@krishibank.org.bd	
BKB/HO/ADC/ATM-17(3)(ATM Procurement)/2024-2025/608 Dated: 20/04/2025 “e-Tender Notice (OTM)”	

This is to notify all concern that the following tender has been published through National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>)

Sl	Tender ID, Tender Package No. and Reference No.	Name of Tender	Tender Documents Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time	Tender Method
01	Tender ID: 1100838 Tender Package No: 4/2024-2025, Reference No. BKB/HO/ADC/ATM- 17(3)(2024-2025/607	Supply Installation & Commissioning of 10(Ten) ATM(Automated Teller Machine) for Bangladesh Krishi Bank	Date: 06-05-2025 Time: 16:00	Date: 07-05-2025 Time: 15:00	OTM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-Government Procurement Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) and you can also ask help from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

-Signed-
(Md. Farid Hasan)
Deputy General Manager (ICT)
(Additional Charge)

GD-958

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Department of Land Records & Surveys (DLR&S) Settlement Press 98, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Sharni, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208 Memo No. 31.03.0000.005.07.581.21-210				
e-Tender Notice No. 04/2024-2025 (OTM)				
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following Goods.				

Sl No.	Package/ Lot No.	Tender ID	Description of goods	Last selling date & time	Closing/opening date & time
01	GR-3 Press Lot-10	1098839	Procurement of 4th Class Employees Uniform and others item of Settlement Press of DLR&S	06.05.2025 17:00pm	07.05.2025 12:15pm

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

Syed Robiul Islam
Director (Admin)
Department of Land Records & Surveys
Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208
Tel: 02-41024603 (Office)

GD-959

6-year-old abducted, tortured, forced to beg

Police rescue him after 6 months, boy now undergoing treatment

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

It was six months ago in October last year when a six-year-old boy vanished from a village field in Pabna.

While his mother went from one police station to another, clutching his photo and begging for help, her son was locked away in a dark room. He received no food, no sunlight, but just beatings.

He was starved for days at a time. The six-year-old went through unbearable torture. His small fingers were broken. The abductors did everything to make the boy appear disabled. Then they paraded him across cities to beg, from one ferry terminal to another, using the boy's shattered body to win sympathy from strangers.

Six months passed.

And then, last Friday, police found the boy lying unresponsive beside a man at Rupsha ferry ghat in Khulna. The man, later identified as Rafikul Islam Biplob, 30, was begging with the boy in tow. He was arrested on the spot.

When the child was brought back home, his mother could barely recognise him. "At first glance, I was so shocked that I asked the police, 'are you sure this is my boy?'" she said, standing at her son's bedside in Pabna General Hospital.

"He was so thin, I could count every bone. His face had changed. His body was full of wounds. He didn't say a word to me," she added. She said her son had gone out to play on October 2 near their home in Pabna Sadar upazila. That was the last time anyone saw him.

Biplob lured the boy with biscuits,"

said Md Abdus Salam, officer-in-charge

of Pabna Sadar Police Station. "He kept him in confinement and tortured him, starving him for days. Once the boy was too weak to resist, he began taking him from place to place to beg."

The abductors had once called the mother, he said. And from that point, they began tracing him using mobile phone surveillance. They finally tracked him to Khulna's Rupsha area with help from local police, he added.

"When we found him, he wasn't even able to sit properly," said OC Salam. "His fingers were twisted, his back marked with injuries."

He is severely malnourished. There are signs of prolonged physical abuse.

Dr Rafikul Hasan, Pabna General Hospital

The boy has since undergone surgery to repair broken bones in his hand.

"He is severely malnourished. There are signs of prolonged physical abuse," said Dr Rafikul Hasan, assistant director of Pabna General Hospital. "But the psychological trauma will take much longer to heal. He's afraid of people. He doesn't speak," he said.

Biplob, who hails from Shanikdiar village in the same upazila as the victim, has been sent to jail through court proceedings. Meanwhile, the child's mother waits at the hospital. "I just want him to smile. That's all I want," she said.

(Names of the mother and child have been withheld to protect their identities)

Woman tied to tree and tortured
Two arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Brahmanbaria

A woman was tied to a tree and tortured allegedly by two of her brothers-in-law in Brahmanbaria on Monday.

The incident took place at Sadar upazila between 5:00pm and 8:00pm, said police and locals.

The victim, wife of an expatriate, used to live with her two children at her in-law's house.

Based on a complaint filed by her with Sadar Model Police Station on Monday, police arrested her brothers-in-law, Mangal Mia and Zainal Abedin, yesterday afternoon, said Officer-in-Charge Mohammad Mozzafar Hossain.

A video clip of the incident went viral on social media.

Police recorded the complaint as a case, the OC said.

According to the case statement, Mangal had been harassing her for a long time.

On Monday, when she protested, he started beating her, it added. Later, Zainal and other family members joined him. They tied her to a tree and continued to beat her, the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Police Headquarters, Dhaka.

Invitation for Local Tender

Memo No.44.01.0000.024.05.001.2021-672

Date: 22 April 2025

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the bonafied business organization/suppliers in their official letter head pad for purchase of the following items for Bangladesh Police. Tenderer must read and fill up the tender documents cautiously, so that the offered package complies with the tender documents. Conditional or alternative offer shall not be evaluated.

1. Ministry / Division	Ministry of Home Affairs/ Public Security Division.		
2. Agency	Police Headquarters, Dhaka.		
3. Head of Procuring Entity Name	Inspector General, Bangladesh Police.		
4. Invitation for	Purchase of Water Craft		
5. Invitation Reference No	44.01.0000.024.05.001.2021-15 (FY-2024-2025)		
6. Date	22 April 2025		
KEY INFOMATION			
7. Procurement Method	One stage two envelop		
FUNDING INFORMATION			
8. Budget and Source of Fund	Gov. Revenue Budget		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
9. Tender Publication date	23 April 2025		
10. Tender Selling last date	20 May 2025		
11. Tender closing date and time	21 May 2025 at 12.00pm		
12. Tender opening date and time	21 May 2025 at 12.30pm		
13. Name & Address of the officer Selling Tender Document Receiving Tender Document Opening Tender Document	Addl. DIG (Transport), 5 th Floor, Police Headquarters, Phoenix Road, Fulbaria, Dhaka-1000.		
14. Place, date & time of pre-tender meeting (optional)	13 May 2025 at 03.00 pm NCCOM, 5 th Floor, Police Headquarters, Dhaka-1000.		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
15. Eligibility of tender	(i) Up to date trade license (ii) VAT registration Certificate (iii) Up to date income tax clearance certificate (iv) Manufacturers or Local Agents shall not be black listed by any other organization in Bangladesh and (v) Other Conditions shall be described in standard document (STD).		
16. Price of tender document (BDT)	TK. 2000 (Two Thousand) Only (non-refundable).		
17. Brief description of goods			
Lot No	Identification of Goods	Tender Security (Taka)	Completion Time
Lot-1	Patrol Boat	8,00,000/- (Eight Lac) only.	
Lot-2	Speed Boat	8,00,000/- (Eight Lac) only.	30 June 2025
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS			
18. Name of official inviting tender	Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman, BPM		
19. Designation and address of the official inviting tenderer			

'I am doing fine': Babita

Social media was abuzz with rumours about legendary actress Babita's health last Monday, sparked by a Facebook account using her name. To confirm the news, The Daily Star contacted the actress later that night.

"I am well and healthy. By the grace of Almighty, I am doing fine," Babita assured during the conversation.

Expressing disappointment, she added, "I don't know who is spreading the word about me being unwell. It's not true. With everyone's prayers and love, I am doing just fine."

When informed that the post originated from a Facebook account named Babita clarified, "I don't use Facebook



so I don't have any account there. That's a fake ID. I don't know who is behind it."

She further said, "I've been receiving constant phone calls since the rumour started circulating. People shouldn't spread such news without confirming it."

Babita, a celebrated actress of Bangladeshi cinema's golden era, has starred in numerous films. She gained international acclaim for her role in Satyajit Ray's *Ashani Sanket*.

