



DISRUPTING OFFICE WORK

Govt employees can be punished within 8 days

Recommends draft amendment to Government Service Act-2018

BAHARAM KHAN

The interim government has moved to amend the Government Service Act 2018 to allow swift disciplinary action against its employees who will be found guilty of disrupting official activities.

The accused employees can be suspended, removed from service or demoted with only eight-day show-cause notices. The notices would be served in two phases -- first in a maximum of five days and second in three days, according to the proposed amendment.

The public administration ministry has prepared the draft amendment in the wake of disruptions in civil administration since the July-August mass uprising. The home ministry also requested the amendment.

Five senior officials from the public administration and home ministries with knowledge of the draft confirmed the development to The Daily Star.

In the existing act or rules, there is no provision to mete out swift punishment to the public servants for major or minor offences. They can be punished if found guilty in a lengthy investigation process, said public administration experts.

They spoke to The Daily Star off the record as the matter is sensitive.

The draft amendment will be placed before the cabinet once it gets the go-ahead from Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, who has kept the public administration ministry under his watch.

In the existing act or rules, there is no provision to mete out swift punishment to the public servants for major or minor offences. They can be punished if found guilty in a lengthy investigation process, said public administration experts.

However, the act permits the government to retire public servants without explanation once they complete 25 years in service.

The civil administration went through a period of disorder after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5 last year. A number of cadre officials demonstrated for promotion and other personal benefits by skipping work.

Processions were brought out at the Secretariat in Dhaka almost every day, while scuffles were also reported. Even the offices of secretaries of different ministries were locked up.

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Dhaka North City Corporation workers using excavators to demolish illegal structures during an eviction drive along Haikka Canal in Mohammadpur's Katur area yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Poverty may worsen: World Bank

'Political tensions over polls likely to affect economic recovery'

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh is confronting a potential rise in poverty and inequality as stubborn inflation, job losses and a slowing economy erode household welfare, according to a World Bank report.

The national poverty rate is projected to rise to 22.9 percent in 2025, up from 18.7 percent in 2022, while the share of people living in extreme poverty -- those earning below \$2.15 a day -- is expected to nearly double to 9.3 percent and push an additional 3 million people into this group. However, the poverty rate is forecast to ease in 2026.

GDP growth forecast lowered to 3.3% for FY25

An additional 3m people may go into extreme poverty

Export growth may slow due to global trade disruptions

"High inflation and job losses have strained economic welfare, particularly for low-income households who spend a larger share of their income on

essential goods," the World Bank said in its Bangladesh Development Update released yesterday.

Nearly 4 percent of workers lost their jobs in the second half of 2024, while wages fell by 2 percent for low-skilled workers and 0.5 percent for high-skilled workers.

Bangladesh's labour force is showing signs of distress. The labour force participation rate declined to 59.2 percent from 60.9 percent, driven largely by a sharp fall in female participation, which dropped from 41.6 percent to 38.9 percent. The number of employed fell by 1.6 million.

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Pile pressure on Myanmar for Rohingya return

Yunus urges Qatar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday said Qatar can use its good offices to exert pressure on Myanmar for starting repatriation of Rohingyas without any further delay.

Given the renewed international geopolitical and geostrategic scenario, Qatar can strongly express their solidarity to resolve the issue and be proactive to engage the OIC countries to raise more funds and impose pressure on the international community to advocate for the repatriation of the Rohingyas, he said.

Prof Yunus made the comments at a roundtable discussion on "Social and Environmental Challenges around Forcibly Displaced Populations: The Case of the Rohingyas".

He is on a four-day visit to Qatar to attend Earthna Summit 2025.

Qatar Foundation Chief Executive Officer Sheikh Hind bint Hamad Al Thani, also the sister of Qatar emir and the host

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Battery-run rickshaw drivers throwing brick chunks at police during clashes in the Outer Signal area of Chandgaon in Chattogram yesterday. The drivers blocked the street during a demonstration against the seizure of their vehicles and alleged police harassment.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

KASHMIR TERROR ATTACK

India blames Pakistan, downgrades ties

Expels diplomats, suspends Indus water treaty, tells Pakistanis to leave India

STAR REPORT

India announced a raft of measures to downgrade its ties with Pakistan yesterday, a day after suspected militants killed 26 men at a tourist destination in Kashmir in the worst attack on civilians in the country in nearly two decades.

Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri told a media briefing that the cross-border linkages of the attack had been "brought out" at a special meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), headed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after which it was decided to act against Pakistan.

He said New Delhi would suspend with immediate effect the bilateral treaty of 1960 on the sharing of the trans-border Indus river.

"The Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 will be held in abeyance with immediate effect, until Pakistan credibly and

CHIEF ADVISER, GOVT CONDEMN J&K ATTACK -- PAGE 2

Pakistan convenes security committee after Indian measures

Tourists flee India-administered Kashmir after 26 killed

'Resistance Front' claims responsibility

Modi cuts short Saudi visit to attend security cabinet meet

irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism," Misri told reporters in New Delhi.

The 1960 Indus Water Treaty gave India and Pakistan three Himalayan

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BNP seeks reform, not revenge

Says Tarique

UNB, Rangpur

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said his party does not want to take revenge on their oppressors, but wants to implement its 31-point reform proposal, aimed at serving the interests of people.

"For the last 15-16 years since 1/11, you all endured unspeakable torture and abuse. You were subjected to false cases, and you were oppressed by the police or by autocrats and

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Haor farmers rush Boro harvest amid flash flood fears

DWOHA CHOWDHURY and MINTU DESHWARA

Boro harvesting is underway across the Haor regions of Sylhet Division and Netrokona, with farmers racing to cut their crops amid fears of flash floods.

Farmers in four Sylhet districts are harvesting even before their paddy fully ripens, anxious after past flash floods, especially the devastating one in 2017. Recent years have only deepened their fears.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), 4.97 lakh hectares of Boro have been cultivated in Sylhet Division this year – 2.76 lakh hectares in deep Haors. Sunamganj leads with 2.23 lakh hectares, followed by Habiganj (1.23 lakh), Sylhet (87 thousand hectares), and Moulvibazar (62 thousand hectares). In Netrokona, 1.85 lakh hectares were cultivated, with 41,000 in Haors.

Harvesting is in full swing despite uneven ripening caused by early drought and late recession of last season's floodwater. Most paddy is only 70–90 percent ripe.

So far, 1.75 lakh hectares (35 percent) have been harvested in Sylhet Division, including 1.47 lakh hectares in Haor areas, accounting for 56 percent of cultivation in the Haors.



DAE data shows harvest progress in the low-lying Haor areas at 51 percent in Sunamganj, 53 percent in Habiganj, 50 percent in Sylhet, 70 percent in Moulvibazar, and 58 percent in Netrokona.

On April 15, the Sunamganj administration issued a high alert based on Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) forecasts, urging immediate harvesting of ripe paddy. All official leave was suspended until harvest completion.



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

However, the Flood Forecast and Warning Centre (FFWC) noted only minimal flood risk, despite expected mid to heavy rainfall.

"I harvested early, even though my paddy was only 80–90 percent ripe," said Eklasur Rahman from Sunamganj. "Some even harvested at 70–80 percent."

FFWC executive engineer Sarder Uday Raihan clarified, "We forecasted rain, not floods. Long-term flash flood prediction is difficult due to weather unpredictability."

"We regularly share a three-day flood forecast for general information and a seven-day forecast for officials to act before the time, considering the Boro harvest of the Haor areas," he added.

Similarly, Mamun Hawlader, executive engineer of BWDB in Sunamganj and general secretary of the district committee to protect Boro harvest, said that only rain, not flooding, was forecasted, and the harvest advisory was precautionary.

"The administration urged farmers to harvest only 'ripe' crops, because the rainfall might submerge low-lying areas," he added.

Amid the confusion, the FFWC yesterday forecast mid to heavy rainfall in the northeastern region of the country but stated a 'minimal' chance of flash flood.

Meanwhile, farmers in Moulvibazar and Habiganj voiced concern as drought, pest infestations, and a shortage of labour threaten their harvest.

Ahmed Mia, a farmer from Kawadighi Haor in Moulvibazar, said that prolonged drought and lack of rainfall have dried up vast Haor lands.

However, not all farmers anticipate losses.

Saddam Hossain from Hakaluki Haor said his yield is good, with half his 3-acre field harvested using combine harvesters.

However, labour shortage remains a major issue.

Rafiqul Islam of Karab village in Habiganj's Lakhai upazila said that he couldn't harvest ripe crops as there was no one to harvest.

"Local labourers are demanding higher wages,

and even then, they're hard to find. We are waiting for combine harvesters to arrive," he said.

Over 2,000 combine harvesters are active across Sylhet Division, DAE reports. 1,850 of them are local. Harvesting costs range from Tk 1,400–2,000 per bigha.

Adding to worries, many farmers are selling their crops early at low prices, fearing they will not get a fair price.

"I don't have cash in hand. So, I'm selling my paddy in advance. The middlemen are offering only Tk 950–1,000 per maund (37.5 kilogrammes)," said Tofayel Khan, a farmer from the Dingapota Haor area in Netrokona's Mohanganj upazila.

Others echoed concerns about poor market rates.

Shyamal Sarker, a farmer from Bagbari in Sunamganj's Dharmpasha, said he has harvested half of his 2-acre field, but the low market price is making him worried. He said, last year, farmers got Tk 1,100 per maund at the start of the season and later it rose to Tk 1,400, barely meeting the production cost.

However, DAE officials, quoting farmers, said, due to favourable weather, this year's yield is better than the last two years.

"We've harvested from the most vulnerable Haors, so floods won't do major damage," said Md Nuruzzaman, deputy director of DAE in Netrokona.

Bimal Chandra Shome, additional director of the DAE in Sylhet Division, agreed.

"Though only a few paddy fields were affected by drought and insects, overall harvest is very good this year. We aim to complete the harvest by April 30. We urge farmers to begin harvesting once their paddy is around 90 percent ripe. This is just a precautionary measure to stay on the safe side, considering the flood risk," he said.

He also said there was no shortage of labourers and the number of combine harvesters is sufficient for the harvest.

[Reporting by Jaydul Islam, Netrokona Correspondent]

Chief adviser, govt condemn J&K attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday expressed deep condolences over the loss of lives in an attack by gunmen in India's Kashmir.

In a message posted on his official Facebook page, Yunus said, "Excellency, please accept my deepest condolences over the loss of lives resulting from the terrorist attack that took place in Pahalgam, Kashmir."

"We strongly condemn this heinous act. Let me reaffirm Bangladesh's resolute stand against terrorism," he added.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a separate

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Beijing ready to work with Dhaka to advance economic globalisation

Says Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

China stands ready to work with Bangladesh and all nations to advance economic globalisation for greater openness and inclusiveness with balanced benefits, said Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen.

Referring to the recent US tariffs on all its trading partners, including China and Bangladesh, he said this severely infringes upon the legitimate rights and interests of all countries, violates WTO rules, undermines the rules-based multilateral trading system, and severely disrupts the global economic order.

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S ALAM ASSETS

Court orders confiscation of 9,646 kathas

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission to confiscate 9,646.04 kathas of immovable properties owned by S Alam Group Chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam, his family members, and their beneficiaries over corruption allegations.

The market value of the properties stands at Tk 407.21 crore.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Tahasina Munabil Haque, who leads the inquiry team, appealed in this regard.

ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir moved the application on behalf of the anti-graft body.

S Alam, his family members, and their beneficiaries were trying to transfer ownership of the properties, said the ACC official, adding that he learnt from a credible source. "So, an order is needed to prevent them from doing so."

India blames

FROM PAGE 1

rivers each and the right to hydropower and irrigation resources.

Misri added that the border crossing at Atari-Wagah border "will be closed with immediate effect", although those with valid travel documents may return to Pakistan before May 1.

Three defence advisers in the Pakistani high commission in New Delhi were declared persona non grata and asked to leave, Misri said, adding that the overall strength of the Indian high commission in Islamabad will be reduced to 30 from 55.

India also announced a halt to visas for Pakistani nationals under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme, our New Delhi correspondent quoted him as saying.

Misri said India is also withdrawing its army, air and navy advisers from its High Commission in Islamabad.

He said any visa under the SAARC Visa Exemption Service issued in the past to Pakistani nationals is deemed cancelled. He also asked any Pakistani national currently in India under SVES visa to leave the country within 48 hours.

"The CCS reviewed the overall security situation and directed all forces to maintain high vigil and resolved that the perpetrators of the Pahalgam attack will be brought to justice and their sponsors held to account," Misri said.

"India will be unrelenting in the pursuit of those who have committed acts of terror, or conspired to make them possible," he added.

At least 17 people were also injured in the shooting that took place on Tuesday in the Baisaran valley in the Pahalgam area of the scenic, Himalayan federal territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The dead included 25 Indians and one Nepalese national, police said.

It was the worst attack on civilians in India since the 2008 Mumbai shootings, and shattered the relative calm in Kashmir, where tourism has boomed as anti-India insurgency has waned in recent years.

Meanwhile, Pakistan yesterday said the government has decided to convene a rare meeting of its National Security Committee to respond to diplomatic measures imposed by India over the attack in Kashmir.

The committee – composed of senior civil and military officials and summoned only in cases of external threat or major terror attack – will meet today, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, who is also the foreign minister, said on X.

A little-known militant group, the "Kashmir Resistance," claimed responsibility for the attack in a social media message. It expressed discontent that more than 85,000 "outsiders" had been settled in the region, spurring a "demographic change".

Govt employees can be punished

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All these incidents for several weeks led to the delay or disruption in government initiatives, policies, and services.

The proposed amendment is aimed at ensuring discipline during such periods. The act will have provisions similar to those in the "Government Servants (Special Provisions) Ordinance, 1979", which was repealed in 2018 with the passage of the Public Service Act, said the officials.

Abdul Awal Majumder, a former secretary and public administration expert, told The Daily Star that the special provisions in the ordinance were "very strict". Some even described it as a "black law".

But in the current administrative context, such stricter provisions have become necessary, he said.

Asked about the proposed provision of eight days' time for the employees to submit an explanation, Awal said if the government wants, it can terminate any employee found guilty of an offence with an eight-day notice.

"There is no requirement for Public Service Commission's opinion or an investigation in such cases," he said.

OFFENCES, PUNISHMENTS

According to the draft, disciplinary action can be taken against any government employee who engages in activities that cause dissatisfaction among colleagues, disrupt discipline, obstruct others' work; remains absent without approved leave or valid reason or refrains from performing duties; provokes others to abstain from work, or prevents them from carrying out their duties; and obstructs another from attending office or performing their assigned tasks.

For these offences, the proposed amendment has three types of disciplinary action: dismissal, removal, and demotion or salary reduction.

The draft outlines the procedure for punishing government employees in question.

It says an accused employee will be served notice and he or she will have to respond to the allegation or attend a hearing in person within two to five days of being notified.

If the accused official fails to respond within the stipulated time or is found guilty even after giving a response, the authorities will impose a specific penalty and provide the employee with an opportunity to show cause within three days.

In case the accused fails to respond to the show-cause notice, or if the response is deemed unsatisfactory to

the authorities, a final penalty will be imposed. However, the draft allows the accused to appeal the decision within seven days to the appropriate authority or, in special cases, to the president within 30 days.

Sources involved with the matter said that under the 1979 ordinance, appeals against penalties could not be challenged in court. The proposed draft of the Government Service Act also does not have any such provision.

The draft states that the president's decision on the appeal will be considered final.

WHY AMEND NOW

A home ministry official said that the involvement of public servants, including cadre officers, in chaotic incidents following the uprising has raised questions.

Due to the absence of a proper legal mechanism, it has not been possible to take strict measures against them, which has hampered the expected improvement in law and order.

"In many cases, government employees are not complying with official directives or are tactically distancing themselves from their responsibilities. This lack of discipline among public servants is slowing down the pace of government operations," the official said.

To address the problem, the public administration ministry has been requested to reinstate the 1979 ordinance.

Besides, several public servants have still not returned to work after the July uprising, which is why many want a stringent law that can hand out punishment quickly to such employees.

As many as 187 police personnel, from DIG to constable ranks, have yet to return to duty. As the government lacks the legal authority to take stern action against those in service for less than 25 years, it feels the absence of a stricter legal framework, the official said.

MIXED REACTIONS

Public administration experts and serving officials have given mixed reactions over the necessity of the proposed amendment.

Firoz Miah, former additional secretary, told The Daily Star that such a law is necessary to maintain order among the bureaucrats.

"In recent times, we have witnessed unprecedented chaos in the name of protests, often driven by personal interests. Discipline is yet to be restored in the administration due to the incompetence and weakness of the public administration. Therefore, the

government may be trying to bring back provisions of the repressive ordinance," he said.

"There has probably never been such incompetent leadership in public administration since independence," added Firoz.

A senior official at the public administration ministry, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the amendment was necessary.

"Most of the strict laws introduced during Sheikh Hasina's long tenure have been gradually weakened, which increased the tendency of misconduct among government officials," the official said.

"The government has the authority to forcefully retire any public servant after 25 years of service without showing cause, but this provision is rarely used," the official added.

An official from the Chief Adviser's Office said on condition of anonymity that the law will only be applied to those who violate the rules. Therefore, there is no reason for honest officials to be afraid.

Meanwhile, some serving officials questioned the rationale of enforcing an ordinance from the military regime era, suggesting that such a move might heighten anxiety among civil servants.

They said enacting a stringent law could create trouble for officials who held key positions under previous administrations.

A joint secretary from the Local Government Division argued that the move to amend the act would curb freedom of thought among government employees, thereby infringing on their constitutional rights.

Citing article 39(l) of the constitution, he said, "Freedom of thought and conscience is guaranteed."

"When the Special Powers Act of 1979 was enacted, the constitution was under suspension. The current government claims to uphold the rule of law, so why does it favour such a repressive law now?"

An official from the law ministry said, "A law with such special provisions is not prepared with good intention. The motives behind them are often questionable."

Contacted, Additional Secretary (Rules) ANM Moinul Islam of the public administration ministry declined to comment on the matter.

Mokhles Ur Rahman, senior secretary of the ministry, told The Daily Star, "The matter is under the jurisdiction of the government."

Pile pressure on Myanmar

FROM PAGE 1

of Earthna Summit, joined the discussion. Prof Yunus said Qatar was among the first few countries to immediately provide assistance and support after the Rohingya crisis began in 2017. Qatar also took strong diplomatic positions on the issue in different international forums.

Prof Yunus said Bangladesh is currently hosting about 1.3 million Rohingyas, while 32,000 newborns are being added yearly.

He said prolonged stay of the Rohingyas poses enormous challenges for Bangladesh and making these Rohingyas frustrated. "Rise in criminal activities in the camps and attempts of illegal migration are clear signs of desperation among them. If the problem persists, it may affect the security and stability of the entire region and jeopardise development initiatives."

Despite numerous challenges and constraints, Bangladesh is giving shelter to such a huge number of Rohingyas only on humanitarian considerations. "Bangladesh considers sustainable repatriation as the only solution to the current crisis."

Bangladesh will organise a "High-Level Conference on the Situation of Rohingya Muslims and Other Minorities in Myanmar" under UN auspices, probably in September 2025 in New York.

Bangladesh expects high-level political participation and cooperation from Qatar in the conference, the chief adviser said.

Yunus said ongoing justice and accountability initiatives in International Court of Justice (ICJ), the investigation of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the activities of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar (IIMM) regarding the atrocities committed against Rohingyas are "very crucial".

BNP seeks reform, not revenge

FROM PAGE 1

their cohorts... We do not want to take that revenge through oppression. We do not want to do what they did," he said while virtually addressing four workshops.

The BNP leader said the implementation of the party's 31-point reform proposal would serve as the means of reprisal against those who oppressed BNP leaders and activists.

"We want to take revenge for the torture and oppression that you endured in the past through the implementation of the 31-point," he said.

Tarique said, "I want to take revenge for the torture and oppression that was inflicted on me, the imprisonment that I served, the oppression and imprisonment that was inflicted on my mother, and the

Attributing the crimes to Myanmar/officials of Myanmar will also be a crucial tool to build the confidence of Rohingyas for their repatriation to Rakhine.

In ICJ, the Gambia submitted its memorial on October 23, 2020, furnishing reliable and credible evidence against Myanmar.

The case is expected to be in its merit phase this year. Law firm Foley Hoag informed that after successful completion of the three phases (Provisional, Objection, and Merit phases) of the court proceedings, they would request the ICJ for repatriation by the Myanmar government to the victims of the genocide.

The Gambian government is undertaking concerted efforts to secure necessary funding from OIC member states. OIC has so far raised \$2.77 million, with Bangladesh being the most significant contributor, worth \$0.7 million.

Considering the severe budgetary constraints to meet up the expenditures of the ongoing judicial proceedings pending with the ICJ, as an affluent member of the OIC, Qatar may be requested to make financial contribution to the OIC fund for Rohingyas, created to meet the expenditure of the case and to remain seized with the issue to maintain the momentum.

The Qatar Foundation CEO expressed her willingness to visit Bangladesh soon.

During a high-level meeting and luncheon hosted by Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Saoud bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, Prof Yunus has called for deeper economic cooperation with Qatar, inviting Qatari investment across key sectors of Bangladesh.

He offered an exclusive economic zone for the manufacturers of the kingdom, including defence equipment plants.

way my brother was killed, through the implementation of the 31 points."

The BNP Training Affairs Committee arranged the workshops titled '31-Point State Structure Reform Proposal and Public Engagement' in Rangpur City, Rangpur and Nilphamari districts, and Saidpur upazila.

Tarique called upon his party colleagues to take the party's 31-point proposals to the doorsteps of people across the country, regardless of their political affiliation or opinion, and to mobilise public support in favour of the reform agenda.

He said the people of the country believe BNP can deliver positive outcomes, as they trust the party. "We all have the responsibility to uphold that trust, and unity is essential to do so," he said.

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PARVEZ MURDER
Two including
prime accused
arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers yesterday arrested two youths, including the prime accused, in connection with the murder of Jahidul Islam Parvez, a student of Primeasia University.

The prime accused, Meheraj Islam, 20, was arrested by Rab from Gaibandha, while another accused, Mahathir Hasan, 20, was arrested by a team of Banani police from Chattogram, said Banani Police Station Officer-in-Charge Russel Sarwar.

"A team of Banani police went to Chattogram and arrested Mahathir. Efforts are underway to arrest the other accused and those involved in the incident," the OC said.

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On the eve of the 12th anniversary of the Rana Plaza tragedy, relatives of victims and labour organisation leaders light candles at the site in memory of those who lost their lives. *Inset*, a file photo of rescuers working at the site after the tragedy took place in Savar on April 24, 2013.

PHOTO: AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH

**SC scraps graft**
case against
Yunus, six
others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday dismissed the proceedings of a corruption case against Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, chairman of Grameen Telecom, and six other officials.

A four-member bench, led by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed, delivered the verdict after allowing an appeal, filed by Yunus and the six others, challenging a High Court order that had upheld their indictment in the case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

The full text of the Supreme Court's verdict, which will provide detailed reasoning, is yet to be released.

The six Grameen Telecom officials are Managing Director Nazmul Islam and Directors Ashraful Hassan, Naznin Sultana, Md Shahjahan, Nurjahan Begum, and SM Huzzatul Islam Latif.

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12 YEARS OF RANA PLAZA TRAGEDY**Ensure long-term**
support for survivors
Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Survivors of Rana Plaza tragedy, alongside rights activists and legal experts, yesterday criticised the slow pace of trial proceedings, blaming past political interference and lack of urgency.

Speaking at a discussion titled "Rana Plaza Bhaban Dhawongsho: Bicharer Opekkhay Ek Jug" at Jatiya Press Club, Abul Kalam Khan, additional public prosecutor of Dhaka district, alleged that the previous government had protected those responsible.

"For years, the case made little progress. Only 93 witnesses testified in eight years. Many of the accused, including the building owner, were granted bail," he said.

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Victims still await justice
as trials drag on

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER

Twelve years have passed since the Rana Plaza collapse, yet the trials of two related cases remain incomplete at a Dhaka court, mainly due to the repeated absence of prosecution witnesses.

Frustrated by the prolonged delay, survivors and victims' families said they will not be able to see justice in their lifetime.

At least 1,136 people, mostly garment workers, were killed and over 2,500 were injured when the nine-storey building collapsed in Savar on April 24, 2013, marking the deadliest garment factory disaster in history.

In 2016, the murder trial against 41 accused, including building owner Sohel Rana, began. However, proceedings in another case – filed for violating building codes – have not yet started.

On July 18, 2016, the Dhaka district and sessions judge's court framed charges against the accused in the murder case. Since then, only 94 of the 594 prosecution witnesses have testified, according to the prosecution.

The court recorded statements of witness Nuruzzaman Dolon, former

secretary of Rana Plaza Owners' Association, on February 12 this year. Since then, no witnesses have testified in the court.

On April 15, the court issued non-bailable arrest warrants against 15 witnesses and set May 15 as the next date for witness statements.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Public Prosecutor Md Iqbal Hossain said witnesses are now being summoned to testify properly, and non-bailable arrest warrants are being issued against those who fail to appear.

"We are taking steps to finish the trial without delay," he said, adding, "Some witnesses testified but did not give statements properly before the court. We declared them hostile," he said.

A day after the incident, Wali Ashraf Khan, sub-inspector of Saver Police Station, filed the murder case against Sohel Rana, also a former Jubo League leader, and several others.

On May 24, 2015, CID's Senior Assistant Superintendent Bijay Krishna Kar pressed charges against Sohel Rana, his parents Abdul Khaleque and Morjina, and 38 others.

Of the 41 accused, only Sohel Rana

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Timely polls under
interim govt doubtful

Says Mirza Abbas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member Mirza Abbas yesterday expressed doubts over the possibility of the upcoming national election being held on time.

Addressing a discussion organised by Ganatantra Forum at Jatiya Press Club, he alleged that several individuals close to the chief adviser are trying to disrupt the electoral process.

Mirza Abbas alleged that both government officials and members of the advisory council were attempting to misguide the CA and steer him away from the right path.

"This is my personal opinion, not the party's stance... There's a saying in English: 'Hope for the best, think for the worst.' I hope for something good, but thinking of the bad, it seems like – perhaps they won't hold the election very soon....," said the BNP leader.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

**Hills more peaceful**
than before
Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chittagong Hill Tracts are now more peaceful than before, said Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday.

He made the remarks while speaking to reporters at the Chattogram Circuit House after a closed-door views-exchange meeting with senior officials of the Chattogram Range Police, Chattogram Metropolitan Police, and representatives from the army, navy, and Border Guard Bangladesh.

Regarding the recent abduction of five Chittagong University students in the hill tracts, the adviser said such incidents are not unique to the region.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 7

**Do not block roads**
with demos: DMP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police has urged all groups and individuals to refrain from blocking roads during demonstrations, saying such actions are worsening traffic congestion and causing immense public suffering.

In a statement yesterday, DMP Deputy Commissioner (Media and Public Relations) Talebur Rahman said different groups and vested quarters have recently been blocking roads at will in the name of pressing demands or staging protests, causing severe traffic congestion and immense suffering to commuters, including students and office goers.

Such road blockades are also causing difficulties for outbound air passengers and transportation of critically ill patients, said the statement.



The capital's Jirani canal in Khilgaon Nandipara has long been a victim of encroachment and pollution. The waterbody now resembles a drain due to indifference of the authorities concerned.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Student bodies gear
up for Jucusu polls**Concerns remain over fairness, timely execution**

SAKIB AHMED

As Jahangirnagar University inches closer to the long-anticipated Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union (Jucusu) elections, student organisations are intensifying preparations and engaging in discussions over nominations and strategic alliances.

Still, doubts persist about the timely and fair conduct of the polls.

Initially, the election schedule was expected on February 1, according to the university's roadmap.

However, following recommendations from the Environment Council, a body tasked with monitoring the electoral atmosphere, and due to disagreements among student bodies, the announcement was delayed.

Instead, a 10-member committee was formed to review and amend the Jucusu and

Polls postponed from original Feb 1 schedule
Elections set to be held by May 21
Schedule due end of April
Students want VC removed as Jucusu president
Voter list, code of conduct in progress

hall union charters.

On February 7, the vice chancellor issued a notice confirming elections would be held no later than May 21, with the schedule to be published in the last week of April.

Prapti Taposi, organiser of Jahangirnagar Bachao Andolon, said her coalition is in talks with various cultural and social bodies. "We're skeptical," she said. "There are still faculty members loyal to the ousted regime..."

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) echoed the concern, while projecting confidence in their groundwork. "We've won Jucusu elections before. Students trust us," said

Jahir Uddin Babor, convener of JU JCD.

However, he questioned the administration's impartiality, noting that BCL members involved in past attacks

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

According to the UN

"To accelerate progress, we must support mothers and adolescents, improve nutrition, promote healthy birth spacing, and raise awareness to end preventable newborn and maternal deaths," she added.

Timely polls

FROM PAGE 3

A 12-member delegation of Ganoforum met BNP leader Amir Khasru and Vice-Chairman Barkatullah Bulu.

Ensure long-term

FROM PAGE 3

On compensation and rehabilitation, Sifat said victims of Rana Plaza -- and other workplace disasters like Tazreen -- should receive adequate

Taslima Akhter, a commission member and labour organiser, said, "Impunity has thrived for 15 years. Even after Rana Plaza, many accused remain free. We need unity to demand justice."

Victims still await justice as trials

FROM PAGE 3

VICTIMS STILL WAIT FOR JUSTICE

Nilufar Yasmin, who used to work as a sewing operator on the fifth floor, was rescued nine and a half

hours after the collapse

Monir Hossain, a former worker on the fourth floor, was rescued after nine days. He suffered eye and spinal injuries.

[Our Savar correspondent contributed to this report.]

Two including

FROM PAGE 3

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

The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd. (SPCBL)
Gazipur-1703

Local/International e-Tender

International e-Tender is invited in The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd. (SPCBL)'s e-Tender site <https://spcbltender.bb.org.bd> for procurement of the following item for SPCBL as per e-Tender schedule. Necessary information is given below:

e-Tender No.	Nature of e-Tender	Name of item	Date of publish	Last date & time for submission of e-Tender	Date & time for opening of e-Tender
42/2024-2025	Local	Supply of 1,200.00 kgs Stapling Wire	24.04.2025	28.05.2025 11:00am	28.05.2025 11:15am
43/2024-2025	International	Supply of 1,200.00 kgs Stapling Wire	24.04.2025	28.05.2025 11:00am	28.05.2025 11:15am

For more details, please visit/contact the followings:
 Website: www.spcbl.org.bd
 Cell No. +8801552476764, +8801742453378
 Telephone: +88-02-996695110-15
 Fax: +88-02-996695772-3
 E-mail: info@spcbl.org.bd
 e-Tender site: <https://spcbltender.bb.org.bd>

Shafayet Arefin
Shafayet Arefin
 General Manager (Foreign Purchase)
 Phone: +88-02223375571

GD-967

Student bodies gear

Contacted, VC Prof Dr Mohammad Kamrul Ahsan said they still need

to hold meetings with the Environment Council and student bodies for holding Jucsu election.

"If the campus environment is deemed suitable by the council and intelligence agencies, and if student bodies maintain a positive approach, then the election will take place within the announced timeframe," he hoped.