Bangladeshi film 'Mastul' makes global debut at Moscow Film Festival

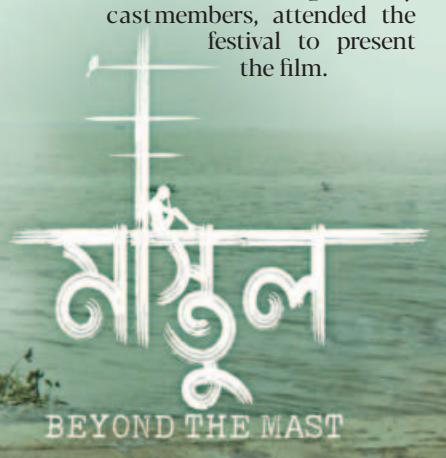


Yesterday, Bangladeshi film *Mastul* debuted internationally at the 47th Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF), competing in the festival's main section. The film, directed by Mohammad Nuruzzaman

and produced by Cinemaker, Lotus Films, and Gulmohor, will again be screened on April 24, standing as Bangladesh's only entry among over 200 films from 50 countries.

Mastul follows the story of Maqbool, a kind cook played by Fazlur Rahman Babu, who befriends Noora, a young stowaway aboard a river oil tanker. Their bond unsettles the ship's power dynamics, raising tensions with a suspicious helmsman. It also features Deepak Suman, and Arif Hasan,

among others. Director Nuruzzaman, along with key cast members, attended the festival to present the film.



Arbovirus releases first single from fourth album

Arbovirus has returned with *Purono Thikana*, the first single from their fourth studio album *Nikhoj Shongbad*, released under Infected Records via their official YouTube channel.

The track signals a nostalgic comeback, reviving the band's signature sound and reuniting its original lineup: Asif Asgar (Ranjan), Ahmed Aldname Alam, Nafeez Al Amin, and Sufi Maverick.

The visualiser, designed by Alex Unai, pairs seamlessly with the song's moody tone, while Khalid Ahsan and Asif Asgar led the artwork and concept direction.

Iqbal Asif Jewel handled audio mixing and mastering. The release has sparked excitement among fans, especially following Sufi's 2022 exit and the members' move abroad, which had raised doubts about the band's future.



Chandni set for television comeback under Azizul Hakim's direction

Actress and dancer Mehbooba Mahnoor Chandni is set to make her television comeback in the Eid-ul-Azha special drama *Tumi Ami O Shey*, directed by veteran actor-director Azizul Hakim.

The script, penned by his wife, actress-director Zeenat Hakim, marks Azizul Hakim's return to direction after a break.

The drama centres on a man who returns from the US and falls in love with a girl in Bangladesh, only to face pressure from his family to marry someone from abroad.

Abdun Noor Sajal takes on the lead role opposite Chandni, bringing the pair back together on screen after a significant hiatus.

Praising the script, Chandni noted, "I now prefer to only accept roles that resonate deeply, and working under Azizul bhai's direction is always rewarding."



NEWS

Cops get

FROM PAGE 12
RANK INSIGNIA, ACCESSORIES

Insignia include combinations of Shapla, stars, and crossed swords or batons made from silver metal or thread embroidery. Police on tactical duty or UN missions may wear embroidered badges on detachable epaulettes, reads the gazette.

Corget patches, belts, lanyards, boots, nameplates, and ribbons have also been standardised. Black leather or Velcro belts will be used based on rank, and nameplates must follow a dark-blue plastic or Velcro system depending on dress type.

All personnel from the superintendent of police down to a constable will wear shoulder titles reading "Police" in Bangla, according to the gazette.

CEREMONIAL, MESS, SPECIAL UNIT UNIFORMS

The ceremonial uniform includes a tunic, aiguillettes, Oxford shoes, and rank-appropriate insignia. A white mess jacket with golden epaulettes, blue silver trims, and miniature medals will be required for formal events.

Distinct uniforms have also been specified for women officers, traffic police, APBn, Rab, immigration police, and special action teams. These include accommodations for maternity, seasonal variation, and operational requirements, reads the government gazette.

Yunus to attend

FROM PAGE 2
work closely with him to foster peace, human dignity and environmental stewardship," he said.

The people of Bangladesh, who were deeply honoured by His Holiness' historic visit to our country in 2017, join the global community

Invisible foes

FROM PAGE 12
"However, to achieve this, we still have a long way to go. We must continue the hard work," he added.

Reiterating the need for unity at all costs, Tarique said, "We must preserve internal cohesion. If there are any harmful or disruptive elements, we must identify and remove them, and then move forward together."

"Because the people trust you and our beloved party -- the Bangladesh Nationalist Party -- we cannot allow that trust to be broken. We can only maintain this trust by firmly holding on to our unity," he said.

Each unit must also update its insignia to incorporate the new national monogram. Officers on UN duty will wear a patch with the national flag and the words "Bangladesh Police" in English.

OLD RULES REPEALED

The new rules officially repeal the Police Dress Rules, 2004, though previous actions taken under the old rules remain valid under corresponding provisions of the 2025 update.

The police monogram was previously revised through a gazette notification issued on February 10, 2004. Later in 2009, a new logo was introduced featuring a sailboat flanked by garlands of wheat and rice stalks. The emblem also included a shapla (water lily) above the sail and the word "Police" written in Bangla beneath the boat.

Calls for changing the police uniform and logo resurfaced after the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5 last year.

On August 11, a decision was made to revise the police uniform and logo during a meeting with then-home adviser M Sakhawat Hossain.

The next day, the PHQ formed a 10-member committee led by Additional DIG (Logistics) Mohammad Ataul Kibria to oversee the proposed changes.

in mourning this great loss," said the chief adviser.

"During this time of sorrow, we stand in solidarity with the Catholic Church and people of faith around the globe, remembering the profound impact of his teachings and the kindness he extended to all," he said.

Tarique said the ultimate judge of any political party is the people.

"As a political party, our greatest examiner is the public. We must pass that test by serving the nation, uniting the people, and achieving real progress. We will do whatever is necessary to bring about positive change," he said.

Tarique said the BNP has historically undertaken significant reforms and welfare initiatives for the country and its people and pledged to implement the 31-point reform proposal if it comes to power for the welfare of the people.

27th death anniversary

FROM PAGE 12

Shahnaz Rahman, current chairman of the group, Shazneen was the youngest among four siblings. Her elder sister Simeen Rahman is the chief executive officer of Transcom.

More than 19 years after the shocking incident, the convict in the Shazneen rape and murder case, Shahidul Islam, alias Shahid, was hanged at Kashimpur High Security Prison in Gazipur in 2017.

A Special Tribunal for Prevention of Women and Children Repression delivered the verdict in September 2003, sentencing six accused to death for the rape and murder.

They are domestic help Shahidul; contractor Syed Sajid Mainuddin, who was tasked with renovating the house, and his assistant Badal; housemaids Estema Khatun Minu and her sister Parvin; and carpenter Shaniram Mandal.

After the lower court verdict, the death reference reached the High Court for confirmation of the sentence. At the same time, the accused appealed to the High Court against their convictions and sentences. The HC acquitted Shaniram.

Later on, Hasan, Badal, Minu and Parvin appealed to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the HC verdict. Shahidul filed a jail appeal.

On August 2 in 2016, the Appellate Division granted the appeals of Hasan, Badal, Minu and Parvin and dismissed Shahidul's appeal.

On March 5, 2017, the apex court rejected Shahidul's petition for review of the verdict. He sought presidential mercy, which was turned down by the president. He was executed on November 29 that year.

Gunmen kill 24 tourists

FROM PAGE 12

civilians in recent years", with the death toll "still being ascertained".

"This attack on our visitors is an abomination," he said in a statement. "The perpetrators of this attack are animals, inhuman and worthy of contempt."

India's interior minister Amit Shah said he was flying to the site of attack.

"Those involved in this dastardly act of terror will not be spared, and we will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences," Shah said in a statement.

Tarique said the BNP has historically undertaken significant reforms and welfare initiatives for the country and its people and pledged to implement the 31-point reform proposal if it comes to power for the welfare of the people.

WFP forced to halt food aid in Ethiopia

AFP, Addis Ababa

The World Food Programme said yesterday that it was suspending aid for 650,000 malnourished women and children in Ethiopia because of a lack of funding.

The UN agency warned they were among 3.6 million people in Ethiopia who would no longer have access to food aid in the coming weeks without urgent new funding.