SC scraps

FROM PAGE 3

Contacted, Barrister Abdullah-Al-Mamun, principal lawyer for Dr Yunus and the six others, said following the Appellate Division's verdict, it has been proved that the case filed against his clients was false, baseless and fabricated, and that the HC verdict was wrong.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
প্রধান বন সংরক্ষকের দপ্তর
বন অধিদপ্তর
বন ভবন, আগারগাঁও, শেরেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।

রচনা প্রতিযোগিতা

বন অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক আয়োজিত জাতীয় বৃক্ষরোপণ অভিযান ও বৃক্ষমেলা ২০২৫ উপলক্ষে বৃক্ষরোপণ, বৃক্ষের পরিচর্যা, বন, বনাগ্রাণি, জীববৈচিত্র্য সংরক্ষণ ও বৃক্ষের উপকারিতা সম্পর্কে সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে স্কুল, কলেজ, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় এবং মাদ্রাসা পর্যায়ের ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের মধ্যে রচনা প্রতিযোগিতার আয়োজন করা হয়েছে। সারাদেশের আগ্রহী ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদেরকে নিম্নবর্ণিত নিয়মাবলী ও শর্ত মোতাবেক মোট ৫ (পাঁচ) টি গুপে রচনা প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

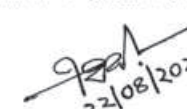
গুপ	রচনার বিষয়বস্তু	সর্বোচ্চ শব্দ সংখ্যা
১. 'ক' গুপঃ স্কুল পর্যায়ের অধ্যয়নরত	"পরিচরিত বনায়ন করি সবুজ বাংলাদেশ গড়ি"	৫০০
২. 'খ' গুপঃ কলেজ পর্যায়ের অধ্যয়নরত		৭৫০
৩. 'গ' গুপঃ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কলেজ/বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় পর্যায়ের অধ্যয়নরত		১০০০
৪. 'ঘ' গুপঃ মাদ্রাসা পর্যায়ের অধ্যয়নরত		৫০০
৫. 'ঙ' গুপঃ সিনিয়র মাদ্রাসা পর্যায়ের অধ্যয়নরত		৭৫০

শর্তাবলী/নিয়মাবলী :

- আগ্রহী ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদেরকে রচনা অথবা ইংরেজী ভাষায় উল্লিখিত বিষয়ে রচনা স্বহস্তে লিখতে হবে।
- ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের অবশ্যই অধ্যয়নের প্রমাণস্বরূপ নিজ নিজ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধানের প্রত্যয়ন পত্র রচনার সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।
- সুশাসিতকৃত রচনার মূলকপি এবং শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ২(দুই) কপি ছবিসহ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ডাকযোগে অথবা সরাসরি নিম্নবর্ণিত ঠিকানায় আগামী ২০.০৫.২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে অবশ্যই পৌঁছাতে হবে। বিলম্বে পৌঁছালে রচনা গ্রহণ করা হবেনা।
- প্রতিযোগীর নাম, শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ও ঠিকানা, শ্রেণী, পিতা/মাতা/অভিভাবকের নাম ও যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা, টেলিফোন/মোবাইল নম্বর বাংলায় ও ইংরেজীতে আলাদা কাগজে লিপিবদ্ধ করে রচনার সাথে পাঠাতে হবে।
- ঘাসের উপর প্রতিযোগিতার "গুপ" উল্লেখ করে এবং "রচনা প্রতিযোগিতা" কথাটি লিখতে হবে। প্রত্যেক "গুপ" এ প্রথম, দ্বিতীয় ও তৃতীয় স্থান অধিকারীকে পুরস্কার প্রদান করা হবে এবং
- রচনার শব্দ সংখ্যা ১০% এর অধিক হলে রচনা মূল্যায়নের জন্য বিবেচিত হবে না এবং ১০% এর মধ্যে হলে ৯০ নম্বর খরে মুদ্রায়ন করা হবে।
- ঘ ও ঙ নম্বর গুপে উল্লিখিত মাদ্রাসা পর্যায়ের অধ্যয়নরত ছাত্র/ছাত্রীরা কোরআন ও হাদীসের আলোকে বৃক্ষরোপণ ও জীববৈচিত্র্যের গুরুত্ব রচনার মধ্যে ফুটিয়ে তুলবে।

রচনা প্রেরণের ঠিকানা :

লিগ্যাল ইউনিট, কক্ষ নং-৪০২, বন ভবন,
 শেরেবাংলা নগর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭
 ফোন : ০২-৫৫০০৬৭৮০ (অফিস)
 মোবাইল : ০১৭১৪-২১৬৯৭৪
 ই-মেইল : dcf-lu@bforest.gov.bd


 (মোঃ এনামুল হক হুইয়া)
 উপবন সংরক্ষক
 লিগ্যাল ইউনিট,
 বন ভবন, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা
 ও
 সদস্য-সচিব
 রচনা প্রতিযোগিতা আয়োজক উপ-কমিটি
 জাতীয় বৃক্ষরোপণ অভিযান ও বৃক্ষমেলা ২০২৫



Dhaka South City Corporation
Office of the Executive Engineer
Waste Management Department
Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka.
www.dhakasouthcity.gov.bd

Date: 23.04.2025

Memo No. 46.207.000.12.05.5524.2025

Re-e-Tender Notice

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

Sl. No.	Package No.	Identification of Lot	Tender ID No.	Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time
1.	dsc/wmd/2024-25/2/P53	Cleaning Work of Pipe drain & Open drain at Ward-53 Under Zone-5, DSCC (Fiscal Year 2024-2025).	1098745	07.05.2025 up to 05:00 PM	08.05.2025 up to 2:00 PM
2.	dsc/wmd/2024-25/2/P67	Cleaning Work of Pipe drain & Open drain at Ward-67 Under Zone-8, DSCC (Fiscal Year 2024-2025).	1098746	07.05.2025 up to 05:00 PM	08.05.2025 up to 2:00 PM
3.	dsc/wmd/2024-25/2/P68	Cleaning Work of Pipe drain & Open drain at Ward-68 Under Zone-8, DSCC (Fiscal Year 2024-2025).	1098747	07.05.2025 up to 05:00 PM	08.05.2025 up to 2:00 PM

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 e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's Branch. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


 (Mohammad Golam Kibria)
 Executive Engineer
 Waste Management Department
 Dhaka South City Corporation.
 e-mail: xenwm@dsc.gov.bd

ডিসিসিসি/পিআরডি/২৮৭/২০২৪-২০২৫ (৬৪৪)

Hit by train, 3 die in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Three boys died after being hit by a train in Madhabpur area of Cumilla's Burichang upazila early yesterday. The victims were struck by a train on the Chattogram bound line, said Sohel Molla, a sub-inspector and in-charge of Cumilla Sadar Railway Police Outpost. Two of the deceased were identified as Saiful Islam, 18, and Md Tuhin, 17. The identity of the other deceased could not be known immediately, he said. Prasanjit Chakrabarty, station master of Sadar Rasulpur Rail Station, said the incident occurred between 3:45am and 4:00am when the Chattogram-bound Udayan Express hit the three. Railway police said bodies will be handed over to families after legal procedures.



Children enjoying a playful bath in a pond using banana stems as floats in Rajshahi's Tanore upazila. Scorching heat has been sweeping across various upazilas of the district for the past few days. Yesterday, the temperature in Rajshahi reached 39 degrees Celsius.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Neonatal mortality still high at 20 per 1,000 births

Study suggests better care, community-level intervention

TAHIRA SHAMSI UTSA

Although Bangladesh has made significant progress in reducing mortality in children under five over the past decade, saving newborns – especially in the first weeks of life – remains a major challenge. A key factor behind the progress has been the introduction of Special Care Newborn Units (SCANUs) by the health ministry in 2009. These units, focused on treating vulnerable infants, have saved countless lives. However, a recent study has raised concerns about their current condition, revealing operational issues that could threaten future progress. While most medical equipment in SCANUs and Newborn Stabiliser Units (NSUs) is still functional, around 25 percent is either non-functional but repairable or beyond repair.



According to the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME), over 100,000 children in Bangladesh died before age five in 2023 – nearly two-thirds of them within the first 28 days of life.

This was found in a study titled “Strengthening Special Care Newborn Units in Bangladesh: An Extensive Assessment and Improvement Strategies.” The study – conducted by Pyae Phyoo Then Chao, Zahid Hassan, and

Dewan Md Emdadul Hoque of Unicef Bangladesh – was presented at a conference titled “Quality Newborn Care at Facility and Home: A Pathway to Healthier Future” yesterday. The event, focused on future strategies for improving newborn care, was organised by the Bangladesh Neonatal Forum (BNF) with support from Unicef at the Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Center in Dhaka. According to the study, ageing infrastructure is a major concern, with 38 percent of SCANUs and 42.8 percent of NSUs using equipment that is over 10 years old. The study also revealed that 32.1 percent of ventilators and 42.8 percent of infant incubators are repairable. However, functionality remains low for critical devices like pulse oximeters (71.7 percent) and infant incubators (57.1 percent).

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

COX'S BAZAR-MAHESHKHALI Ferry service begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

The long anticipated regular sea truck service on the Cox's Bazar-Maheshkhali waterway will begin from today, according to the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA). The 250-seat sea truck will operate three times a day in both directions. Passengers boarding from Jetty No 6 in Cox's Bazar will pay a fare of Tk 50, while those boarding from Nuniachhara Ghat will pay Tk 40, said BIWTA officials. Residents of Maheshkhali expressed excitement over the launch, saying it will ease travel difficulties and reduce the influence of syndicates that have long controlled the route. Due to tourist attractions like the Adinath Temple, the island sees visitors year-round. BIWTA Assistant Director at Cox's Bazar Md Khairuzzaman said, “A trial run was conducted from last Friday, and the decision to run the service regularly from Thursday has now been finalised.”



SINHA MURDER HC starts hearing death reference and appeals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday started hearing on the death reference and appeals filed by the convicts in Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan murder case. The bench of Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman and Justice Md Sagir Hossain began the hearing with Deputy Attorney Generals Shamima Sultana Dipti and Md Jashim Sarker read out from the FIR, charge sheet and verdict. On January 31, 2022, Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Ismail sentenced Pradeep Kunar Das, suspended OC of Teknaf Police Station, and suspended SI Liaquat Ali to death and also six others to life term imprisonment. Sinha was killed in police firing at Baharchhara police check post on Marine Drive road in Teknaf on July 31, 2020.

Hills more peaceful

FROM PAGE 3

“During my service, I was posted in the hills three times, and the situation is now much more peaceful than it was before. Abductions are not only happening there; they are occurring in the plains as well. However, people tend to focus only on abductions in the hills.” Responding to a question about a video allegedly featuring members of the Arakan Army in the CHT, he said, “The Arakan Army has been fighting [in this region] for a long time. Many of their members have married on this side [Bangladesh], and this cannot be denied. The way the videos present things is not entirely accurate. TikTok videos can be made in many ways, and not everything seen there is entirely true or false. It is important to maintain a balanced perspective.” He added, “The Arakan Army has taken over the border [on Myanmar side]. If anything is imported from Myanmar, taxes must be paid to the Myanmar government, and at the same time, the Arakan Army also demands money. This

issue needs to be properly understood. We must work towards resolving it. Our borders are fully protected, but we require your [the media's] cooperation in maintaining that security.” Referring to the recent shooting and killing in Raozan, the adviser said, “Raozan is a hilly area, and like Raozan, Fatikchhari, Patiya, Satkania, and Lohagara are also surrounded by both hills and plains. The situation is different there. After each incident, the armed criminals hide in the hills... We have discussed these issues, and action will be taken.” To media members, he said, “When an incident occurs, you must report the facts – it helps us with our work. However, some individuals report false incidents. After we investigate [the claims in the report], we find it to be untrue, and that creates a problem. Journalists from neighbouring countries take advantage of this and publish false news... Some can [make mistakes]; I also make mistakes while working, but they should be addressed and rectified.”

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Immigration and Passports
E-7, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka-1207
www.dip.gov.bd

No. 58.01.0000.102.99.019.24-272 Date: 23/04/2025

Corrigendum

Subject: Amendment of DIP Tender No. 58.01.0000.102.99.019.24-570, 19-08-2024 for Selection of service provider for the supply of manpower

Tender No. & Date	Description	Existing	Amended As
58.01.0000.102.99.019.24-570, 19-08-2024	At Serial No. 14 Application Closing Date and Time	24/04/2025 at 1:00pm (BST).	29/04/2025 at 1:00pm (BST).
	Opening Date and Time	24/04/2025 at 2:00pm (BST).	29/04/2025 at 2:00pm (BST).
	Brief Description of Outsourcing Staff Recruitment at Serial No. 17	Type of category: Dispatch Rider Security Guard Cleaner Liftman Electrician Pump Operator	

- Outsourcing Recruitment Policy-2025 will be follow for this recruitment.
- All other terms and conditions shall remain unchanged.

GD-975

23.04.2025
Md Al Amin Mridha
Deputy Director (Procurement)
For Director General

Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Narail
www.eed.narail.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice No. 217-20/2024-2025 Date : 23/04/2025.

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works Under EED,Narail District as mentioned below.

SL No	Tender ID No.	Package No	Identification of Package	Procurement Method	Tender Document last selling/ Downloading Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time
01	1101838	NARAIL/REP/SHED/GOVT./2023-24/WR-16	Overall Repair And Renovation Works Of Model Building At Kalia Govt. Pilot Model High School, Kalia, Narail.	LTM	12/05/2025 (16:00)	13/05/2025 (13:00)
02	1101828	NARAIL/REP/SHED/GOVT./2023-24/WR-15	Completion Of Remaining Repair & Renovation Works Of Main Building At Kalia Govt. Pilot Modwl High School, Kalia, Narail.	LTM	12/05/2025 (16:00)	13/05/2025 (13:00)
03	1101822	NARAIL/REP/SHED/GOVT./2023-24/WR-14	Repair & Renovation Works At Office of the Executive Engineer, Education Engineering Department, Sadar, Narail.	LTM	12/05/2025 (16:00)	13/05/2025 (13:00)
04	1101817	NARAIL/REP/SHED/GOVT./2020-21/WR-12	Repair And Renovation Works Of District Education Office, Sadar, Narail.	LTM	12/05/2025 (16:00)	13/05/2025 (13:00)

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be acceptable in the National e-GP system portal and No offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender A1 & A2 renewed upto FY.2024-25 enlistment Category Contractor of Education Engineering Department under Narail District who are registered in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) will be eligible. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches up to 12:00 on 13/05/2025. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk @eprocure.gov.bd). The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender(s) without assigning any reason what so ever.

23.04.2025
Arunava Roy
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Narail.

GD-976

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources
Power Division
Power Cell
Biddyt Bhaban (13th Floor), 1, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka-1000

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
FOR APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTING FIRM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT STUDY OF
SOLAR PARK AT JAMALPUR CHAR AREA (Package S-34)**

No: 27.71.0000.003.03.010.25-310 Date: 22/04/2025

- The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a fund from the International Development Agency (IDA) and it intends to apply a part of the proceeds of this credit to payment under the contracts for appointment of consulting firm for “**Environmental and Social Impact Study of Solar Park at Jamalpur Char Area**”. Power Cell, therefore, intends to appoint an internationally reputed consultancy firm to accomplish the mentioned services by using this fund under “TA for Strengthening and Development of Sustainable Power Sector in Bangladesh” project of Power Cell, Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resource.
- Interested consulting firms must provide information indicating the qualifications to perform the services. The short-listing criteria are:
a) General experience of the firm;
b) Experience in similar projects (especially RE generation projects).
c) Financial soundness of the firm;
d) Should have resources, key experts & support services of the firm.
- A consulting firm is allowed to submit the Expression of Interest (EOI) alone if it considers itself to be fully qualified on its own for the assignment, as it is not mandatory for a consulting firm to associate with any other firm(s), whether foreign or local. Alternatively, if the firm chooses to associate to enhance their qualifications and capability for the assignment, then such associations may either be as a Joint Venture (i.e., all members of the joint venture shall be jointly and severally responsible) and/or Sub-consultants (The Consultant will be responsible for the services of the sub-consultant, and the qualification and experience of the sub-consultants will not be evaluated). In case of an association, the Consultants must explain in the EOI submission (a) the rationale for forming the association and (b) the anticipated role and relevant qualifications of each member of the Joint Venture and/or of each sub-consultant for carrying out the assignment, to justify the proposed inclusion of the JV members and/or sub-consultants in the association. Failure to provide the above explanation in the EOI may risk the association not being shortlisted for the assignment.
- Consultants are requested to submit the following supporting documents against the above mentioned criteria: (a) The Firm's Incorporation/Trade/registration documents from the country of the firm; (b) JV agreement/letter of intent (if applicable); (c) Firm's brochure; (d) Description of similar consultancy contracts, including the scope, contract amount, name of Client, period of the contract (date of contract signing to date of completion), location/country of the services, etc.; (e) Service experience record (including nature, total cost, total inputs in terms of staff month, employer, location, scope of the service etc.); (f) Short biography of key professional; (g) Company's Income Tax certificate/Income Tax registration certificate. The experience of a parent company, subsidiary company, group company or associates (whatever the names) of the applicant (consulting firm) shall not be considered in evaluation.
- Detailed Scope of Work will be available in the Terms of Reference (TOR) which can be downloaded from the website of Power Division (www.powerdivision.gov.bd), Power Cell (www.powercell.gov.bd), and CPTU website from the date of publication of EOI.
- Interested Firms are requested to submit their EOI in 2 (Two) sets, (one original and one duplicate) with soft copy to the above mentioned address and clearly marked “*Request for Expression of Interest*” for “*Environmental and Social Impact Study of Solar Park at Jamalpur Char Area*” on or before the submission deadline of **May 29, 2025, 15:00 Hours (BST)**. Any submission received after the submission date & time will not be accepted.
- The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.

22.4.25
(A J M Ershad Ahsan Habib)
Joint Secretary, Power Division &
Director General (Addl. Charge), Power Cell
Tel: +88 (02) 223386040
E-mail: dg@powercell.gov.bd

‘Conclave’ viewership soars in wake of Pope’s death

Following Pope Francis’s death on April 21, viewership of the 2024 Oscar-winning drama **Conclave** soared dramatically.

The film, which explores the secretive process of electing a new pope, saw a 283% rise in home streaming last Monday, jumping from 1.8 million to 6.9 million minutes viewed, according to Luminate, the US firm that monitors streaming activity.

Conclave portrays the intense political and spiritual deliberations within the Vatican following a fictional pope’s death.

Interest also resurged in Netflix’s 2019 film **The Two Popes**, with a 417% increase in viewership.

During Oscar season, the cast of **Conclave** was inquired about the Pope’s health to which lead actress Isabella Rossellini responded with well wishes for him.



Miles embarks on month-long US tour

Legendary Bangladeshi band Miles has embarked on their **Legacy Tour USA 2025**, marking 30 years since their first US tour in 1996.

The month-long concert series

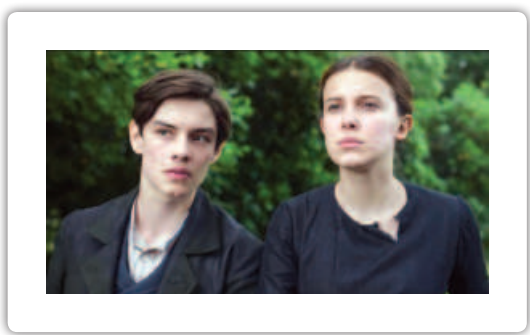
Organised by Ironclad Melody, the tour will span key US cities including Dallas, New Jersey, Los Angeles, New York, Denver, Austin, Michigan, and Buffalo.

Band frontman Hamin Ahmed



kicked off on April 11 at Houston’s Stafford Centre Auditorium, followed by a landmark performance in Miami on April 12—attended by over 3,000 fans, making it the largest Bangladeshi music concert in the city to date.

noted the tour’s historical importance, celebrating Miles’ decades-long influence on Bangladeshi music. Organisers expressed hope that this tour will become another major milestone in the band’s illustrious legacy.



‘Enola Holmes 3’ begins shooting with original stars

Netflix has confirmed that production is underway for **Enola Holmes 3**, starring Millie Bobby Brown and directed by Philip Barantini. A release date has not yet been announced.

The platform shared a behind-the-scenes photo of Brown and co-star Louis Partridge, captioned, “Your faves are back!!!!”

The film also features Himesh Patel, Henry Cavill, Helena Bonham Carter, and Sharon Duncan-Brewster.

According to the film’s synopsis, the story follows Enola to Malta, where a complex case entangles her personal and professional life.

The first **Enola Holmes** film debuted in 2020, with a sequel released in 2022.

Recently, Brown also unveiled a wax figure of her detective character modelling a period-style outfit inspired by the films at Madame Tussauds London.

WHAT’S THE HAPS?

Exhibition: ‘Save the Environment’

Alliance Française de Dhaka presents **Save the Environment**, the 16th solo painting exhibition by acclaimed artist Md Abu Salim.

The exhibition, featuring 18 evocative works, highlights urgent environmental concerns through powerful visual storytelling, inviting art enthusiasts and environmental advocates to reflect on nature’s fragility and the need for preservation.

Date: Friday–Tuesday | April 25–May 6
Time: 3–9pm

Venue: Alliance Française de Dhaka, Dhanmondi



Tarua stages anti-war drama ‘All Quiet on the Western Front’ at Shilpakala

Dhaka-based troupe Tarua brought the harrowing realities of war to the stage with their latest production, **All Quiet on the Western Front**, at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy yesterday, at 7pm.

Directed by Bakar Bakul and adapted for the stage by Runa Kanchan, the play is based on Erich Maria Remarque’s seminal anti-war novel. Subsequent performances are scheduled for today at 7pm and Friday at 4pm and 7pm.



NEWS

Tobacco use declines 13%

FROM PAGE 14

He was presenting the findings at a workshop, organised by Public Health and Informatics Department of the BMU, on trends in tobacco use in Bangladesh (2009–2022) with projection to 2030.

He said tobacco use was 54 percent among people aged between 25 and 69 in 2009. It declined to 47 percent in 2022.

It indicates a 13 percent relative reduction in tobacco use in 13 years, he said.

During the period, smoking declined from 27 percent to 22 percent, a 19 percent relative reduction.

Smokeless tobacco use declined from 36 percent to 31 percent, a 14 percent relative reduction.

As per a 2009 survey, the age of initiation of smoking was 19.1 years while a 2022 survey showed it is 17.7 years.

“It means people are starting to smoke at a comparatively earlier age lately. We did not fare well here,” Prof Mostafa said.

The use of e-cigarettes saw a serious

increase during the period.

In the 2017 survey, 3.6 percent people said they used e-cigarette. That number rose to 14.6 percent in a 2022 survey, he said.

“We have to do something in this regard.”

The decline in tobacco use in men was a little prominent compared with women.

Although tobacco use decreased in both urban and rural areas, it dropped more prominently in urban areas, he said.

The use of Biri has decreased compared to cigarettes.

Zaman recommended strengthening the tobacco control programme to accelerate the current decline rate.

Special attention should be given to policies and laws to identify the reason for insufficient decline, he said, while calling for another round of survey soon.

Prof Shafiqun Nahin Shimul of the Institute of Health Economics at Dhaka University, however, said the data set is extremely limited, making

it difficult to draw firm conclusions from either the figures or the study’s methodology.

While the analysis suggests tobacco consumption has fallen, the National Board of Revenue statistics indicate cigarette sales are on the rise.

“So, we need further detailed survey to get a better picture,” he added.

Amendment to the Tobacco Products (Control) Act is in the works with the view to controlling tobacco use, said Sheikh Momena Moni, an additional secretary to the health services division.

People from all over the country need to get engaged in efforts to reduce tobacco use.

Farmers need to be discouraged from cultivating tobacco, she said.

“We have to do much more. Otherwise, it would be difficult to achieve the target,” she said.

Mamunur Rashid, joint secretary of the division, Prof Atiqul Islam, chairman of DPHI, and Prof Mujibur Rahman Hawlader, pro-vice chancellor of BMU, among others, also spoke at the event.

One candidate per constituency

FROM PAGE 14

Otherwise, the election will not be free and fair.”

He said the five parties also agreed that the next election should be conducted under a proportional representation system — an electoral system in which the distribution of seats corresponds with the proportion of total votes cast for each party. For example, if a party receives 40 percent of the total votes, the PR system would allow it to obtain 40 percent of the seats in parliament.

“We’re also of the opinion that the national election should be held after local body polls,” Yunus told this correspondent.

Jamaat-e-Islami was not present at yesterday’s meeting.

Regarding this, he said, “We had held a meeting with Jamaat earlier and will sit with them again soon.”

Yunus said they were planning further discussions with different Islamist parties to finalise their plan for nominating single candidates for each seat in the next national election.

The Islamist leaders at the meeting also demanded the trial of the Awami League as a fascist party.

They further demanded that the Women’s Reform Commission formed by the interim government be abolished.

12 key AL leaders

FROM PAGE 14

Magistrate Md Mahbubur Rahman’s court.

After receiving the court’s permission, Palak said, “It is being claimed that I was involved in the murder incident in Badda on August 5. I would like to inform you [court] of one thing. On August 5 last year, at 11:00am, I was present in the parliament... At one stage, I, along with 11 persons, including the speaker, the deputy speaker, were forced to take shelter in a special room. At 2:30am, the army rescued us from there.”

Palak further said, “Since I was in the parliament the entire day, I have no connection with any murder that took place on August 5... If interrogation is necessary, then permission should be granted to question me at the jail gate.”

However, state lawyer Omar Faruq Faruqi opposed his claim of innocence. He told the court, “We had heard the speaker and others were hiding in parliament on August 5. Palak confirmed it today, yet Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury has not been held accountable.”

“We have repeatedly said those who directly shot and killed the anti-discrimination student protesters deserve punishment, and those conspired to commit these murders deserve the same punishment. Zunaid Ahmed Palak is involved in the conspiracy behind these killings,” he added.

After hearing both sides, the court placed Palak on a two-day remand.

Tureen Afroz Weeps in Court

Meanwhile, at another court, former ICT senior prosecutor Tureen Afroz broke down in tears during a hearing over her arrest in an anti-terrorism

case. She was escorted to court in a helmet and bulletproof vest.

In the dock, she was consoled by Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haq Inu and former IGP AKM Shahidul Hoque, among others.

During the hearing, her lawyer requested that she be allowed to speak, citing alleged torture.

With the judge’s permission, Tureen said, “I respect the law. I seek justice. I’ve never held any political post. I only did my job. I’m unwell, I can’t walk.”

State lawyer Faruqi denied her claims, saying, “She is lying to mislead the court.”

Tureen then showed her leg and told the court, “I was tortured.”

She was earlier placed on a four-day remand on April 8 in an attempted murder case filed with the Uttara West Police Station.

Chaos in Court over Shajahan Khan’s Statement

Meanwhile, chaos ensued at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate’s Court during former shipping minister Shajahan Khan’s remarks in a murder case filed with Jatrabari Police Station.

State lawyer Faruqi said, “Both lawyers and accused must maintain decorum. The accused shouldn’t disrupt proceedings.”

Even while the public prosecutor was speaking, a group of pro-BNP lawyers continued to cause commotion and made derogatory remarks toward Shajahan Khan.

“Are we not allowed to speak? Do we not have the right to express ourselves?” Shajahan Khan was heard saying to the court at that time.

Kuet withdraws suspension

FROM PAGE 14

Till filing of the report last night, 23 were continuing their hunger strike demanding the resignation of Vice-Chancellor Prof Muhammad Masud.

Another section of students brought out a procession on the campus around 6:30pm to press home their demand.

However, the teachers’ association of Kuet said at a press conference yesterday that it would not accept the resignation of the VC solely on the demand of the protesting students.

Meanwhile, students of Dhaka, Jahangirnagar, Rajshahi, and Khulna universities held different programmes in solidarity with the Kuet students.

In another development, the University Teachers’ Network, a coalition of private and public university teachers, in a statement yesterday expressed solidarity with the Kuet students.

At Dhaka University, a group of 16 students from the Bangladesh Democratic Students Council has been continuing a hunger strike since Tuesday.

Early Wednesday, several leaders of the National Citizen Party, including Hasnat Abdullah, joined the protests and expressed solidarity with them.

According to the Kuet protesters, members of a student body and other outsiders attacked students on the campus on February 18.

Although a police case was filed, it lacked specific details, and no arrests have been made. Meanwhile, a counter-complaint filed by an outsider named 22 students with specific information, including names, departments, and roll numbers.

The university had suspended the 37 students over the incident.

[Our correspondents from respective universities contributed to this report.]

No permission needed to arrest FIR accused

FROM PAGE 14

Sikder Mahmudur Razi issued the order and rule following a writ petition challenging the legality of the DMP commissioner’s order.

Supreme Court lawyer Md Jasim Uddin filed the writ petition as a public interest litigation, seeking a stay on the order issued by the DMP commissioner’s office on April 9.

The order said the officers-in-charge of the police stations must get prior permission from higher authorities by submitting documents to arrest accused named in FIRs or suspects in the cases related to the anti-discrimination student movement and the subsequent uprising.

Citing the petition, Jasim Uddin told The Daily Star that the DMP commissioner’s office order was “illegal” both under the Code of Criminal Procedure and the constitution.

Barrister Ruhul Quddus Kazal appeared for the writ petitioner during the hearing of the petition.

4 indicted in Magura child rape case

FROM PAGE 14

prosecutorial adviser to the home ministry, who was appointed to assist the prosecution, also participated in the proceedings.

Following the hearing, he told reporters, “The court has accepted the application to frame charges against the accused based on the charge sheet, the confessional statement of the prime accused under Section 164, and supporting documents.”

According to court sources, Hitu Sheikh has been charged with causing death after rape, Sajib Sheikh and Ratul Sheikh with criminal intimidation, and Jaheda Begum with destroying evidence.

Ehsanul further informed reporters that the judge told the accused they may appoint legal counsel by applying under the provisions of the Prison Code.

When asked by the court whether they admitted to the charges, all four accused denied involvement in the crime.

Thousands say goodbye to Pope Francis lying in state

AFP, Vatican City

Tens of thousands of mourners began saying their last goodbyes to Pope Francis at St Peter's Basilica yesterday, as the body of the late Argentine pontiff began three days of lying in state.

A long line of pilgrims and tourists stretched across the sprawling St Peter's Square before the doors opened at 11:00 am (0900 GMT), when the public were allowed inside to file past the open coffin.

"I came to say a last goodbye to a great man. He stood for the people," Simonetta Marini, 67, a Roman pensioner, told AFP.

For the next three days, it will rest on a low bier before the Altar of the Confession underneath the soaring dome painted by Michelangelo, before being closed at 8:00 pm (1800 GMT) on Friday evening ahead of Saturday's funeral.

Strike a deal or US will 'walk away'

VP Vance tells Russia, Ukraine

AGENCIES

US Vice President JD Vance warned yesterday that Moscow and Kyiv must strike a deal or Washington will end its efforts to reach a ceasefire.

"We've issued a very explicit proposal to both the Russians and the Ukrainians, and it's time for them to either say yes, or for the United States to walk away from this process," Vance told reporters in India.

Vance spoke as envoys from Washington, Kyiv and European nations gathered for talks in Britain amid a new US push to end Russia's war in Ukraine, reports AFP.

"It's now time, I think, to take, if not the final step, one of the final steps, which is, at a broad level, the party saying we're going to stop the killing, we're going to freeze the territorial lines at some level close to where they are today," Vance added. "Now, of course, that means the Ukrainians and the Russians are both going to have to give up some of the territory they currently own," he added.

Meanwhile, A Russian drone hit a bus carrying workers in the Ukrainian city of Marhanets yesterday, killing 9 people, reports Reuters.



Local residents wait in a park in Istanbul, Turkey, yesterday, following an initial earthquake of 6.2 magnitude at 12:49 pm, which was followed by three others with magnitudes ranging from 4.4 to 4.9. A total of 151 people were hurt and received hospital treatment after leaping from buildings in panic during the tremor but none were in a critical condition, the Istanbul governor's office said.

PHOTO: AFP

Israeli airstrikes hit Gaza school, hospital

20 Palestinians killed; President Abbas calls on Hamas to hand over arms to his authority

REUTERS, Gaza

An Israeli airstrike on a school sheltering displaced families in northern Gaza killed at least 10 people, while another hit a children's hospital, local health authorities said, taking yesterday's death toll to 20.

Medics said the airstrike on the Yaffa School in the Tuffah area of Gaza City set fire to tents and classrooms. There has been no Israeli comment on the school attack.

Some furniture was still in flames several hours after the strike as people sifted through blackened classrooms and the schoolyard in search of their belongings.

"We were sleeping and suddenly something exploded, we started looking and found the whole school on fire, the tents here and there were on fire, everything was on fire," said eyewitness, Um Mohammed Al-Hwaiti.

"People were shouting and men were carrying people, charred (people), charred children, and were walking and saying: 'Dear God, dear God, we have no one but you.' What can we say? Dear God, only," she told Reuters.

Medics said at least 10 other people were killed in separate Israeli strikes across the enclave.

Since a January ceasefire collapsed on March 18, Israeli attacks have killed more than 1,600 Palestinians, according to the Gaza health authorities.



Meanwhile, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, in a televised speech yesterday, called on Hamas to cede its responsibility over the Gaza Strip, hand over its arms to the Palestinian Authority and turn itself into a political party.

Yesterday, the Gaza health ministry said an Israeli missile also hit the upper building of the Durra Children's Hospital in Gaza City, damaging the intensive care unit and destroying the solar panel system that feeds the facility with power. No one was killed in the hospital strike.

Gaza's healthcare system is close to collapse due to an Israeli blockade on all supplies to Gaza, including fuel and electricity, since

the beginning of March, when it relaunched military operations.

The health ministry said many Palestinian victims of Israeli military strikes remained trapped under rubble and on the roads, as rescue teams are unable to reach them because of ongoing bombardments.

The attacks have also hit dozens of bulldozers and machinery used to clear roads, remove debris and to carry out rescue operations.

The Israeli military said on Tuesday it had hit 40 "engineering vehicles" that were used for "terrorist actions. Some of those heavy vehicles were parked on the road and others inside the garages of municipalities.



"The European Union is not giving up on our closest, deepest and most important partnership with the United States."

EU Economy Commissioner VALDIS DOMBROVSKIS

Beijing ready to work with Dhaka to advance economic globalisation

FROM PAGE 2

"The Chinese government strongly condemns and resolutely opposes such a move," Wen said while addressing the Government Training Programmes Inauguration Ceremony at the Chinese embassy in Dhaka yesterday.

"History has repeatedly proved that there are no winners in trade or tariff wars. Protectionism is a dead end," he said, stressing the need for a safe and stable international environment.

Referring to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus' visit to China last month and his meeting with President Xi Jinping, Wen said the visit marked a new phase of development in China-Bangladesh relations and elevated the Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership to an unprecedented height.