"WFP is being forced to halt treatment for 650,000 malnourished women and children in May due to insufficient funding," it said in a statement.

"WFP had planned to reach two

million mothers and children with life-saving nutrition assistance in 2025," it added.

The WFP, like other aid agencies, has been caught in the crosshairs of funding cuts by US President Donald Trump, who signed an executive order freezing all foreign aid for three months shortly after his inauguration in January.

It comes as several Western countries have also reduced aid spending.

More than 10 million people are facing hunger in the east African country of around 130 million, the UN agency said.

Rab files 2 cases

FROM PAGE 12

"gunfight" in Agailjhara's Mollapara area.

Speaking to The Daily Star after the incident, OC Oliul Islam said Rab members in plainclothes were on an anti-drug operation in the area when they came under attack from some drug dealers. At that, Rab personnel opened fire, injuring the two. Siam later died of his injuries.

As of last night, no complaints had been filed by the families of the victims, said the OC.

Gaza a 'land of desperation'

FROM PAGE 12

wounded when an air strike hit a house in the centre of the southern city of Khan Yunis, he said.

Six more remained trapped under the rubble, he said.

Another nine were killed in separate strikes on Jabalia refugee camp in northern Gaza, Mughayir said, including five when a tent housing displaced people was hit.

Five others were killed in a strike on a home belonging to the Bakr family in the Al Shati refugee camp of Gaza City, he said, while two died in a similar attack in the southern city of Rafah.

More than 10 houses were also destroyed in the strikes, civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal earlier told AFP, adding that an air strike also destroyed bulldozers and equipment belonging to the Jabalia municipality.

Since the ceasefire with Hamas collapsed, the military has carried out an intense assault on Gaza.

Gaza's civil defence agency on Monday accused the Israeli military of carrying out "summary executions" in the killing of 15 rescue workers last month, rejecting the findings of an internal probe by the army.

At least 1,864 people have been killed in Gaza since the military resumed its offensive, bringing the total death toll since the war erupted to at least 51,240, according to the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza.

Theatre Factory to honour Jibanananda Das' life story on stage



Theatre Factory is set to debut *Komola Rong er Bodh*, a tribute to poet Jibanananda Das, on May 9 at Mohila Samity, with additional shows on May 10 and 11. The production has been written and directed by Alok Basu.

The play opens on October 14, 1954, the day Jibanananda Das was hit by a tram, leading to his death nine days later. It traces his final reflections and struggles for today's world.

Director Basu notes that while Das is respected, he's rarely explored on the Bangladeshi stage. "We aim to uncover the lesser-known sides of his life and make him resonate with today's youth," he stated.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

Play: 'Neel Mayurer Joubon'

The play *Neel Mayurer Joubon*, adapted from Selina Hossain's novel, explores Bengal's timeless bond with nature and the human struggle against imposed boundaries.

DATE: THURSDAY | APRIL 24

TIME: 7PM ONWARDS

VENUE: EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE HALL, BANGLADESH SHILPAKALA ACADEMY

Mob justice can no longer be allowed

FROM PAGE 1
public prosecutors in the courts must remain vigilant."

Addressing public officials, he said, "We are a non-political government. You can benefit more from us. We try to avoid requests or lobbying, especially regarding job postings. Though we may not have been able to avoid it entirely, we have tried our best to resist such pressure. You must ensure that officers in charge of police stations do not take bribes."

ACC moves to bring back Hasina, family members

the commissioner said, "We have registered a case against Tulip Siddiq as a Bangladeshi citizen. All the notices have been sent to her Bangladesh address. The government will also take necessary steps to bring her back."

Regarding the possibility of issuing red notices through Interpol for the seven, Farid said, "I have no information in this connection".

The other Hasina family members that the ACC is seeking to bring back are Hasina's children Sajeeb Wazed; Hasina's sister Sheikh Rehana, and Rehana's children Radwan Mujib Siddiq Bobby and Azmina Siddiq. They all face corruption allegations in Bangladesh.

EX-RAJSHAHI MAYOR SUED

The anti graft body has filed three cases against former Rajshahi City Corporation mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, his wife Shahin Akhter Reni, and daughter Anika Farida Zaman for allegedly amassing illegal wealth worth Tk 28.56 crore, ACC Director General (prevention) Akhtar Hossain told journalists at the ACC headquarters in Dhaka yesterday.

Liton has been named in all three cases. He is accused of illegally acquiring wealth worth Tk 10.35 crore. His wife was charged with acquiring illegal assets worth Tk 11.41 crore. Their daughter is accused of accumulating illegal wealth worth Tk 6.80 crore.



Palestinians inspect destroyed bulldozers and other vehicles at the Jabalia municipality garage, which was hit by Israeli bombardment, in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SAGAR-RUNI MURDER CASE HC gives task force 6 months to submit probe report



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted the government-formed task force an additional six months to complete the investigation into the murders of journalists Sagar Sarwar and Meherun Runi in 2012 and to submit its report.

The HC bench of Justice Fatema Najib and Justice Sikder Mahmudur Razi passed the order after Additional Attorney General Mohammad Arshadur Rouf sought nine months to complete the probe.

He informed the court that several officials involved in the investigation had been changed or transferred over the years, delaying progress.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 5

Can Bangladesh fend off Vietnam in RMG race?

FROM PAGE 1

2024 data -- yet to be released -- may offer a clearer picture of shifting dynamics. Compounding concerns, the WTO revised Bangladesh's previously reported export figures downward by \$9 billion due to discrepancies in data submitted by the Export Promotion Bureau, raising questions about statistical reliability.

Despite the correction, Bangladesh retains several structural strengths: a large and affordable labour force, robust backward linkages through its \$25 billion primary textile sector, a global lead in certified green factories, and rising compliance with international safety standards.

But these are increasingly offset by entrenched weaknesses -- underdeveloped infrastructure, extended lead times, high borrowing costs, bureaucratic frictions and overreliance on low-value, basic garments.

What separates Bangladesh from competitors like Vietnam is not just cost structure but strategic direction. Vietnam has steadily moved up the value chain, diversifying its product base and leveraging free trade agreements to secure preferential access. With both countries subject to elevated tariffs in the US market, the decisive variable may be the ability to offer differentiated, value-added products and to navigate trade diplomacy with agility.

Without targeted reforms and meaningful trade engagement, Bangladesh's position in global supply chains risks being overtaken -- not through a sudden collapse, but by gradual erosion in competitiveness and missed opportunities.

Tapan Chowdhury, a garment exporter and managing director of Square Pharmaceuticals, acknowledged that Vietnam could eventually overtake Bangladesh if key structural challenges remain unaddressed. However, he believes Bangladesh retains its competitive edge -- at least for now.

"Given that the Trump administration set the tariff at 37 percent, Bangladesh retains its competitiveness since the effective tariff rate for Vietnam is nearly 10 percentage points higher in the same market," he said.

Tapan urged exporters to shift towards high-value products to withstand price pressures. "International retailers and brands always offer lower prices for basic items. Exporters must adopt the right strategies and be selective in choosing buyers to offset challenges."

Echoing the need for deeper reforms, Rubana Huq, also managing director of Mohammadi Group, said Bangladesh's growth narrative often overlooks entrenched problems.

While the potential of the apparel sector is widely recognised, Rubana warned that optimism alone is not enough. "Relying solely on the continued growth of basic garments is no longer a viable strategy," she said. The sector must diversify its product base, invest in technology upgrades, and develop a skilled workforce capable of adapting to global demand. She stressed the urgency of expanding capacity in man-made fibre (MMF) garments, where Bangladesh continues to lag behind competitors.

"Bangladesh will lose its competitive edge if we can't engage in active economic diplomacy," she warned, calling for stronger international engagement to secure favourable trade terms.

Faruque Hassan, managing director of Giant Group, raised another important distinction in the comparison with Vietnam. He said Vietnam's export statistics often include both garments and textiles, unlike Bangladesh, which reports garments only. "For example, Vietnam last year reported more than \$37 billion in combined textile and garment exports, which included several billion dollars worth of textiles," he said. "If we exclude garments from that equation, it will take more time for Vietnam to overtake Bangladesh."