"This visit injected new momentum into the high-quality Belt and Road cooperation between the two countries. It has become a broad consensus in Bangladeshi society that China is the most trustworthy and reliable development partner."

Wen said China will accelerate the construction of the Mongla Port Project and Chinese Economic and Industrial Zone in

Chittagong, and stands ready to participate in the Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project.

China will continue to facilitate medical access for Bangladeshi citizens seeking treatment in China, expand scholarship opportunities, and encourage greater engagement of Bangladeshi nationals in business, education, and cultural exchanges in China, he added.

About the training programme, he said as Bangladesh and China celebrates 50 years of diplomatic relations this year, China will organise 23 bilateral seminars and 30 multilateral seminars, trainings for over 500 Bangladeshis.

These seminars will cover areas such as smart governance and information technology, new energy, finance, transportation, agriculture, tourism, and education, he added.

Mirana Mahrukh, additional secretary and wing chief at the Economic Relations Division and Mohammed Nore-Alam, director general at the East Asia & Pacific Wing of the Foreign Ministry also spoke, among others.

Chief adviser

FROM PAGE 2

statement, also strongly condemned the attack that claimed the lives of 26 people.

"Bangladesh strongly condemns the terror attack in the state of Jammu and Kashmir in India, resulting in the tragic loss of innocent lives," it said.

The Government of

Bangladesh extended condolences to the families of the victims, expressing "heartfelt sympathy to all those affected by this mindless act of violence."

"Bangladesh reiterates its unwavering commitment to the global fight against terrorism," the press release added.

Poverty may worsen: World Bank

FROM PAGE 1

Zahid Hussain, a former lead economist of the World Bank in Dhaka, said the poverty surge is primarily being driven by food inflation and prolonged wage stagnation.

"All research on poverty shows that the poverty rate is inversely related to food inflation," Hussain said. "The higher the food inflation, the higher the poverty rate, because the share of the budget that poor people spend on food is very high."

Hussain said real wages have been declining for over 40 months as nominal wage growth fails to keep pace with soaring prices. "Income has not grown at the same rate as expenditure due to inflation. That also increases the number of people below the poverty line," he said.

Inflation is expected to remain around 10 percent this fiscal year, with a gradual easing projected in the following year.

Three in five households are likely to have faced increased financial stress by depleting their savings, driven largely by deteriorating labour market conditions between 2023 and 2024, the World Bank said. "Vulnerable populations are likely to be disproportionately affected."

However, with over a million people leaving the country annually, remittance-receiving households are expected to remain more resilient amid the economic challenge.

The Gini index, a measure of inequality where 0 represents perfect equality and 100 indicates maximum inequality, is projected to rise to 36.1 in 2025 from 33.4 in 2022, according to the World Bank. Inequality is expected to ease slightly in 2026.

"The main reason for inequality lies in the labour market," Hussain said. "A vast number of workers are in low-productivity, self-employed occupations. Most are entrepreneurs by necessity, not by opportunity."

While the formal sector remains small, most of the 65-66 million working Bangladeshis are engaged in informal jobs with limited earnings potential, Hussain said. "The low productivity of self-employed young people in rural and urban areas means low average income," he said.

ECONOMIC GROWTH TO SLOW

The World Bank forecasts GDP growth at 3.3 percent

in FY2025, down from 4.2 percent last year and 5.8 percent in FY2023. The slowdown has been driven by falling investment, policy uncertainty, high borrowing costs, and political unrest that disrupted activity in the first quarter.

Private sector credit growth hit a 30-year low of 7.3 percent in December 2024, and ADP spending declined 24.1 percent in the first half of the fiscal year. Imports of capital goods fell by 12 percent, reflecting weak investment sentiment.

Despite this, strong remittances and a rebound in garment exports helped narrow the current account deficit to \$1.1 billion, and reserves have stabilised around \$20 billion.

The World Bank projects a gradual recovery, though. GDP growth is expected to rebound to 4.9 percent in FY2026, assuming the successful implementation of financial sector reforms, improved domestic revenue mobilisation, and a more stable business environment.

The medium-term outlook hinges on restoring investor confidence, addressing macroeconomic imbalances, and delivering long promised structural

reforms across the banking, fiscal and regulatory landscape.

UNCERTAIN CLIMATE

The World Bank warns that delays in banking and fiscal reforms, coupled with persistent inflation and uncertainty surrounding the upcoming national election, could undermine Bangladesh's economic recovery.

"Higher costs of borrowing, policy uncertainties, and the timing of elections are expected to weigh heavily on investment growth," the World Bank said.

Beyond the economic risks, the report also flagged political tensions as a growing source of concern.

"Safety and security concerns remain and are likely to continue until the restoration of a fully functioning police force," it said.

"Policy uncertainty is significant and compounded by ongoing discussions about the timing of the next election. Disagreements between political parties and the interim government over the election date could heighten political tensions in the future."

TRADE DISRUPTIONS

Bangladesh's export outlook faces fresh risks in FY2026 due to mounting global trade disruptions and rising policy uncertainty, the World Bank said. While the economic impact is expected to be limited in FY2025, as disruptions occurred late in the fiscal year, the fallout is likely to be more pronounced in the following year.

The World Bank projects that Bangladesh's exports and real GDP growth could decline by 1.7 percentage points and 0.5 percentage points, respectively, in FY2026 compared to previous forecasts.

"There is considerable uncertainty around this outlook due to the rapidly evolving status of trade policy discussions," the World Bank said.

Lower fuel import payments, due to falling international energy prices, are expected to provide some cushion to the current account balance. Meanwhile, the Bangladesh government has expressed its intent to reduce the trade surplus with the United States by boosting imports, a move seen as part of broader trade diplomacy amid tensions over tariffs and reciprocal access.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Department of Environment "Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division" Project (A component of HELP Project) 1 st Floor, Room: 202, Poribesh Bhaban New Building E/16 Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207 www.doe.gov.bd				
Request for Expression of Interest (Eoi) for Selection of Individual Consultants (National)				
1.	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change	
2.	Agency	:	Department of Environment (DoE)	
3.	Procuring Entity Name	:	Project Director	
4.	Procuring Entity District	:	Dhaka	
5.	Expression of Interest for selection of	:	Individual Consultant (National)	
6.	Eoi Ref No.	:	22.02.0000.020.14.001.25-10	
7.	Date	:	23 April 2025	
Key Information				
8.	Procuring Method	:	Selection of Individual Consultant (SIC)	
Funding Information				
9.	Source of Funds	:	World Bank through DoE	
10.	Grant No.	:	E325-BD	
Particular Information				
11.	Project ID	:	P501274	
12.	Project Code	:	224403000	
13.	Project Name	:	Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division	
14.	Eoi Closing Date and Time	:	15 May 2025, 02:00 pm	
Information for Applicants				
Package No.	Name of Positions	Number of Positions	Duration	Terms of References (ToR) including Educational Qualification
HELP/S-01	Junior Consultant (Procurement)	1 (One)	6 months (intermittently)	Master's in procurement/ economics/ statistics/ finance/ business administration/ management or other relevant subjects.
HELP/S-02	Junior Consultant (Finance)	1 (One)	24 months	Master of Commerce in Accounting/Finance or MBA with major in Accounting/Finance. Candidate having fully or partly professional accountancy degree (CA/ACCA/CMA/ equivalent) will get preference.
Procuring Entity Details				
15.	Name of Official Inviting Eoi	:	Md. Samsuzzaman Sarker	
16.	Designation of Official Inviting Eoi	:	Project Director, Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division	
17.	Address of Official Inviting Eoi	:	Department of Environment 1 st Floor, Room: 202, Poribesh Bhaban New Building E/16 Agargaon Administrative Area Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207	
18.	Contact details of Official Inviting Eoi	:	Phone: 02-2222218378, Email: helpdoepd@gmail.com	
19.	Place of submission of Eoi	:	Project Director, Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division 1 st Floor, Room: 202, Poribesh Bhaban New Building E/16 Agargaon Administrative Area Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207	
20.	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Eois without showing any reason.			
The Department of Environment is implementing the "Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division" Project. The overall objective of the project is to assess the environmental impact and damage occurred out of Rohingya influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram division.				
Project Director of the "Comprehensive Environmental Impact and Damage Assessment of Rohingya Influx in Cox's Bazar and Bhasanchar of Chattogram Division" invites eligible applicants to express their interest in providing the services. Applicants are advised to provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services in completed Curriculum Vitae (CV) and proven documents with a cover letter. Request for Application Form with detailed Terms of References (ToR) are available in the website of the Department of Environment (www.doe.gov.bd).				
One original and two copies of Eoi must be submitted in the Project office on or before 15 th May 2025, 02:00 pm in sealed envelope and be clearly marked the position for Expression of Interest.				
The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any/all Eoi. Persons who are in service should submit Eoi through the proper channel, otherwise Eoi will be rejected.				
-signed- Md. Samsuzzaman Sarker Project Director Email: helpdoepd@gmail.com				
GD-972				



Office of the Manikganj Pourashava
Manikganj

Memo No. MPS/Eng.2025/724

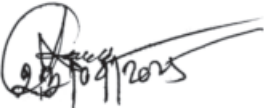
Date: 23/04/2025

e-Tender Notice No. (OTM)-06/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works under IUGIP Project, LGED. Details are given below.

SL No.	Description of the works & package	Tender ID No.	Tender closing & opening (date & time)	Tender security submission (last date & time)
1	Package No. IUGIP/MANI/UT+DR/04/2023 Name of Sub-Project: Construction/Improvement/Rehabilitation of Roads 6829.00m in 08 locations, RCC Pipe Drain 1557.00m in 04 locations, Protection Work 1048.00 & Installation of street light 235.00 Nos. at Manikganj Pourashava, Manikganj.	1098509	29-May-2025 till 2:00 pm	29-May-2025 till 1:00 pm

- 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 the downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to 28-May-2025 up to 5.00pm.
- Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@procure.gov.bd) also for email: manikganj_municipality@yahoo.com


Md. Shahadat Hossain
Executive Engineer

Manikganj Pourashava, Manikganj

GD-970

বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Bangladesh Water Development Board
web: www.bwdb.gov.bd

প্রকল্প পরিচালক এর দপ্তর
যমুনা নদী টেকসই ব্যবস্থাপনা প্রকল্প-১:
নদী তীর সংরক্ষণ ও নদী শাসন (কম্পোনেন্ট-১)
পানি ভবন, লেভেল-৪, ব্লক-এইচ, রুম নং-৪১৭
৭২ গ্রীন রোড (পান্থপথ), ঢাকা-১২০৫।
ফোন: ৮৮-০২-২২২২-৩০২২২
ই-মেইল: pd.jrsmPWD@gmail.com



Office of the Project Director
Jamuna River Sustainable Management Project-1:
Riverbank Protection and Riverbank Training
(Component-1)
Pani Bhaban, Level-4, Block-H, Room: 417
72 Green Road (Panthapath), Dhaka-1205
Phone: 88-02-2222-30222
e-mail: pd.jrsmPWD@gmail.com

Memo No: 42.01.0000.000.817.07.0002.25-190

Date: April 22, 2025

Request for Bids: Works (International Bidding)
(Two-envelope Bidding Process, Without Prequalification)

Employer: Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB)
Project: Jamuna River Sustainable Management Project -1 (P172499): Riverbank Protection and Riverbank Training (Component 1)
Contract title: Construction of Permeable/Top Blocked Permeable Groin (4 Nos. with 2 rows each and 1 No. with 3 rows) with Riverbank Protective Work 5 no. Top-Blocked Permeable Groins in series including Riverbank Protection on the R/B of the Jamuna at Fulchhari
Country: Bangladesh
Loan No. /Credit No. / Grant No.: IDA Cr. 7411-BD
RFB No.: JARSMP-WDB-NZ-GAIB-WD-01
Issued on: April 22, 2025

- The Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh (the "Borrower") has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Jamuna River Sustainable Management Project-1 and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for "Construction of five Permeable/Top Blocked Permeable Groin (4 Nos. with 2 rows each and 1 No. with 3 rows) in series with Riverbank Protective Work on the R/B of the Jamuna at Fulchhari". For this contract, the Borrower shall process the payments using the Direct Payment disbursement method as defined in the World Bank's Disbursement Guidelines for Investment Project Financing.
- The Bangladesh Water Development Board now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for protection of 2.43 km riverbank of Jamuna River at Uria Mouza, Uria Union, Fulchhari Upazila (right bank of Jamuna River), Gaibandha district, Bangladesh. The riverbank protection works include (i) construction of 5 no. permeable/Top Blocked Permeable groins (4 no. with 2 rows each and 1 no. with 3 rows), (ii) beam and deck over the groins, (iii) shore protection with CC blocks and geo-textile filters & brick chips, (iv) riverbed protection with geo-bags and, (v) earthen tie embankment works. The completion time is 24 months of which underwater works shall be carried out between December-March (which is dry season and water level goes to the lowest point).
- Bidding will be conducted through international competitive procurement using Request for Bids (RFB) as specified in the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers- Procurement in Investment Projects Financing" September 2023 ("Procurement Regulations"), and is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Regulations.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the office of the Project Director and inspect the Bidding document during office hours from 10:00 am to 04:00 pm (Bangladesh Standard Time - GMT+6:00) at the address given below. A read-only copy of the bidding document will also be available for downloading by prospective bidders on the website of the Employer www.bwdb.gov.bd.
- The Bidding document in English may be purchased by interested eligible Bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the currency of USD or BDT as mentioned below. The method of payment will be electronic wire transfer to the bank account of the Employer (given below) or Pay Order (from any scheduled commercial bank in Bangladesh). The document fee and delivery terms are as follows:
(a) Nonrefundable fee: USD 100 (one hundred) or equivalent BDT 12,000 (twelve thousand), delivery of Bidding Document by hand from the office of the Project Director;
(b) Nonrefundable fee: USD 150 (one hundred fifty) or equivalent BDT 18,000 (eighteen thousand), delivery of Bidding Document through courier service within Bangladesh from the office of the Project Director; or
(c) Nonrefundable fee: USD 250 (two hundred fifty) or equivalent BDT 30,000 (thirty thousand), delivery of Bidding Document through airmail outside Bangladesh from the office of the Project Director.
(d) Within 3 working days of receipt of the required fee in the Employer's bank account, the Employer will dispatch the bidding documents through courier service and send a copy of the courier service order receipt through reply email to the bidder's email address, which the bidder may use to track the delivery. The Employer shall not be responsible in case of late or incorrect delivery by the courier service company.
- Pre-Bid meeting will be held on **May 13, 2025 at 11:00 am** (Bangladesh Standard Time) at Room No: 406, Level-4, 72 Green Road, Pani Bhaban, BWDB, Dhaka.
- Bid Document last selling date on or before **16.00 hours (GMT+6) of June 23, 2025**. Bids must be delivered to the address below, on or before **02:30 pm (Bangladesh Standard Time), June 26, 2025**. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. The outer Bid envelopes marked "ORIGINAL BID," and the inner envelopes marked "TECHNICAL PART" will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend, at the address Room No: 406, Level-4, 72 Green Road, Pani Bhaban, BWDB, Dhaka at **03:00 pm (Bangladesh Standard Time) on June 26, 2025**. All envelopes marked "FINANCIAL PART" shall remain unopened and will be held in safe custody of the Employer until the second public Bid opening.
- All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of USD 300,000.00 (Three hundred thousand) or BDT 36,000,000.00 (Thirty-six million) in favor of the Project Director, JRSMP-1 (C1) Project.
- All Bids must be accompanied by a Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and/or Sexual Harassment (SH) Declaration. Attention is drawn to the Procurement Regulations requiring the Borrower to disclose information on the successful bidder's beneficial ownership, as part of the Contract Award Notice, using the Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Form as included in the bidding document.
- Bank account details of the Employer for wire transfer purpose only:
A/c title: JRSMP-1 Riverbank Protection and Riverbank Training
A/c number: 0100261867979
Bank name: Janata Bank PLC.
Branch name: Green Road Corporate Branch
Swift code: JANBDDHJBD
Routing No: 135261693
Address of the bank branch: 72, Green Road, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh
- The addresses referred to above are:

(T. M. Rashidul Kabir)

Project Director
Jamuna River Sustainable Management Project-1:
Riverbank Protection and Riverbank Training (Component-1).
Bangladesh Water Development Board
Pani Bhaban, Level - 4, Block H, Room No.417
72 Green Road, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh.
Tel: +8802-222230222.
Mob: 01711157254
E-mail: pd.jrsmPWD@gmail.com
Web: www.bwdb.gov.bd

পানি-৮৮৯/২০২৪-২০২৫
১২X৪"

GD-969

Government of the People's of Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Chattogram Division Upazila and Union Road
Widening and Strengthening Project (1st Revision)
62, West Agargaon, Shere Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No: 46.02.0000.695.07.049.2025-277


Date: 22/04/2025

e-Tender Notice No :02/2024-25.

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal in OTM (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of Road Roller;

Tender ID	Name of Scheme	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
1101226	Purchase of 3 (Three) nos. Three Wheel Static Road Roller (8-10 Ton)	18-May-2025 16:00 hr	19-May-2025 14:00 hr	19-May-2025 14:00 hr

These are online Tender, where only e-Tender 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 (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Aminur Rashid Chowdhury
Project Director
Chattogram Division Upazila and Union Road
Widening and Strengthening Project (1st Revision)
Phone: 02-222242141
e-mail: pd.cdws@lged.gov.bd

GD-966



বীমা উন্নয়ন ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ কর্তৃপক্ষ
৩৭/এ, দিলকুশা বা/এ, ঢাকা
প্রশাসন-১ শাখা
প্রশাসন অনুবিভাগ
www.idra.org.bd

স্মারক নং ৫৩.০৩.০০০০.০০০.০০৮.১১.০০০২.২৫-২১

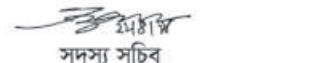
তারিখঃ ১০ বৈশাখ ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ
২৩ এপ্রিল ২০২৫ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

অর্থ মন্ত্রণালয়ের আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠান বিভাগের আওতাভুক্ত বীমা উন্নয়ন ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ কর্তৃপক্ষের নিম্নবর্ণিত শূন্য পদসমূহ পূরণের লক্ষ্যে পদের পার্শ্বে বর্ণিত শর্ত সাপেক্ষে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে অনলাইনে <http://idra.teletalk.com.bd> ওয়েবসাইটে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

ক্রম:	পদের নাম, গ্রেড ও বৈতনিক	পদ সংখ্যা	সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা	যোগ্যতা ও অভিজ্ঞতা
১.	প্রোগ্রামার (গ্রেড-৬) বৈতনিক: টাকা ৩৫,৫০০-৬৭,০১০/-	০১ (এক)	৩৫ বছর	ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স/ কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং / ইলেকট্রিক্যাল এন্ড ইলেকট্রনিক্স ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং/ ইনফরমেশন এন্ড কমিউনিকেশন টেকনোলজি সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে ন্যূনতম দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিজিপিএসহ ০৪ (চার) বছর মেয়াদি স্নাতক বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; খ) কোনো সরকারি/স্বায়ত্তশাসিত/ আধা স্বায়ত্তশাসিত/ সংবিধিবদ্ধ প্রতিষ্ঠানে সিনিয়র কম্পিউটার অপারেটর/ সহকারী প্রোগ্রামার/ সহকারী রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ প্রকৌশলী হিসাবে ন্যূনতম ০৪ (চার) বছরের চাকুরী।
২.	উপ-পরিচালক (গ্রেড-৭) বৈতনিক: টাকা ২৯,০০০-৬৩,৪১০/-	০৫ (পাঁচ)	৪০ বছর	ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে আইন, গণিত, পরিসংখ্যান, অর্থনীতি, ব্যবসায় প্রশাসন, ব্যাংকিং এন্ড ইন্স্যুরেন্স বিষয়ে ৪ (চার) বছর মেয়াদি দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিজিপিএসহ স্নাতক (সম্মান) অথবা প্রথম শ্রেণির স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রি; এবং খ) কোনো আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠানে ন্যূনতম ৫ (পাঁচ) বছরের বাস্তব কর্ম অভিজ্ঞতা অথবা কোনো স্বীকৃত বীমা সোসাইটি বা ইনসিটিউট এর ফেলোশিপ অথবা এসোসিয়েটশীপ অথবা কোনো স্বীকৃত প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে সমমানের পেশাগত দক্ষতাসহ বাংলাদেশ ইনসিটিউট অব চার্টার্ড একাউন্টেন্ট এর ফেলোশিপ অথবা এসোসিয়েটশীপ।
৩.	সহকারী পরিচালক (গ্রেড-৯) বৈতনিক: টাকা ২২,০০০-৫৩,০৬০/-	০৫ (পাঁচ)	৩২ বছর	কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে আইন, গণিত, পরিসংখ্যান, অর্থনীতি, ব্যবসায় প্রশাসন, ব্যাংকিং এন্ড ইন্স্যুরেন্স বিষয়ে ৪ (চার) বছর মেয়াদি দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিজিপিএসহ স্নাতক (সম্মান) অথবা প্রথম শ্রেণির স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রি।
৪.	কর্মকর্তা (গ্রেড-১১) বৈতনিক: টাকা ১২,৫০০-৩০,২৩০/-	০১ (এক)	৩২ বছর	কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে যেকোনো বিষয়ে ৪ (চার) বছর মেয়াদি দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণী বা সমমানের সিজিপিএসহ স্নাতক (সম্মান) অথবা প্রথম শ্রেণীর স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রী।
৫.	কম্পিউটার অপারেটর (গ্রেড-১৩) বৈতনিক: টাকা ১১,০০০-২৬,৫৯০/-	০৫ (পাঁচ)	৩২ বছর	ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে বিজ্ঞান বিভাগে স্নাতক (সম্মান) অথবা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; খ) কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরে প্রতি মিনিটে বাংলায় ২৫ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ৩০ শব্দের গতিসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে Standard Aptitude Test এ উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে। গ) লিখিত পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীরা শুধু ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় এবং ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীরাই শুধু মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন।
৬.	ডাটা এন্ট্রি/কন্ট্রোল অপারেটর (গ্রেড-১৬) বৈতনিক: টাকা ৯,৩০০-২২,৪৯০/-	০২ (দুই)	৩২ বছর	ক) কোন স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ; খ) কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরে প্রতিমিনিটে বাংলায় ২০ শব্দ এবং ইংরেজিতে ২০ শব্দের গতিসহ সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে Standard Aptitude Test এ উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে। গ) লিখিত পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীরা শুধু ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় এবং ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীরাই শুধু মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন।

- নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তাবলি আবেদন ফরম পূরণ এবং পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে অবশ্যই অনুসরণ করতে হবে:
- আবেদনকারীর নাম, পিতার নাম, মাতার নাম, জন্ম তারিখ ও নিজ জেলাসহ অন্যান্য সকল তথ্য সংশ্লিষ্ট সনদে যথাযথ লেখা রয়েছে অনলাইন আবেদন ফরমে এবং পরবর্তীতে ছব্বহ সেভাবে লিখতে হবে।
 - মুদ্রিত/হস্ত লিখিত কোন প্রকার আবেদন বা কাগজপত্র ডাকযোগে বা অন্য কোন উপায়ে প্রেরণ করা হলে তা গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
 - ০১.০৪.২০২৫ খ্রি: তারিখে আবেদনকারীর সর্বনিম্ন বয়স ১৮ (আঠারো) হতে হবে এবং সর্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা ০৪ নম্বর কলামে উল্লিখিত বয়স সীমার মধ্যে থাকতে হবে এবং বয়স প্রমাণের ক্ষেত্রে কোনো প্রকার এফিডেভিট গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
 - এই নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির ছকের ১, ৫ ও ৬ নং ক্রমিক বর্ণিত পদসমূহ পূরণে জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়ের "সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানের কম্পিউটার পার্সোনেল নিয়োগ বিধিমালা, ২০১৯" অনুসরণ করা হবে।
 - বিজ্ঞপ্তির ১ নং ক্রমিক বর্ণিত পদের শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার ক্ষেত্রে সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ের সমমান হিসেবে জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়ের ২০ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২৪ তারিখের ০৫.০০.০০০০.১৪৭.৯৯.০১০.১৮-৬০ নং স্মারক অনুযায়ী কম্পিউটার সায়েন্স এন্ড টেলিকমিউনিকেশন ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, ইনফরমেশন টেকনোলজি, টেলিকমিউনিকেশন এন্ড ইলেকট্রনিক্স ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, এপ্রাইড ফিজিক্স, ইলেকট্রনিক্স এন্ড কমিউনিকেশন ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, এপ্রাইড ফিজিক্স এন্ড ইলেকট্রনিক্স ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং, সফটওয়্যার ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ও ইলেকট্রনিক্স এন্ড কমিউনিকেশন ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিষয়ের প্রার্থীগণ যোগ্য বিবেচিত হবেন।
 - বিজ্ঞপ্তির ১ ও ২ নং ক্রমিকে উল্লিখিত পদে আবেদনকারী প্রার্থীগণ অনলাইনে যথাযথ আবেদন দাখিল করত: আগামী ২২ জুন ২০২৫ থেকে ৩ জুলাই ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে সকল শিক্ষাগত সনদ, অভিজ্ঞতার সনদ, নাগরিক সনদ, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র এবং প্রার্থিকার সনদের সত্যায়িত কপি বীমা উন্নয়ন ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ কর্তৃপক্ষের কার্যালয়ে জমাদান করবেন।
 - সরকারি, আধা-সরকারি ও স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে চাকরিরত প্রার্থীদেরকে অবশ্যই যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমতিক্রমে আবেদন করতে হবে। চাকরিরত প্রার্থীকে মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত অনাপত্তি পত্রের মূল কপি প্রদর্শন করতে হবে।
 - নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারের বিদ্যমান বিধি-বিধান ও কোটা নীতি এবং পরবর্তীতে সংশ্লিষ্ট বিধি-বিধান কোনরূপ সংশোধন হলে তা অনুসরণ করা হবে।
 - কর্তৃপক্ষ বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে উল্লিখিত পদের সংখ্যা হ্রাস/বৃদ্ধি এবং বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাতিল করার অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে।
 - লিখিত/মৌখিক/ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোনো প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না।
 - নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত বিষয়ে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।
 - আবেদনের শর্তাবলিতে উল্লেখ করা হয়নি এরূপ ক্ষেত্রে সরকার কর্তৃক জারিকৃত বিধি-বিধান প্রযোজ্য হবে।
 - IDRA নিয়োগ পরীক্ষা, ২০২৫-এর বিজ্ঞপ্তি, online-এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণের নিয়মাবলী, SMS-এর মাধ্যমে আবেদন ফি প্রদানের নিয়মাবলী ও অন্যান্য প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্যাদি আবেদন সংশ্লিষ্ট ওয়েবসাইট <http://idra.teletalk.com.bd>, কর্তৃপক্ষের ওয়েবসাইট <http://www.idra.org.bd> ও আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠান বিভাগ, অর্থ মন্ত্রণালয়ের ওয়েবসাইট <http://www.fid.gov.bd> তে পাওয়া যাবে।


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An urgent call to action

Do not neglect malnutrition among children, who are our future

Amid continued focus on economic crises, dollar shortages, and political developments, one topic that perhaps impacts our long-term future the most—the nutrition level of our children—hardly comes into discussion. Children, especially those under five years of age, have no voice in the public realm, whether in politics, policy planning, or in our parliament. As a result, a crisis of nutrition among children is quietly in the making.

Although there has been some improvement in this regard over the last decade, experts are worried that, given the current prevalence of stunting and wasting among children under five, Bangladesh may not meet the Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDG) targets by 2030. Besides, statistics and percentages often hide the real picture. Take, for example, the stunting rate among children under five, which came down from 41 percent in 2011 to 21 percent in 2022—it does not really convey the reality of the millions who are still stunted. When these children become adults, the deprivation of proper nutrition during their most crucial development years is likely to haunt them for the rest of their lives. According to experts, 80 percent of brain development occurs between birth and three years of age. As such, even if an adult increases their nutrition intake, they will not be able to reverse the harm done from lack of nutrition in the early years.

One of the main causes of malnutrition among children under five is deprivation from breast milk. Sadly, in Bangladesh, the rate of exclusive breastfeeding has come down from 65 percent in 2018 to 55 percent, according to the most recent data. Reasons include inadequate campaigns to raise awareness on the importance of breastfeeding, an increase in caesarean deliveries, aggressive marketing by powder milk suppliers, an increase in the number of working mothers, and lack of space for nursing at workplaces. Child marriage, which remains quite high in Bangladesh, can also lead to malnutrition among mothers and children under five, according to research.

Ironically, we are not just depriving our children of proper nutrition; we have allowed toxins to seep into our food chain through excessive use of plastics, chemical fertilisers, and pesticides, harming their health and nutrition in the long run. Therefore, we must not only increase budget and manpower—especially at the grassroots—for nutrition programmes and raise awareness about breastfeeding and antenatal care. Child marriage must also be stopped, along with the use of harmful chemicals and plastics that toxify our food chain. It is time for an urgent call to action.

A tragic waste of youthful energy

Clashes between students of Dhaka, City colleges raise concerns

In what is becoming a tedious display of ego clashes and false heroics, students of Dhaka College and Dhaka City College have again turned the streets around their campuses into battlegrounds, leaving the general public to suffer the consequences. Given how routine such conflicts involving the two colleges have become, this is no longer just about who or what started it off; any excuse seems enough to unleash violence. On Tuesday, it was the allegation of a Dhaka College student being assaulted the previous day, leading to an attack on the City College premises as well as hours of chase and counterchase as police struggled to contain the situation. Many, including police officials, were injured. It’s painful to see this meaningless cycle of violence among students who are supposed to lead the nation one day.

According to a report, this is the fifth time that students of these colleges clashed in the last four months. City College students were also involved in a separate clash with their peers from Ideal College earlier this year. As police and witnesses have noted, often trivial matters ignite clashes, leading to repeated disruptions, injuries, and property damage. The surrounding areas, dense with markets and educational institutions, bear the brunt of these outbursts. For commuters and small businesses, every such episode means lost time, lost income, and a growing sense of insecurity. For the students involved, it is a tragic waste of youthful energy, and it has a damaging effect on all other students as well.

Equally alarmingly, this tendency for violent outbursts seems to be increasing in the country. Only days ago, a third-year student of Primeasia University was stabbed to death in broad daylight over a petty argument. The ease with which young people often resort to violence—even over minor personal slights—suggests a deeper malaise caused by decades of authoritarian and undemocratic practices, whose effects continue even after the uprising. There is a possibility that this culture of impulsive aggression could harden into a long-term norm if we do not act urgently.

It is, therefore, not enough to blame the police for the failure to prevent vandalism at City College, as its authorities did. This vandalism or violence is not just a law enforcement problem; it goes much deeper, and all must do their part to resolve it. Dhaka College and City College administrations must work closely with law enforcement to impose strict disciplinary measures, enhance monitoring on and around campuses, and ensure swift punishment for any acts of violence. The role of social media groups in fuelling tensions must also be addressed. We urge the interim government and political parties—whom feuding students often draw their strength from—to treat this issue with the seriousness it deserves.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Installation of Pope Benedict XVI

On this day in 2005, Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger), successor to John Paul II, formally assumed his position as the new leader of the Roman Catholic Church during a mass in St Peter’s Square in Vatican City.

Rana Plaza: 12 years of grief, courage, and unkept promises



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TASLIMA AKHTER

It’s been nearly 12 years, but the memories still refuse to fade.

Back then, the place was sealed off with tin walls and barbed wire. Inside that enclosure lay what could only be called a graveyard—where human remains were mixed with dust, brick chips, and scraps of concrete. If you dug even a little, you might’ve found a tooth, a bone, or even a skull. Just the thought still sends shivers down the spine.

The ground was uneven, with small mounds and dips. Pieces of torn fabric in red, blue, and violet were scattered everywhere, silent witnesses to the shattered bodies they once clothed. Threads lay tangled with buttons, blood-stained clothes, and foreign labels bearing unfamiliar names. Seen from above, it looked like a land struck by a brutal storm. But this wasn’t caused by nature. This was the wreckage left behind by April 24, 2013.

These workers were not just statistics. They were citizens of this country. They were daughters, sons, mothers, and fathers. They were the lifeblood of a national economy, part of a 40-lakh-strong workforce. How can we, as a country, turn away from them?

That day, at Rana Plaza, more than a thousand lives were crushed beneath cement, machines, and metal. It wasn’t a natural calamity. It wasn’t an accident or divine punishment. No outside enemy attacked. The real storm that hit Rana Plaza was made with human hands—by neglect, by greed, and by the failure of those who should have protected lives. It was a massacre, silent, cold, and structural.

April 24 is a date that cannot be swept under the rug. No matter how many years pass, its impact will linger. On that morning in Savar, just



On April 24, 2013, the name Rana Plaza became synonymous with both tragedy and awakening.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

21 kilometres from central Dhaka, more than 1,100 workers lost their lives when the nine-storey Rana Plaza building collapsed. At least 162 are still missing, according to research by Bangladesh Garment Sramik Samhati.