Nonetheless, Hassan stressed the need for swift action. "We need to explore new markets, diversify both products and destinations, invest in technology, and produce more value-added garments. That must go hand-in-hand with improving customs services, port operations, gas supply, and utility services, and removing non-tariff barriers."

Other exporters remain more confident. Md Fazlul Hoque, managing director of Plummy Fashions Ltd, dismissed speculation that Vietnam is about to overtake Bangladesh.

"For years, people have been saying that Vietnam will surpass us, but that hasn't happened. Bangladesh remains competitive and continues to grow."

He added that rankings are less important than performance. "Meeting the market demand is how we can climb even higher."

Indeed, Bangladesh has maintained a strong presence in key markets. It is currently the second-largest apparel exporter to the EU, with annual shipments exceeding \$25 billion, and ranks third in the US with yearly exports of over \$8 billion. In Canada and select emerging markets, Bangladesh has also expanded its footprint significantly, with market share rising to more than 20 percent, double the level from five years ago.

Still, concerns over looming threats persist. Anwar-Ul-Alam Chowdhury, chairman of Evince Group, pointed to two immediate risks: Trump's tariffs and Bangladesh's upcoming graduation from least developed country (LDC) status, scheduled in November 2026.

He stressed the need for proactive diplomacy in addressing the US tariffs. "Bangladesh must address Trump's tariffs politically. And the government must take timely policy steps to offset the immediate impacts of LDC graduation."

Although countries like the EU, the UK, Canada, and Australia have pledged to extend duty-free access beyond 2026, Anwar-Ul-Alam argued that Bangladesh must not be complacent. He called for negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs) with major trading partners and enhancing engagement with Asian markets such as China, India, and Japan.

If positioned strategically, he noted, Bangladesh could attract new orders as sourcing patterns shift away from China and Vietnam under US tariff pressure. "But this will depend entirely on our diplomatic and strategic responses."

Mostafa Abid Khan, a former member of Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission, warned that even a 10 percent tariff burden could be difficult for many local exporters to absorb. He also flagged Vietnam's advantage under its free trade agreement with the EU, saying the Southeast Asian country continues to strengthen its foothold in the European market.

Mohammad Abdur Razzaque, chairman of the Research and Policy Integration for Development, echoed this concern. "Under the EU-Vietnam FTA, Vietnam's exports to Europe are bound to rise. Its presence in the US and Canadian markets is also expanding."

Razzaque also pointed to a critical structural difference. Vietnam's rapid growth in the garment sector is driven largely by Chinese investment, reportedly \$61 billion in textiles and garments. In contrast, Bangladesh's \$55 billion textile and garment sector has less than 5 percent foreign investment.

"This is a relative advantage for Bangladesh," he said, suggesting that US buyers may be wary of Vietnam's deep production ties with China.

However, to seize any potential gains from declining Chinese exports, Bangladesh must address one key weakness: its limited capacity in MMF-based apparel, according to Razzaque. "Countries that wish to fill the gap left by China in the US market must be able to scale up MMF production."

Overhaul our tax system

It has become a major hurdle to Bangladesh's fiscal progress

According to a recent report by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Bangladesh lost an estimated Tk 226,236 crore in potential revenue due to tax evasion and avoidance in FY 2022-23. This is an extremely troubling finding. While it is generally known that tax irregularities are widespread in Bangladesh, the extent of the resultant loss, as estimated by the CPD, is staggering. To put it into perspective, the lost amount from FY23 could have funded the construction of approximately seven metro rail lines, provided each cost as much as the revised budget of Tk 33,472 crore for Metro Rail Line 6 connecting Uttara to Kamalapur.

In other words, had the National Board of Revenue (NBR) managed to collect some portion of the Tk 2.26 lakh crore lost to tax evasion, it could have easily met its revenue target for that year—which it fell short of by Tk 44,728 crore, according to provisional data. Therefore, the fact that the NBR has a history of missing its revenue targets is clearly not a fait accompli, but rather something that can be rectified.

According to the CPD report, corporate tax evasion alone accounted for roughly half of the total loss in FY23—about Tk 113,118 crore—highlighting a concerning trend of rising evasion since 2011. The estimated loss in 2012 was Tk 96,503 crore, which surged to Tk 133,673 crore by 2015. According to CPD, corruption and a range of structural issues, including high tax rates, weak enforcement, and a labyrinthine legal framework, have been fuelling this rampant tax evasion.

For instance, nearly half of the firms surveyed in the study alleged that they were asked for bribes by officials while seeking tax-related services in FY23. Additionally, 40 percent of surveyed companies reported problems when adjusting their tax refunds. Moreover, 79 percent of firms pointed to a lack of accountability among tax officials, while 72 percent cited widespread corruption in the tax administration. Furthermore, 65 percent of businesses reported persistent disputes with tax officials over the calculation of their payable tax amounts. Another controversial factor that deserves scrutiny is the policy on tax expenditure and incentives. According to CPD, Bangladesh's current tax incentive structure is deeply entangled with political interests, rather than being merit-based and time-bound.

Clearly, much work is needed to improve our overall tax system. In fact, the entire structure appears to require a significant overhaul. Firstly, the tax submission process must be fully digitalised, with a unified system of financial transactions to ensure that every transaction is traceable and verifiable, thereby creating a barrier against corruption and fraud. Secondly, the NBR must significantly expand its corporate tax net, raising the proportion of tax-paying firms to at least 59 percent of registered companies—up from the current estimate of just 9 percent. Without such transformative reforms, Bangladesh's fiscal progress will remain severely hampered.

Let's prioritise workers for a change

Political will key to success of labour reforms

The recommendations outlined in the Labour Reform Commission's report, submitted to the chief adviser on Monday, could bring about a welcome change for Bangladesh's eight crore working people—provided the proposals are accepted by all, implemented effectively, and enforced regularly.

One of the most notable recommendations is having a national minimum wage that ensures a dignified living standard for all workers and self-employed individuals regardless of industry, sector, specialised labour region, type of work, or nature of business. However, enforcing such a proposal in a country where 87.2 percent of the working population is engaged in the informal sector poses an enormous challenge. On the positive side, thanks to information technology, workers can at least become aware of their rights and use this knowledge to demand fair remuneration. Meanwhile, sector-specific minimum wages will continue to exist, as per the recommendation, but they cannot be lower than the national minimum.

The commission also recommended significantly reforming existing labour laws—or enacting one or more new, integrated labour laws—to bring workers of all sectors, industries, and profit/non-profit organisations under legal protection. To support this, they proposed the creation of a National Labour Force Registration System and Information Repository, as well as increasing the number of labour courts.

Other recommendations include simplifying the process of trade union registration and creating a government emergency and contingency fund to help businesses sustain operations and pay workers even during international or domestic crises. The commission also proposed that two white papers be published—one on the former government's actions, investigations, trials, compensations, etc., in relation to notable workplace accidents such as Rana Plaza and Tazreen Fashions; and the other on the utilisation of the Sramik Kalyan Foundation Fund. While the commission did not specify which recommendations can be executed immediately, the chief adviser has asked for a list of those that can be implemented in the short term. We believe that work on the two white papers can and should start without delay.

Reportedly, the commission's recommendations will soon be presented to political parties for their feedback. While there appears to be no reason for any party to oppose these proposals, which aim to ensure workers' rights and protection, trusting political parties to properly implement them is difficult given their past records, especially while in power. Historically, most political parties have prioritised the interests of businesses and employers at the cost of labour rights. We can only hope that they along with businesses and employers, in line with the aspirations of the July uprising for real change, will support the delivery of pro-worker reforms this time.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

New Coke replaces Coca-Cola

On this day in 1985, the Coca-Cola Company introduced New Coke, a reformulated soft drink meant to replace its flagship beverage. Due to public outrage, however, the previous version of Coke was brought back as Coca-Cola Classic less than three months later.

EDITORIAL

What would make a good leader in new Bangladesh?



Dr Mohammad Zaman is an international development and resettlement specialist. His forthcoming book is titled 'Anatomy of Resettlement: Ethnographic Accounts and Stories in Retrospect' (Lexington Books, 2025). He can be reached at mzaman.b@outlook.com.