The workers arrived early, in groups, as they had every day. They entered the building that housed five factories—New Wave Bottoms Ltd, Phantom Apparels, Phantom Tac, Ether Tex, and New Wave Style—spread across six floors (third to eighth). The lower floors held shops and banks; the top floor was empty. Bizarrely, huge generators were installed on the third and eighth floors, not on the ground, raising the risks. From the outside, the blue glass facade looked polished. Inside, it was a death trap.

The land that the building had been constructed on had been illegally grabbed, including the property owned by locals like Rabinranath Sarkar. Sohel Rana, owner of Rana Plaza, and his family had a reputation for grabbing land. People were afraid to speak out. “If you say anything about him, there will be trouble,” they would whisper. “Even the local MP

deafening roar, the building came crashing down. Within moments, everything was reduced to rubble. Survivors described it as being buried alive inside a grave. Some cried out for help. Others whispered prayers. Many fainted from shock or exhaustion.

In the dim light of their mobile phones, trapped workers saw horrifying sights. Bodies crushed under machines and concrete. Blood dripping down the walls. One man’s legs hung from beneath a staircase. A woman was impaled by an iron rod. There were dismembered limbs, lifeless eyes, broken dreams. Some survivors clung to one another, huddled in the darkness, their only wish to live. Religion, gender, age—none of it mattered. People reached for comfort wherever they could find it.

Jasmine, a survivor pulled from the rubble two days later, shared a story that still resonates with me. “I was trapped and had lost hope,” she said. “An unknown man held me close to his chest. As a woman, leaning on a stranger like that would normally be unthinkable. But in that moment,

nothing mattered more than the hope of living—of seeing my daughter again. I’ll pray for that brother all my life. Because of him, I’m alive.”

The horrors didn’t stop there. Blood, filth, intestines, and death surrounded them. Some drank their own sweat, others resorted to drinking urine to survive. One woman named Rojina cut down her own hand to release herself out of desperation. People recited their final prayers. Some lost their minds. They pulled hair, scratched, attacked each other—anything to stay sane or alive. Trapped survivors held on for as long as 17 agonising days.

The official record says the Rana Plaza collapse caused 1,136 deaths. But when you include those who are missing and DNA evidence, the number exceeds 1,175. Still, for the authorities, factory owners, and international buyers, these lost lives seem to be just a number—a number that’s too easy to forget.

But these workers were not just statistics. They were citizens of this country. They were daughters, sons, mothers, and fathers. They were the lifeblood of a national economy, part of a 40-lakh-strong workforce. How can we, as a country, turn away from them?

The world woke up that day. The name Rana Plaza became synonymous with both tragedy and awakening. Since then, the ready-made garment (RMG) sector has seen massive changes: green factories, new markets, ambitions of becoming a hundred billion-dollar industry. But the question remains: how much of this progress has reached the workers?

Twelve years have passed. And yet, there has been no real justice. Sohel Rana and others responsible have not faced meaningful consequences. The compensation laws haven’t changed. Survivors still struggle to live on a minimum wage of Tk 12,500. The site remains unpreserved. There is no national memorial at the site of Rana Plaza, nor other sites of industrial disasters such as Tazreen Fashion and Hashem Foods.

But their fight should not be forgotten. In the new Bangladesh built by its people, there must be justice—not only for Rana Plaza but also for Tazreen and Hashem Foods fires. We must protect the stories, the sites, the sacrifices.

Let April 24 be a day not just of mourning, but of renewal. Let us remember the dead—and the fight for the living. That must be our promise.

Our propensity for violence and the elements that foster it



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ABIR HOSSAIN

On April 20, 2025, battery-run rickshaw drivers took to the streets to protest against the decision to ban their vehicles in Dhaka’s Gulshan and Banani areas. Soon after, tensions flared with clashes breaking out between battery-run rickshaw drivers and the locals, pedal rickshaw pullers, and ride-sharing motorcyclists. Based on the reports on the altercation, it appears that this entire affair has devolved into a “he said, she said” situation, with all parties claiming that they did not provoke the clashes—they just acted to defend themselves. The following day, protests escalated again. This time, there were reports of the protesting drivers threatening pedestrians who attempted to take photos of or record the incident unfolding. Additionally, the scuffle with pedal rickshaw pullers intensified as the protesters threw two pedal rickshaws off the bridge into Gulshan Lake.

Earlier this month, when demonstrations in solidarity with Gaza poured out across the country, the movement garnered attention for all the wrong reasons. With the rallies fizzing into chaos, it was the looting and vandalism that captured most of our attention. Not only did these abhorrent acts divert attention away from the very issue the protests were

for, but they also undermined the collective effort that the rest of the nation displayed.

A month before that, records of two young women being attacked in Lalmatia by an enraged mob pervaded much of our discourse and psyche. What followed was a barrage of more reports of violence against women. In between and beyond, plenty more has happened. One might claim that too much has happened. Yet, it would be wrong to claim that these acts have only taken place in the past several months since the interim government took charge. It did, however, feel like they happened more frequently. Moreover, it would be dismissive to claim that a collective fear did not grip the nation. After all, we are a nation in transition. Any sign of instability threatens grave consequences.

However, as we look back and scrutinise at all such incidents that took place over the years, an underlying pattern emerges. That pattern not only binds the many events that have plagued the conscious collective, but in many ways is a reflection of it. What I am alluding to is our inclination for violence. Many traits may characterise this irrational phenomenon. It may be described as being delirious, damning, and downright despicable. But if all we do is condemn these attacks, without

fully fleshing out what compels them to transpire in the first place, then the thoughts we spare for the victims are performative at best, and dismissive of their struggles at worst.

What triggers violence cannot just be explained by the rule of the former regime and its subsequent overthrow. To make sense of it, we must turn to the values, or rather the lack of them, that the country has survived with for far too long. Our core values, the four principles of our constitution, haven’t been used to create organisations that promote them. Without institutions built on the foundation of state values, how can we expect to undertake a long-term project of nation-building? On what basis is it meant to be sustained and directed? What core beliefs are supposed to resonate across generations?

Despite our history, all these questions are devoid of a solid answer. We have been left to fend for ourselves based on the whims of our politicians, most of whom have rarely, if ever, attempted to rectify or even address it. Rather, they have continued to perpetuate a political culture of control and dominance and leveraged it to accumulate personal wealth. The cycle has repeated far too many times because the system here has been rife with corruption for decades. It has cultivated a culture of impunity, not accountability, essentially warping the law and forcing functionality to completely crumble. Inevitably, the impulse that one might get away with their wrongdoing trickles down, thus forging the culture of impunity as the norm.

Nonetheless, the malfunctioning of the system doesn’t exist in isolation. Its roots, which are a result of a lack

of a value system, are entrenched deep in our education system as well. Without a set of values to dictate the curriculum, what core principles are meant to be instilled in and embodied by young minds? We cannot deny that these principles can at least act as references to mould their thinking around. Additionally, what is indicative of the state of our educational institutions is the fact that elected politicians themselves tend not to send their children to local government schools, opting instead for private English medium schools or schools abroad.

What, then, does that say about the state of our educational institutions? It screams of the giant rift between politicians and their constituencies. In the process, it also lays bare the scarcity that the rest of the nation has to make do with. The dynamic this fosters is one of resentment, enforcing the idea that not only is there no one looking out for them, but also that these institutions are doing nothing to bolster their interests. As a result, people take matters into their own hands and take drastic, often poorly thought-out measures that prove to be counterproductive.

With crumbling institutions built on fragile principles, power has, time and again, been co-opted. Is it any wonder, then, that Bangladesh has been marred by mindless violence for as long as most of us can remember? The sources of people’s apathy and collective restlessness can be attributed to a system that has continued to fail them. A withering system may amplify and echo their troubles. However, it most certainly underpins that while values may be abstract, their weight is tangible.

CHALLENGES IN BUILDING A REFORMED POLITICAL ORDER

Pathways to a new political order

THIS IS THE SECOND 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

Between 1991, when democracy was restored in Bangladesh, and 2009, the Awami League and the BNP were each twice elected to office, through free, fair and inclusive elections. Unfortunately, the tenures of either party did not conspicuously serve to promote the practice of democracy and appeared to be more preoccupied with consolidating power and perpetuating a winner-take-all political culture.

In the backdrop of a bipartisan political system, the BNP has emerged as the largest political party in the country. In the absence of the AL in the political arena, in the aftermath of the post-July-August uprising, the prospect of the BNP forming the next government through a free and fair election appear propitious. Public attention is naturally focused on whether they will return as improved practitioners of democracy. In the aftermath of the uprising, remarks made by top BNP leaders on the state, governance, and practice of democracy project a renovated image of the party and has been widely appreciated by the public. However, the spectacle of the party's field-level workers moving to fill the power vacuum created by the exit of the AL from the field and appropriating the vacated opportunities for rent-seeking have aroused some concern that old habits die hard. Punitive actions by the BNP leadership against malleasant party members do not appear to have done enough to discourage such predatory actions. Popular discontent against such misbehaviour suggests that the BNP leadership needs to act more decisively to discipline their party cadres if they are to persuade the public of their reformed identity.

In contrast, the forces which came together to overthrow the AL regime represent a fresh presence in politics and have generated their own political dynamic where a younger generation has begun to assert itself. The students have earned respect and legitimacy through their vanguard role in the July-August uprising, particularly among the younger people. They have been justifiably concerned that the old political order should not be perpetuated and demand that substantive reforms take place to ensure that a new, more just, and equitable order emerges. They have welcomed the reforms initiated by Prof Yunus but aspire to be more actively engaged in carrying forward the reform process. To do so, a segment of the students have launched a political party, the National Citizen Party (NCP). This is a welcome step.

Bangladesh has long needed a third party to challenge the duopoly exercised by the AL and the BNP for the last four decades, which has tribalised national politics. Prof Yunus made a rather mistimed and misconceived effort to establish such a third party in 2007. Its early demise did not rule out the need for a political force which would challenge the hegemony of the two parties. Jamaat is indeed another such force of political consequence. But its politics so far have been targeted to a specific ideological rather than a national constituency. It may now have wider aspirations to reach out to a broader spectrum of voters and promises to be a significant force in the forthcoming national election.

The emergence of the NCP as a prospective challenger to our dynastic politics has the attraction of novelty and the virtue of not carrying any baggage from past involvements

Failure to effectively manage the economy and the law and order situation could erode the credibility and authority of the IG, which remains crucial to ensure a transition to a free and fair election with a peaceful transfer of power to an elected government.

in governance. To capitalise on such assets, the NCP would be advised to project itself as the party of the future, rather than re-fighting historical battles. Some of the student leaders have so far invested much rhetoric over rewriting the constitution and proclaiming a second (?) republic. As it transpires, their five-point declaration on displacing the four fundamental principles that have underwritten the Bangladesh constitution appears to be a largely semantic exercise, which says nothing that is not already inherent to the original fundamental principles of the constitution. Such provisions as "pluralism" are integral to the ideas of democracy and secularism. The provision of "equality" and "social justice" are essential components of the idea of socialism. Such a move to engage in constitutional dialectics appears to be driven

more by a desire to re-interpret history than to redefine the fundamental values guiding the national mission.

The preoccupation of the students in engaging in such a historical discourse has left limited opportunity for them to spell out how they aspire to create a society committed to eradicate *boishomyo* or inequality. It has also distracted them from what should have been their primary responsibility in the post-August 5 period, providing backup to the Yunus-led interim government (IG) in restoring stability to the ravaged socio-economic landscape of Bangladesh. They could have, through organising students groups, served as a reinforcement to the weakened law enforcement agencies. They could have shown an active commitment towards challenging *boishomyo* by drawing attention to the problems of vulnerable groups, and could have been more proactive in protecting such groups against acts of oppression and exploitation. Such initiatives would have given the students both visibility and credibility as a new force committed to change—not just through words but actions. Such a hands-on role in civic activism would have helped to define their political identity and widened their support base beyond their student's constituency.

One of the enduring messages of politics is to fight the right war at the right time. As a consequence of their incapacity over the last several months to project a more clearly

transparent, creating an example that other political parties can follow.

REFORMS VERSUS ELECTIONS

Yunus is himself a strong believer in the need for reforms, but his promise to hold free and fair elections remains his most tangible commitment to the people of Bangladesh since it remains his most realisable objective. He has indicated that elections may take place between December 2025 and June 2026. This target is still to be firmed up and a roadmap clearly laid out to take the country towards elections. But there appear to be pitfalls ahead which could complicate the design of a clear guidepost.

Yunus sensibly argues that holding free and fair elections may serve little purpose if the inherited state of political malgovernance is perpetuated. Such a position, which is possibly widely shared, particularly among the students, indicates a lack of confidence in the credibility of the promises made by various political parties, but more specifically the BNP, that they are committed to structural reforms.

Yunus and the students demand substantive institutional reforms, which can bring about real change. To this end, he has set up a number of commissions populated by well-known and respected intellectuals and retired bureaucrats to recommend institutional reforms in such areas as the constitution, judiciary, public administration, police, an anti-corruption commission, an election commission, media, women's affairs, local government, health, and a task force as well as a White Paper on the economy. Many commendable reform proposals have emanated from these bodies. Surprisingly, the students/youth have been underrepresented in these commissions. Nor has there been adequate representation of women and religious or ethnic minority groups in the commissions.

It is one thing to write up reforms

options for implementing the reforms whether by executive order of the IG, an elected constitutional assembly, or to be left to an elected parliament. This complex set of governance challenges are also spelt out in synoptic form in the spreadsheet. As anyone who has conducted such US-style examinations knows, such a process may not be able to capture the nuances and complexities which underlie each question. Nor does the spreadsheet provide scope for discussing the process through which each reform will need to be enacted and eventually

The pathway to national elections, whether in December 2025 or in 2026, is not likely to be so smooth. Whenever the election campaign hits the streets, we will get a sense of how far the attempt by the IG to build a consensus to ensure a more peaceful political process has built up any traction.

implemented. Converting a "yes" response to a single-line reform proposal into a policy or legislative programme is thus likely to be a much more challenging process than preparing a commission report.

Most of the political parties, including the BNP, JI and NCP, have responded to this scholastic interrogation. It is not clear how the Consensus Commission will evaluate their answers or how they will weigh responses from the many parties with negligible electoral support and the few that command nationwide electoral support.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

articulated vision for the future, the student movement has lost some of its lustre. The NCP's capacity to reach out to the mass of students who participated in the July-August uprising is eroding as various sections of the student's movement have remained reluctant to follow them into the NCP. It should be recognised that students are not a homogenous class with shared political views. Their immediate goal is to study, pass exams, and enter the job market, so political engagement remains a passing commitment.

To retain its student base and broaden its outreach, the NCP needs to recapture the dynamism of the July-August movement. To do this, they need to establish their political autonomy and project their promise of delivering a fresh agenda before the people. In practice, the NCP has already unnecessarily engaged themselves in the same historical dialectics which frustrated the emergence of a more workable two-party democratic system.

The NCP is already politically identifying itself on such issues as the urgency of elections (not high) and antagonism towards India, where its position is closer to the JI. The emerging political contradiction today pits the NCP and the JI against the BNP, which daily demands an early election, which it expects to win comfortably in the absence of AL as a major challenge. In contrast, the NCP needs more time to build their party, so they argue that reforms should be initiated and implemented before elections are convened, a position supported by the JI but strongly resisted by the BNP, who views this position as a delaying tactic for elections.

As the NCP moves ahead to prepare for elections, whenever they may be, it is facing up to one of the realities of Bangladeshi politics which have sadly not been resolved by any of the reform commissions. It needs to build up a sizeable war chest to contest elections. The party should, however, aim to build an election fund for itself that is above board and

on paper and quite another to secure political consensus on reforms as well as to operationalise them. The IG has constituted a so-called Consensus Commission, made up of the chairs of the six commissions, headed by Yunus, and coordinated by the chair of the Commission on Constitutional Reforms, which has been empowered to draw up a concise agenda of reforms distilled from the reports of the various commissions. This agenda is to then be presented to and discussed with the political parties to establish a consensus behind the reforms.

Such a route to reform appears unusual because it does not involve either Yunus or his interim government in participating in or guiding the political task of consensus-building. As a result, the reform agenda is not identified with Yunus or his government and is the outcome of the diverse views of six different groups of experts who have themselves not been mandated to establish coherence in their particular vision for reform. It is the Consensus Commission which has now been invested by Yunus with the political challenge of building consensual support for the reforms among a heterogeneous group of politicians with widely disparate electoral support and political agendas.

The initial modus operandi of the Consensus Commission has yielded a spreadsheet which puts together their proposed reform agenda in a synoptic form of 167 itemised questions on specific reforms, which are expected to be answered by each party through a quiz format limited to responses through tick-marking one of three possible options: "agree," "disagree," or "partially disagree." There is also a box attached to each question for parties to attach comments, if any, relating to the proposed reform.