MOHAMMAD ZAMAN

I was quite enchanted by a recent op-ed piece titled "Bangladesh deserves better leaders. How do we find them?" by Kollo Kibria, recently published in *The Daily Star*. It is a timely concern raised by the author and a critical issue that deserves due attention since Bangladesh hopes to transition to a new era, both from political and development perspectives. Taking cue from the recently held Bangladesh Investment Summit as a model, the article sets out with clarity and powerful arguments the kind of leadership Bangladesh needs moving forward. However, the question remains: how do we find or identify a leader?

We are talking about all kinds of leaders, with a particular focus on political leadership, given the current complex and dynamic political environment in Bangladesh. It stands at the precipice of transformation. The time is not for politics as usual. As the country seeks transition into a more prosperous and modern country, the role of effective leadership has become paramount. To successfully navigate this transition, it requires leaders who possess a unique blend of qualities that will foster growth, unity, and progress at all levels of government, administration, and businesses. Are we ready for it? Who are our leaders? What does a leader do? What are the traits of a leader?

Leaders are not born; they are made. In our history, we have had many impactful and iconic leaders: Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and others. Leadership qualities are a mix of many traits. But defining what truly marks these historic icons as good leaders proves a bit challenging. Was it simply the political environment of their times that made them good leaders, or something more? What sets these successful leaders apart?

I think the qualities of leadership can be quite elusive. Nevertheless, there are some essential traits that leaders should demonstrate in these difficult times to lead the country and to effectively manage the affairs, both nationally and internationally.



FILE ILLUSTRATION: REHNUMA PROSHOON

First, a leader must have a visionary outlook and be able to see beyond the obvious. A leader should be able to envision the future and articulate a clear and inspiring vision to the people. This quality involves not only the ability to foresee potential challenges, but also the capacity to identify opportunities that can propel the nation forward—for instance, as projected at the investment summit. Visionary leaders can motivate and inspire followers by painting a picture of a brighter tomorrow, encouraging collective effort towards shared goals.

Second, integrity is the cornerstone of effective leadership. Leaders must demonstrate a commitment to ethical principles and transparency in their actions. This has been missing among Bangladeshi politicians for a very long time. Corruption, nepotism, and lies ruled over other considerations. Visionary leaders can motivate and inspire followers by painting a picture of a brighter tomorrow, encouraging collective effort towards shared goals.

Leaders are rewarded because of their loyalty and blind obedience to the party leadership. The political and party systems were designed not to empower and motivate new leadership. We must change this trend.

Fourth, empathy and inclusivity can connect leaders with the masses on a personal level, understanding their needs, aspirations, and concerns. Many of our iconic leaders had these traits, which helped unite diverse groups and create a sense of belonging and purpose during critical times in our history. The new leaders for tomorrow's Bangladesh must be empathetic to ensure that no one is left behind in the march ahead for upliftment and societal progress.

Fifth, the path to transforming Bangladesh will undoubtedly be fraught with challenges. Leaders must demonstrate resilience—an unwavering determination to persevere in the face of adversity. There is no room for flip-flopping. Equally important is adaptability, the ability to pivot and adjust strategies as

convey their vision, policies, and decisions in a manner that is easily understood by the masses. Effective communication fosters transparency and accountability, and encourages participation.

Seventh, leaders must be innovative and are able to think outside the box and develop creative solutions to complex problems. They embrace technology and new methodologies to drive progress. Forward-thinking leaders prioritise sustainable development, ensuring that their actions today build a better future for generations to come.

Finally, one must look for individuals who embody these qualities. Leaders can be identified through their track record of accomplishments, their ability to inspire and mobilise others, and their commitment to people's welfare. The aspiring leaders should demonstrate a deep understanding of Bangladesh's unique socio-economic and cultural landscape and possess the skills necessary to address its challenges.

Let's invest to compete globally



Dr Abu NM Waheeduzzaman is professor of marketing and international business at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

ABU NM WAHEEDUZZAMAN

The Bangladesh Investment Summit 2025, held recently by the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) to attract foreign investment, was a laudable move. The summit has hopefully branded our country as a friendly nation, demonstrated our spirit and culture, facilitated our integration with the world, and countered the negative narratives. We welcome foreign investments that contribute to our economic growth.

Foreign and domestic investments have been contributing to our economic development since Bangladesh was a part of Pakistan. It has also created an entrepreneurial class that has amassed huge wealth through corruption and political power. The rise of the so-called 22 families in Pakistan was possible because of state-sponsored economic development projects. Today, that number is 10 times greater, and they have grown during various regimes under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Ziaur Rahman, HM Ershad, Khaleda Zia, and Sheikh Hasina. How will it be different this time?

Foreign investment must be compatible with our national, political, economic, social, and foreign policy goals. It must also be conducive to our culture. No country or investment should get priority because of vested interests. The forthcoming investments should not

be a source of renewed corruption or money laundering. We don't want to see the rise of another group of entrepreneurs exploiting national resources for political gains. We hope reform, transparency, and patriotic leadership will ensure that.

Unfortunately, in Bangladesh, economic growth has triggered rapid and chaotic urbanisation, developed high-rise buildings, favoured a middle class, and imported lots of cars, contributing to pollution and traffic jams—all corollary effects of unplanned growth. Despite various governmental and non-governmental programmes, the rural poor did not seriously benefit from the development dividends. This situation can be improved by investments targeting economic deceleration projects, e.g. microcredit.

The time has come to think about investments a little differently. Investments, foreign or domestic, must aim at enhancing the competitiveness of the country globally. They should improve people's well-being through both wealth creation and wealth distribution. A good number of investments have utilised our inexpensive labour force. However, they did not significantly target value-added industries. Our skill set has not changed. We still rely on the low-wage workers to improve our balance of payments (BOP) account. This must change.

To enhance our competitiveness, we need to create domestic demand. The expenditure and investment, be it from local government or foreign sources, should also aim at increasing income generating spillovers contributing to domestic demand. The export-led low-wage investment policy has its limitations. Relying heavily on them is risky. Global economic downturns can create havoc in such industries. Domestic demand is a sound backup and a multiplier; it will augment growth in the long run.

People are one of our greatest assets. We have a rich, trainable, youthful workforce. To compete in a globalised world, uplifting their skills is necessary. We should prepare them for value-added industries. Japan, Korea, Singapore, and lately India and China are good examples in this regard. We can learn from their strategies and invest in our manpower. This may require substantial investment in our universities, trade schools, and training sectors. Why not take proactive measures to attract investment in these sectors? It will enhance our long-run competitiveness.

We are a small country. We cannot give away our agricultural land for disproportionate industrial or service sector growth. For example, do we need a 100-acre hospital to serve a few urban elites? Investments must not be shadowy land-grabbing projects. We should aim for a decentralised investment/growth strategy. Decentralised investments should help district centred development, prioritising modern schools, colleges, health facilities, and complementary services. This would augment both labour quality and domestic demand. Not too long ago, the zilla schools were the cornerstone of our education

system and a major component of the workforce.

Enhancing national competitiveness requires supporting infrastructure conducive to investment and economic development. It is an ongoing process. So far, our investment in infrastructure has been on various roads, highways, bridges, railways, and communication. Let us add our rivers and waterways to that list. Again, our immediate concern should be people and their connectivity with the world. Digital sectors should lead our future. Investments in new projects and upgrading existing networks should continue.

For defence purposes, Bangladesh will also have to invest in modern defence systems. Recent wars in various parts of the world have revealed the weakness of conventional weapons. Drones, laser guns, and missiles are relatively straightforward to develop these days. The technology is available, and we have the manpower to produce them. Investment in a strong military industry will give us a strategic advantage in defence.

Industrial growth has a negative correlation with the environment. We must pay attention to the environment as we seek economic growth. We can invite foreign investment to counter environmental degradation. This would include establishing recycling facilities, modernising ports, dredging rivers, digging canals, etc. Keeping our land, air, and water clean must be the target for this purpose.

Bangladesh is a peace-loving, friendly nation. We have the potential to be a globally competitive country politically, economically, and militarily. Let us encourage investments, both domestic and foreign, that complement our global competitiveness.

CHALLENGES IN BUILDING A REFORMED POLITICAL ORDER

Pathways to the downfall of a regime

THIS IS THE FIRST PART OF A TWO-PART ANALYSIS

Prof Rehman Sobhan
one of Bangladesh's most distinguished economists and a celebrated public intellectual, is founder and chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

REHMAN SOBHAN



The pathway to the July-August uprising culminated in Sheikh Hasina's (SH) extraordinary response to the mass mobilisation led by the students against her regime. She committed the politically and morally unforgivable act of ordering the law enforcers to gun down protesting students and ordinary citizens, including children. Fortunately, in contrast to the police, Rab, and border guards, the army declined to comply with this order; otherwise, a bloodbath might have ensued.

The refusal of the army to comply with SH's order to use its full force to shoot on the people was the game changer which ended in her exit from Gono Bhaban at 45 minutes' notice on August 5, 2024. This is not the first time that the refusal of the army to fire on protesters has culminated in regime change. It happened during Ershad's downfall in 1990 when the then Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) Nuruddin refused to deploy the army to back his C-in-C. In January 2007, CoAS M U Ahmed ushered in the army-backed caretaker regime of Fakhruddin Ahmed by refusing to deploy the army to protect President Iajuddin Ahmed's BNP-biased caretaker regime. M U Ahmed had also been handpicked by Khaleda and was a batchmate of her brother, Major Sayeed Eskander. It would appear that the Bangladesh Army has its own institutional interests which transcend personal loyalties. Historically, it has tended to draw the line when ordered to use force to protect an unpopular regime. I do not know how far this precedent applies in other Third World countries.

As it was, around 1,400 people,

of the SH regime did not begin in July 2024. Human rights abuses through the indiscriminate arrest of opponents, disappearing citizens, use of torture, and suppression of the media have also blackened the 16-year record of the SH regime. Reports from the various reform commissions set up by Yunus spell out the malgovernance which underlay the management of the administration and economy. Notwithstanding many positive outcomes for the economy, various malfeasions within the system have been identified in the White Paper prepared by a task force that exposes the darkness beneath the surface. The extent of the malfeasance appears mind-boggling and has had serious consequences for the economy, particularly in the banking sector. Retaining power through three synthetic elections further delegitimised SH in the eyes of her fellow citizens.

Distorted vision from across the border
The killings and the unbridled nature of the corruption practised by SH's cronies has generated a level of anger against her and her party which has itself become a political variable to be taken into account in any assessment of our situation. The killings, electoral fraud, systemic violation of human rights, and industrial-scale corruption associated with the SH regime appear to have been completely ignored by the Government of India (GOI). The ruling party trolls in India continue to trash the Yunus regime in the media, propagating a totally tendentious narrative of

Indian High Commission in Dhaka to restore normalcy to the issue of visas to large numbers of applicants has also created much disquiet and reflects a negative position of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), which is inimical to both our interests. Bangladesh is possibly the largest source of tourists in India today, and their absence from

to rewrite the historical narrative to project themselves as victims, if not heroes, of 1971, where Bangladesh engaged in the wrong war under the leadership of Bangabandhu against the wrong enemy. JI's narrative is being internalised by some elements of the student leadership who led the uprising, now reconstituted as a political party, hence their demand

As an issue, it has little practical relevance to the immediate need for addressing the myriad problems facing the people of Bangladesh. But it does have relevance as to how we define our intra-regional relations, particularly in relation to Pakistan and India.

Revisiting 1971 has brought to the surface political elements

have changed. In the present circumstances, it makes little sense for some political forces in Bangladesh to romanticise the Pakistan connection as a counterweight to India. Over the last two decades, the balance of power between India and Pakistan has been totally transformed. India is now a global power with the third



Sheikh Hasina committed the politically and morally unforgivable act of ordering the law enforcers to gun down protesting students and ordinary citizens during the July-August uprising, yet the wave of protests could not be stopped. This photo was taken in the Central Shaheed Minar premises in Dhaka on August 2, 2024.

FILE PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

mostly young, were killed by the firing of security forces under SH's directive, according to the UN. The events of July-August 2024 have been investigated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) at the request of Prof Muhammad Yunus. The UN has produced a 500-plus-page, well-documented report which will serve as the most reliable intelligence we are likely to receive on the events of July and August. The report has been formally presented by the OHCHR at their recent annual conclave in Geneva. It will also be used as a testimony in the forthcoming trial of SH and her

The continuing reluctance of the GOI to engage in any substantive discussion at the governmental level, and the initial disinclination of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to even open a conversation with Dr Yunus, further aggravated the climate of Indo-Bangladesh relations, which were already contaminated by the presence of SH in India.

The reluctance of the Indian High Commission in Dhaka to restore normalcy to the issue of visas to large numbers of applicants has also created much disquiet and reflects a negative position of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), which is inimical to both our interests.

colleagues in Dhaka for ordering the killing of citizens. However, involving the OHCHR may impose certain constraints on the trial process in Bangladesh to ensure international norms of due process, transparency, and exposure to outside scrutiny.

The erosion in the credibility of

Kolkata is contributing to a local business recession.

In the course of an interview with BBC, Prof Yunus provided an extended commentary on the importance of strong and balanced Indo-Bangladesh relations. This quest for strengthening relations with India was finally advanced through the long delayed meeting between PM Narendra Modi and CA Yunus, held recently at the BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, where mutual concerns were discussed. At the meeting, Yunus presented Modi with a photograph dating back to 2015,

for repudiating the 1972 constitution. This distorted vision of the political landscape has culminated in the destruction of Bangabandhu's residence on Road 32 and further such acts of a political orientation.

The government has belatedly disowned such acts of vandalism. Yunus urged that such attacks be discontinued, but this came too late and with insufficient forcefulness to hold back those forces who aspire to rewrite our history.

The impunity thus far enjoyed by

mos

The impunity thus far enjoyed by mobs assembled to attack Awami League (AL) members and even their presumed fellow travellers has provided licence to a wider community of hoodlums interested in plunder, who can invade anyone's household by denouncing them as collaborators of the ancien régime. This impotence of the government against mob violence has further empowered a class of so-called moral policemen, who believe the new order is more congenial to their intolerant anti-pluralistic beliefs.

picturing Modi presenting him with a special award, indicating the high esteem in which Yunus was held across India. The Bangkok encounter may have concluded with parallel narratives emerging from either side, but it did signal that more regular and meaningful dialogues can be resumed. The recent decision by the Indian government to suspend transit traffic for Bangladesh's export cargoes through Indian airports, without any prior notice, was a rather unpromising signal for the improvement of relations.

Rewriting the historical narrative
Having contextualised the situation as seen from Dhaka, the evolving political situation here is far from settled or predictable. The nature and *dénouement* of the SH regime has opened up Pandora's box and let the demons of discord once again fly out. The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has emerged as a regenerated and more politically relevant force. While they project sobriety in their discourse, one of JI's main tasks is

for repudiating the 1972 constitution.

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Storm lays bare football's plight

ANISUR RAHMAN from Mymensingh

A sudden thunderstorm, heavy downpour, and bad light led to the abandonment of the Federation Cup final between Abahani and Bashundhara Kings in Mymensingh yesterday, but the chaos did more than just cut short a game -- it laid bare the cracks in the infrastructural failings haunting the country's football.

An energetic crowd witnessed a gripping first half with both teams locked at 1-1 at the Rofige Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium. Yet their anticipation turned to frustration as the game, after enduring an hour-long rain delay, was called off following 105 minutes due to bad light.

What should have been a showpiece final turned into another sorry chapter in domestic football's decline.

While Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) scrambles to rearrange the remainder of the final -- set to resume from the minute and scoreline where play stopped -- the incident raises far more pressing questions. Chief among them: Why was such a crucial match staged at a venue with no floodlights, and with limited protection against the predictable fury of pre-monsoon storms?

For all its focus on recruiting expatriate talent to bolster the national team, BFF has done little to improve the conditions at home. For all its promises of reform,



BFF's inability to ensure even basic facilities for marquee events is damning.

The scenes were farcical. A makeshift press box collapsed under the storm's pressure, leaving travelling journalists from Dhaka exposed and scrambling to do their jobs. Dugouts were blown away, forcing substitute players to sit in the open, vulnerable not just to the elements but to potential confrontations from rival supporters.

Yes, nature cannot be controlled. But it can be anticipated. Scheduling a knockout final -- with the likelihood of extra time and penalties -- in the late afternoon, during the peak of Kal Boishakhi season, and at a venue unequipped for evening play, reflects a stunning lack of foresight.

Moreover, that the stadium was chosen through a venue lottery, as claimed by BFF executive committee member Zakir Hossain Chowdhury -- also the deputy chairman of professional league committee -- only indicates the amateurish decision-making at play.

Alternative venues like the well-equipped Bashundhara Kings Arena were available, but concerns over partisan hostility -- including Mohammedan Sporting Club's repeated refusal to play there and a FIFA fine for fan misconduct -- have turned it into a diplomatic minefield, deepening football's identity crisis.

The heart of the problem is BFF's longstanding failure to develop the stadiums it uses. Meanwhile, National Sports Council-owned district grounds remain underdeveloped, despite being used extensively over the last four years due to renovations at National Stadium.

In the end, the unfinished Federation Cup final might find its way to a result. But the bigger game -- rebuilding credibility, earning fans' trust, and giving players a professional environment -- remains very much abandoned.

The entire episode raises questions about the overall state of the game across the country if even the top-tier competition is handled this poorly. And unless those at the helm acknowledge this and act, no resumption whistle will save the future of domestic football.

MSC backtracks on Hridoy's reduced suspension

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club have backtracked from the idea that Towhid Hridoy's suspension was reduced, with a club official claiming that the sentence has been postponed and the batter will have to serve another match suspension at some point this season or next season.

The Mohammedan captain was initially handed a one-match suspension and four demerit points for his first offence in altercating with on-field umpires. Later, his criticism of umpiring led to another sentence of three demerit points, which should equate to seven demerit points and two match suspensions.

However, the umpires' committee sent a memo to Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) where the sanction table had been changed so that seven demerit points equated to just a one-match suspension.

"We sent a letter and after one match [suspension], a decision was given that he has seven demerit points and, going forward, at some point this season or next season he



will be suspended for one match," Mohammedan's cricket organiser Tariqul Islam Titu said in a media briefing yesterday.

"It's not only applicable for

Mohammedan and this opportunity will be there for everyone, that the letter we have with us. Under special consideration, since he wrote to the umpires' committee or BCB [Bangladesh Cricket Board], he was given this. It's not a postponed sentence but something like that."

However, CCDM claim no letter

had been sent in relation to this. Reports surfaced of a certain club coercing CCDM to make sanction changes. When this newspaper reached out to CCDM chairman Mohammad Salauddin on whether such a letter -- as claimed by Tariqul -- was sent from CCDM to Mohammedan, he denied it.

"No. Actually, we have now gotten

a letter signed for an 80,000 taka fine. He [Hridoy] accepted his first offence, which is why there was one-match suspension which we executed. The demerit point was another matter and his suspension will take place going forward," he said.

Asked if the technical committee's convener Enamul Haque Moni's resignation had delayed the decision on the second sentence, CCDM chairman agreed that was the case.

"The sentence has been delayed but when it arrives, we will execute. I don't think Mohammedan's perception is right. If the demerit points are coming into effect, automatically the suspension would be executed and, if it happens now, it will take place and there is nothing regarding postponing the decision," he added.

However, CCDM claim no letter

Ancelotti 'very happy' at Real Madrid

REUTERS

Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti dismissed suggestions on Tuesday he is under mounting pressure at the club as they sit second in the LaLiga standings and were knocked out of the Champions League last week.

Ancelotti's future has been questioned following their Champions League quarterfinal loss to Arsenal, with multiple reports suggesting he could leave Real at the end of the season to take over the Brazil national team.

Bayer Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso and former Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp are among the names that have been linked with the top job at Real in recent weeks.

Asked if he was feeling the pressure, the Italian manager told reporters: "The club is aware that it has been a more complicated year than last year."

"Together we manage the difficulties. The honeymoon continues. I'm very happy, very happy, with a lot of pressure, but that's how it always is."

"You see success very close and it's normal for stress to increase, but stress is fuel for me, it doesn't

What to WATCH

BTV

Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe
1st Test, Day 4
Live from 10:00 am

T Sports

DPL

Abahani vs Gazi Group

PSL

Cricketers
Live from 9:00 am
IPL
Hyderabad vs Mumbai
Live from 8:00 pm
Nagorik TV
Abahani vs Gazi Group

Multan vs Islamabad
Live from 9:00 pm
Star Sports Select HD1
Premier League
Arsenal vs Crystal Palace
Live from 1:00 am
(Thursday)

AHF CUP Bangladesh edge past Thailand

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh emerged Pool B champions in the AHF Cup following a hard-fought 2-1 victory against Thailand in Jakarta, Indonesia yesterday.

The win helped the four-time defending champions stay on top of Pool B with nine points from three matches and they will finish the group stage against Sri Lanka today.

However, Mamanur Rashid's charges will be a little bit concerned about having to fight a lot to get these victories against these opponents in the second tier hockey competition of Asia.

Having started the campaign with a 5-1 win against Kazakhstan, Bangladesh scraped past hosts Indonesia 3-2 in their second match with a winning goal coming 20 seconds before the final whistle.

In the game against Thailand, the men in red and green had to wait till the 23rd minute to get their first goal, with Ashraful Islam converting a penalty corner.

Kraiwich Thawichat's field goal, however, brought parity six minutes later. But Arshad Hossain's powerful reverse hit five minutes later ensured all three points for Bangladesh, who endured some nervy moments towards the end.



Nahida breaks into top 10 in WODI bowling rankings

AGENCIES

Bangladesh's Nahida Akter has broken into the top 10 of the ICC Women's ODI Bowling Rankings for the first time following an impressive showing at the recently concluded ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier in Pakistan.

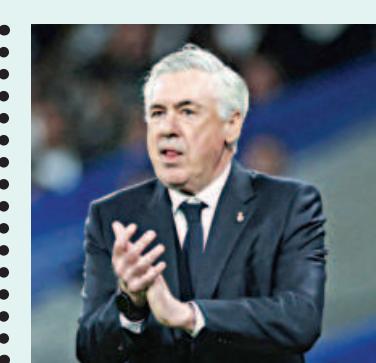
The 24-year-old left-arm spinner played a vital role in helping the Tigresses clinch one of the two World Cup spots, taking six wickets across the six-team tournament.

Her standout performance came in a high-stakes clash against Scotland in Lahore, where she struck four times -- twice in two overs early on, before returning to claim two more wickets at the death -- sealing a 34-run victory for Bangladesh.

With 69 wickets in just 54 matches, Nahida remains a cornerstone of Bangladesh's bowling attack. She had already made history in November 2023 as the first Bangladeshi woman to win the ICC Player of the Month award and was also named in the ICC Women's ODI Team of the Year.

Top 10 ICC women's ODI bowlers:

1. Sophie Ecclestone (ENG)
2. Ash Gardner (AUS)
3. Megan Schutt (AUS)
4. Deepa Sharma (IND)
5. Marizanne Kapp (SA)
6. Kim Garth (AUS)
7. Alana King (AUS)
8. Kate Cross (ENG)
9. Hayley Matthews (WI)
10. Nahida Akter (BAN)



Ancelotti's future has been questioned following their Champions League quarterfinal loss to Arsenal, with multiple reports suggesting he could leave Real at the end of the season to take over the Brazil national team.

bother me, it gives me more energy to think about more things. As long as I continue to get up in the morning, everything is fine."

Real are still chasing success on multiple fronts and sit second in the league standings with 69 points from 32 matches, four behind rivals Barcelona.

They face Barca in the Copa del Rey final this weekend, but before that they will travel to 12th-placed Getafe for a league meeting on Wednesday, where they will be without Kylian Mbappe and Ferland Mendy.

Forward Mbappe suffered an

ankle injury in Real's 2-1 quarterfinal second leg loss to Arsenal last week, while defender Mendy is recovering from a hamstring injury.

"(Mbappe and Mendy) are not ready for tomorrow, but they will train these days and I think they will both be available for Saturday's game [against Barcelona in Copa del Rey final]," Ancelotti said.

"Tomorrow's eleven will be decided taking into account the wear and tear of Sunday night (1-0 win over Athletic Bilbao) and that alone. Some are still a bit tired, but that's quite normal. We'll see tomorrow."



Invisible foes now showing their faces

Says Tarique, urges party unity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Urging unity among party rank and file to tackle the upcoming challenges, BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said many previously invisible enemies or opponents are gradually becoming visible.

"Seven or eight months ago, I told you that we would have to fight against unseen forces. Do you now understand why I said that? Today, that is proving to be true. Many of those once invisible forces, enemies, or opponents are now becoming visible," Tarique said at a programme yesterday, without elaborating.

He was speaking virtually at a training workshop titled "31 Point Framework for State Reform and Public Engagement," attended by party members from Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, and Gaibandha.

"If we are not united, and if anyone among us engages in actions not endorsed by the public, then action must be taken against them. They must be removed. We cannot maintain ties with such individuals," he said.

Tarique stressed that public support is the BNP's greatest strength and the key measure of its success.



SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Cops get whole set of new uniforms

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) has issued a comprehensive new dress code titled Police Dress Rules, 2025, detailing rank-wise uniforms and accessories for all Bangladesh Police members.

The rules were published through a gazette yesterday, repealing the previous dress code of 2004.

According to the gazette, the new official police monogram features the national flower, the Shapla (water lily), resting on water and encircled by paddy and wheat, with three jute leaves at the top. The word "Police" in Bangla appears beneath the emblem.



WORKING UNIFORM

Police officers will now wear iron-coloured shirts and coffee-coloured trousers, with separate summer (half-sleeve) and winter (full-sleeve) versions. Shirts must include six buttons, shoulder straps, and pleated pockets. Trousers will be tailored with waistband pleats and utility pockets, with the hem style varying by rank, according to the gazette.

Headdress rules specify dark blue peak caps with embroidered silver oak leaves for senior officers and blue berets or UN-style field caps for others. All caps and berets will bear rank-specific badges.

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Demanding arrears, workers who collect household waste for the Dhaka North City Corporation staged a protest on Progati Sarani yesterday by dumping garbage onto the road at Notunbazar. With heaps of garbage blocking the city thoroughfare, there was slow traffic in the area and the adjacent areas all afternoon.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



27th death anniversary of Shazneen today

STAR REPORT

Today is the 27th death anniversary of Shazneen Tasnim Rahman.

On this day in 1998, 15-year-old Shazneen was raped and brutally murdered in a premeditated manner at her home in Gulshan. At the time, Shazneen was a grade-IX student of Scholastica School.

She was the daughter of late Latifur Rahman, former chairman of Transcom Group,

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Gaza a 'land of desperation'

Says UN as 'manmade hunger' spreads in the tiny Palestinian territory; 26 killed in air strikes

AFP, Geneva

The United Nations yesterday warned that Gaza was facing deepening hunger 50 days into a total Israeli blockade on all aid entering the war-ravaged Palestinian territory.

"Gaza has become a land of desperation," Philippe Lazzarini, head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA, said on X.

"Hunger is spreading and deepening, deliberate and manmade."

After 18 months of devastating war and an Israeli blockade on aid since March 2, the UN has warned of a dire humanitarian situation for the 2.4 million inhabitants of the Palestinian territory.

Israel has accused the Palestinian militant group of diverting aid, which Hamas denies.

The heads of 12 major aid organisations warned last Thursday that "famine is not just a risk, but likely rapidly unfolding in almost all parts" of the territory.

"You can see a clear tendency towards total disaster," Jens Laerke, spokesman for the UN humanitarian agency OCHA told reporters in Geneva Tuesday.

"It is true that right now is probably the worst humanitarian situation we have seen throughout the war in Gaza."

Israeli probe into aid workers' killings not enough: PRC
1,864 killed in Gaza since Israeli military resumed offensive on March 18

must resume."

Meanwhile, Gaza's civil defence agency said that a spate of Israeli air strikes since dawn killed at least 25 people across the Hamas-run territory.

"The total number of Palestinians killed in Israeli air strikes since dawn today has risen to 25," Mohammad Mughayir, a senior official with the civil defence agency told AFP.

Nine people were killed and several others

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Rab files 2 cases over Barishal 'gunfight'
Deceased, injured among accused

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Barishal

Rab yesterday filed two cases over Monday's "gunfight" during an anti-drug drive in Barishal that left one man dead and a teen injured.

Rab 8 Senior Warrant Officer Sheikh Riazul Islam filed the cases with Agailjhara Police Station in the afternoon, said Officer-in-Charge Oliul Islam.

Each case names two individuals and accuses 12 unidentified others. The deceased and the injured in the incident are the named accused, the OC added.

One case accuses them of obstructing government duties, attacking law enforcers, and initiating the gunfight. The other case was filed for possessing drugs.

On Monday evening, Siam Molla, 18, a college student from Baheer Hat in Uzirpur upazila, was killed, and Rakib Molla, 17, an SSC examinee from the same area, was injured in the

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ATROCITIES IN CHANKHARPUL
ICT prosecutors to press charges on May 25

Ex-DMP chief, 7 others among suspects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday fixed May 25 for the prosecutors to press charges against former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman and seven other police personnel.

They are accused of killing six people in the capital's Chankharpul on August 5 last year.

The investigators submitted the probe report to the prosecutors on April 20.

Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam yesterday requested four weeks to review the probe report before formally pressing charges.

The tribunal then granted time until May 25.

According to the investigation agency, the seven other accused are Sudip Kumar Chakraborty, former DMP joint commissioner; Shah Alam Mohammad Akhtarul Islam, former additional deputy commissioner; Mohammad Imrul, former assistant commissioner (Ramma DMP); Arshad Hossain, former inspector of Shahbagh Police Station; and constables Sujon, Imaz Hossain, and Nasirul Islam.

Prosecutor Tajul previously said that Habibur and several others gave the orders while the rest directly participated in the killing of six protesters.

Four accused -- Arshad, Sujon, Imaz, and Nasirul -- are currently in custody and were produced before the tribunal yesterday.

"In this specific incident, evidence suggests that only policemen were involved. If evidence emerges suggesting that civilians or political activists were involved as well, separate charges will be pressed," Tajul told reporters.

Incidents of crimes against humanity occurred in Chankharpool area and investigations are going on, he said.

Gunmen kill 24 tourists in India's J&K

AFP, Srinagar

At least 24 people were killed in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) when gunmen opened fire on tourists yesterday, a senior police officer told AFP, with authorities calling it the worst attack on civilians in years.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi decried the "heinous act" in the summer retreat of Pahalgam, pledging the attackers "will be brought to justice".

A tour guide told AFP he reached the scene after hearing gunfire and transported some of the wounded away on horseback.

"I saw a few men lying on the ground looking like they were dead," said Waheed, who gave only one name. The attack targeted tourists in Pahalgam, which lies about 90 kilometres (55 miles) by road from the key city of Srinagar.

The senior police officer in the region, speaking on condition of anonymity, described a massacre in which at least 24 people had been killed.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, but rebels in the Muslim-majority region have waged an insurgency since 1989.

They are seeking independence or a merger with Pakistan -- which controls a smaller part of the Kashmir region and, like India, claims it in full.

The killings comes a day after Modi met with US Vice President JD Vance, who is on a four-day tour of India.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said that "the attack is much larger than anything we've seen directed at

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Family members of 22-year-old Arman Hossain Pappu were inconsolable when his body arrived at their Tejgaon Begunbari home from the hospital yesterday. The night before, he was stabbed to death allegedly by muggers near Tejgaon BG Press. He had been working at an online shop and studying electrical engineering at Dhaka Polytechnic Institute. The only son in the family, Arman was supposed to get married this Friday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

ACC moves to bring back Hasina, family members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti Corruption Commission has initiated the official process to bring back deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and six of her family members. Hasina fled the country in the face of a mass uprising last year, and is currently in India.

Briefing reporters about the move yesterday, ACC Commissioner (enquiry) Brig Gen (retd) Hafiz Ahsan Farid said, "Our process involves sending a formal request to the home ministry, which will then communicate with the foreign ministry. Through diplomatic channels, letters will be dispatched to the relevant Bangladeshi embassies or high commissions abroad, which will forward them to their counterparts in the respective host countries."

He added that the process to repatriate accused individuals living abroad has already begun.

Asked about British lawmaker Tulip Siddiq, daughter of Hasina's younger sister Sheikh Rehana,

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