Beyond indicating their preferences on each reform proposal, the political parties are also expected to tick-mark their preferred

Nor is it clear as to how the IG will relate to the consensus-building of the commission since Yunus and the IG are currently the only available institutional body with the power to move towards enacting reforms based on the evaluation of the questionnaire and consultation with the political parties.

While some reforms, classified as "low-hanging fruits," can be picked for immediate implementation by the IG, the process of actually operationalising even these reforms to a point where they yield results on the ground is likely to take time. Reforms, if they are to be carried out, will thus largely depend on the commitment and political perspective of whichever party or coalition wins the forthcoming elections and their capacity to implement the reforms. In such an undefined universe for enacting and implementing reforms by the Yunus government, the debate over reforms versus elections is somewhat theoretical and reflects contesting political strategies rather than policy differences.

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Within this still-evolving scenario, the elephant in the room remains the Awami League. The NCP wants to ban the AL. The BNP rather ambiguously argues that AL's fate should be decided by the people or the courts, whatever this means. The BNP is inhibited from taking a categorical position on this issue at this time. It would ideally like to claim that it fought a freely contested election fairly defeating all comers, particularly the AL. The party reckons a banned AL would remain a permanent source of agitation on the streets, better positioned to challenge a victorious BNP government, more so than an electorally defeated party. However, the path towards drawing the AL into the electoral arena, with its leadership in exile and other leaders and activists largely in hiding or incarcerated, remains uncertain.

How far the International Crimes Tribunal

(ICT) will be able to convict and sentence a significant number of AL leaders, apart from SH, through a credible judicial process remains to be seen. Many of these AL leaders, whether as ministers or MPs, may also be expected to be held accountable for various acts of corruption. This would also need to be done through a judicial process which may determine their eligibility for contesting elections.

Moving from jail cells and remand to the courtroom and passing sentence in Bangladesh is a time-consuming process if it is to be done within the rule of law. So AL's capacity to eventually contest elections remains a grey area. If such issues are resolved in time and the AL is permitted to contest, with the right to campaign on the streets for their nominated candidates, take out processions, and organise public meeting, this is likely to introduce a highly incendiary element into the electoral campaign.

Moves by the IG, under pressure from the NCP and their allies, to ban the AL or keep them out of the elections is likely to be open to contestation, both legally and politically, within the country. Nor may it find favour at the international level, particularly within the UN system. The UN has called for an inclusive election. India, in particular, is likely to make an inclusive election into an issue of both bilateral and international concern. It should be kept in mind that the exclusion of a major party such as the BNP from contesting the national elections of 2014 and 2024 and the fraudulence of the 2018 election put the legitimacy of the AL-led regime at the national and global levels under challenge throughout the last decade. The exclusion of a major political party such as the AL, however discredited it may be, is hardly likely to keep the forthcoming elections immune from challenge.

Prof Yunus recently said that the next election in Bangladesh would be the most free and fair. In this context, we can recall that in 1991, the Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed caretaker government, of which I was privileged to be a member, received much applause both at home and abroad for holding a free, fair, peaceful, and fully inclusive election. In that election, the ousted military dictator HM Ershad's Jatiya Party won 35 seats in parliament. Ershad himself won in five constituencies while he was under house arrest in Gulshan. A veteran Indian journalist, Nikhil Chakravarty, editor of the weekly *Mainstream*, who was a member of a team of election observers, termed the Shahabuddin election as the freest and fairest election he had witnessed in his lifetime.

The pathway to national elections, whether in December 2025 or in 2026, is not likely to be so smooth. Whenever the election campaign hits the streets, we will get a sense of how far the attempt by the IG to build a consensus to ensure a more peaceful political process has built up any traction. The contested social and political landscape is already manifesting itself through the growing visibility of attempts by extremist forces to use the more congenial environment provided by the IG to more openly express themselves. This has created an increasing sense of insecurity for women in public spaces and an enhanced sense of vulnerability for indigenous and religious minorities. Threats of violence voiced by extremist groups and expatriate influencers using social media indicate that the freedom to practise a particular brand of politics or voice uncomfortable opinions can no longer be taken for granted. If such acts of violence are to remain a relevant factor in the practice of democracy, even under the Yunus-led government, the emergence of a reformed democratic order based on public reasoning is going to remain elusive.

In this fast-evolving political environment, the IG may find that its most challenging agenda remains to prevent a further deterioration in the condition of the economy and to bring about some visible improvements within their tenure. While some improvements in the economy have been registered under the IG, the recent decision by the Trump administration to expose Bangladesh's principal exports to a regime of high tariffs has added a further element of uncertainty for the IG's management of the economy. The law and order situation remains a matter of continuing concern. Failure to effectively manage the economy and the law and order situation could erode the credibility and authority of the IG, which remains crucial to ensure a transition to a free and fair election with a peaceful transfer of power to an elected government.

Fortunately, prospects for change are not without hope. Bangladesh is today led by Muhammad Yunus, a universally respected person of unquestioned integrity. Attempts across the border to paint him as an intolerant fundamentalist with a hunger for power lack credibility and hence appear tendentious in intent. His presence as the head of the IG has provided the country with a rare moment where governance and policy decisions are largely made not for personal benefits, but for the greater good. Some of these decisions may be unwise, governance may be deficient in some areas, but the commitment of the regime remains sincere. If such a regime cannot lead the way towards substantive change, then Bangladesh may indeed face another era of disappointment and discontent.

BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

A priceless fictional HEIRLOOM

Review of ‘Lost Tales from a Bygone Era: An Anthology of Translation of Urdu Stories by Rahat Ara Begum (1910-1949), Along With Biographical Notes’ (Nymphaea, 2024), edited by Lubna Marium

FAKRUL ALAM

There are any number of ways one can approach Rahat Ara Begum’s collection of short stories, *Lost Tales from a Bygone Era: An Anthology of Translation of Urdu Stories*, assembled, contextualised and published in this book by her loving grandchildren and their siblings. One can view their work as a recovery of not only a female ancestor’s works; one can also feel in reading it their delight in coming across her considerable fictional talent and preserving it for posterity. The realisation that their grandmother had used the short story form with considerable skill and sensitivity to depict the lives of women and their loved ones of “a bygone era” is something her descendants can justifiably take pride in.

Another way of looking at the stories anthologised in the volume is to stress their artistry, for Rahat Ara’s ability to bring us close to diverse aspects of men-women relationships in the pre-partition era fictionally is an achievement that can



DESIGN: MAISHA SYEDA

I am reminded a bit by the last of these questions of A. S. Byatt’s 1990 Booker-prize winning *Possession* (Random House), which at least in part depicts the excitement and thrills experienced by the fictional descendants of the woman poet at the center of the novel when they discover her literary “remains”.

in no way be underestimated. Indeed, when one thinks of the way most Muslim upper-class women were made to spend their lives in the innermost parts of houses and cope with all sorts of restrictions placed on their movements routinely then, her coverage of these areas and of their occupants artistically in her short stories featuring them appears even more admirable.

A third way of approaching these works, however, is to not be influenced solely by considerations dependent on cultural and social history to arrive at the real estimate of Rahat Ara’s writing skills. In other words, one can try to assess her writerly abilities: how good was she as a chronicler of women’s

lives in her era and what skills and techniques did she deploy in her writing to portray her characters and delve into their minds and the intricacies of their relationships?

Finally, a point that can be dealt with relates to the genesis of the book. How did the “lost tales” come into public view seven decades or so after they were written and after the writer herself had passed away?

I am reminded a bit by the last of these questions of A. S. Byatt’s 1990 Booker-prize winning *Possession* (Random House), which at least in part depicts the excitement and thrills experienced by the fictional descendants of the woman poet at the center of the novel when they discover her literary “remains”. We are made to believe that she had all but disappeared from the English literary landscape and would have perhaps been only a footnote in literary history, if she and her manuscript not been accidentally rediscovered and treated as an extraordinary inheritance by a pair of young academics, one of whom is a close relative “possessed” by the desire to retrieve a lost reputation. The thrills of holding in hand a lost but priceless family heirloom is something Byatt makes palpable in her novel.

From the prefatory material of *Lost Tales from a Bygone Era* we learn that the stories were originally written in Urdu and published either in Kolkata or in Lahore between 1939 and 1948. We also gather from the introduction the collective excitement that spurred the grandchildren on to search for her works in libraries in Lahore, Hyderabad and Kolkata as well as the University of Dhaka. As Lubna Marium, the editor of the volume, points out in her Introduction: their grandmother’s work and Rahat Ara herself had been almost “erased from public memory”. This was something that drove her and her sister Naila Khan, “the Project Coordinator”, to “retrieve Rahat’s publications and reprint them in the original or in translations.” And it was thus that they managed to get the stories translated by Neeman Sobhan, Rukshana Rahim Choudhury, and Aamer Hossein. Collectively, they as well as the other grandchildren and great grandchildren had felt that it was “certainly time to bring out into the open and celebrate her unusual but creative life”.

To turn now to the nine stories of *Lost Tales from a Bygone Era*, six of them deal with Muslim characters and three with Hindu ones. In other

words, Rahat’s focus extends across religious boundaries, something surely remarkable in pre-partition Bengal. Spatially, too, there is variety, for we have stories set in villages as well as cities. The social standing of the characters, moreover, reveal the range of her interests, for they include people coping with poverty on the one hand, and financially well-off people, or even aristocratic ones, on the other. But almost all the stories deal with situations arising from love or desire, and the barriers in the way of lovers preventing them from uniting with their loved ones, or the hurdles that have to be crossed to live happily. As in life, Rahat depicts tales with endings depicting union and fulfillment in addition to ones that have tragic or disturbing outcomes. Not surprisingly for a woman writer of that period, Rahat depicts the vulnerability of women in quite a few of these stories, and the stereotypes about female duties and conduct and the boundaries they are confronted with.

Only on a few occasions does Rahat signpost a moral from the conflicting situations she portrays in most of her stories. A moral that can be considered representative of her position on love and marriage is what we come

across in the following lines from “The Confession”: “Love and trust are the only two things that can transform an individual’s life into paradise.” Not unsurprisingly perhaps for a woman writer of her time, Rahat also has a point to make implicitly in some of the stories that is used almost like a refrain in “The Young Student”: “A man can love many women at the same time. His heart probably has compartments where he has to keep the love of many women. But a woman loves only once in her lifetime.” And implicit in quite a few of the stories is the one encapsulated in the title of the story: “Azadi” or “Freedom”: women would like to come out of confinement if they could do so. But the story ends by showing how a predatory man attempts to abuse her for daring to do such a thing, although her husband will continue to believe in her!

On the whole, Rahat Ara prefers to show and not tell. Thus readers will more often than not have to draw the moral or the point being made in a story through the thrust of the narrative and on their own. This never poses a problem to the reader though since her story-telling method is simple and the pace of the narratives gentle. Almost always, the reader is carried along by the plot and assisted by the narrative techniques she uses. The events depicted seem natural and the setting is portrayed economically. Because the translations are very readable and the book neatly produced, readers will surely be able to go through the nine stories on their own easily whenever they want to.

One can only hope that more such efforts will be made by Rahat Ara’s descendants to rediscover other manuscripts she has left behind in addition to publishing some of the other collections of stories they already have in their possession. Present and future readers can then relive the past and come across the stories of people whose memories may have dimmed but whose lives still can be revived fictionally for pleasure as well as for guidance, and for coming to know more about our past social and cultural history.

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BOOK REVIEW: COLLECTION

Reading Begum Rokeya, again and always

Review of ‘Spider-Mother: The Fiction and Politics of Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain’ (Warbler Press Annotated Edition, 2024) edited by Ben Baer and Smaran Dayal

MAHMUDA EMDAD

Begum Rokeya was once described as a “Spider Mother” (makar-mata or makarsha janani) in her biographical account but there is nothing sinister in this metaphor. The image of the spider here symbolises the quiet, patient, and selfless labour of an educator, caring for children who were not her own. Shamsunnahar Mahmud, her close co-worker, wrote: “Day after day in this way, with the blood of her own breast, Spider Mother began to revive hundreds of baby spiders into new life.”

This hauntingly beautiful image stayed. It became the title of Ben Baer and Smaran Dayal’s book *Spider Mother*. This anthology brings together a curated selection of Rokeya’s most compelling fictional and political writings. The editors have chosen works that exemplify her reflective and speculative engagements with the world around her, texts that pushed against the boundaries of how gender, religion, science, and power were conventionally discussed. From the visionary technoutopia of “Sultana’s Dream” to the sharp critique of gendered seclusion in “Burka”, from reimagining biblical allegory in “Fruit of Knowledge” to interrogating the very structures that shape a woman’s voice in Woman Prisoner, the collection captures

Rokeya’s literary range and radical insights.

For many of us, our first encounter with Begum Rokeya’s revolutionary voice came through “Sultana’s Dream”. What makes this short tale groundbreaking is how it prefigures concepts of ecofeminism, long before the term was coined. The harmonious balance between nature, science, and society in Ladyland mirrors many of the ideas we now associate with ecofeminist thought. As artist Chitra Ganesh reflects, “Sultana’s Dream, and the visual grammar it generates remind us of the radically generative potential of dismantling patriarchy, thinking with structures rather than individuals, the power of collective action, and what a concrete vision of a more just and enduring world might look like.”

One of the key intentions of this book is to make her work accessible to a wider, multilingual readership. The editors and translators have taken special care to preserve the distinctiveness of Rokeya’s style in translation, believing that her clarity, rhythm, and rhetorical power are essential to the impact of her ideas. Their goal was not to smooth out or modernise her voice, but to retain the integrity and resonance of the original texts, allowing readers to experience both the substance and style of Rokeya’s thinking.

The second piece in the collection, “Fifty



ILLUSTRATION: AMREETA LETHE

Miles in an Airplane (Dream Fulfilled)”, offers a retrospective glance at “Sultana’s Dream” and reflects how Rokeya’s once-imagined world of aerial travel became her lived reality. Published in 1932, the essay captures her first flight experience, written with light humor and profound insight into technological and social transformation. This brief essay is a subtle commentary on the disparities between technological advancement and gender progress, showing how speculative fiction can anticipate real-life change.

The collection also reimagines the

tale of Adam and Eve, Rokeya challenges the traditional view of women as the root of all evil by portraying Eve’s act of eating the forbidden fruit as the beginning of knowledge, consciousness, and human progress. Through this lens, the woman is not a seductress but a catalyst for enlightenment and action. Rokeya cleverly links this awakening to the socio-political reality of British colonial India, using “Kanakadweepa” to represent the subcontinent and Fairyland to symbolise Britain. With literary finesse, she critiques

imperial exploitation and reframes women as agents of change, making a compelling case for collective liberation.

Begum Rokeya’s contributions to feminist thought and activism remain both profound and timeless, as exemplified in the collection *Spider Mother*. Beginning her advocacy for women’s rights in the early 20th century, she focused on the education and empowerment of Muslim women, a marginalised group in a rapidly changing society. Her writings, often under-recognised in her time, consistently addressed the multifaceted oppression women faced, connecting it with broader social, economic, and political structures. Her ability to uncover the deep-rooted causes of gender inequality and link them with various facets of society highlights the versatility and depth of her work. Despite limited exposure during her lifetime, Rokeya persisted in her mission, using her voice to challenge the status quo until her final years.

This review has been abridged. Read the full article on *The Daily Star* and *Star Books and Literature’s* websites.

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Muzarabani wins battle of pacers

SHABAB CHOWDHURY

Zimbabwe pacer Blessing Muzarabani stood tall and won the battle against the much-hyped pace unit of Bangladesh in the first Test in Sylhet.

Much of the talk from the Bangladesh camp was about their pace sensation Nahid Rana, and how he could dismantle batters with sheer pace. But instead, it was Muzarabani who shone, putting all those chatters to bed as he starred with match figures of nine for 122 – the best for a Zimbabwean against Bangladesh – to help his side to a three-wicket win at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Standing at six feet and eight inches tall, Muzarabani produced an accomplished display throughout both innings, using not just his physical abilities to great effect but also having his wits about him.

The 28-year-old persistently challenged Bangladesh batters with short deliveries – an Achilles heel for the Tigers – and perhaps had the best read on the wicket on offer.

Muzarabani had several top-order batters jumpy by ruffling them with deliveries directed at the bodies, winning the mind-game with the Bangladesh batters. The right arm quick then went for the kill with nipping deliveries just on a length or just short of it. He had as many as five batters, most of them key in the Bangladesh lineup, succumbing to the short ball.

But, perhaps, what Muzarabani did best was identify how the grassy wicket offered extra bounce for the bowlers. He remained adamant about bowling short-of-a-length, surprising the batters almost at every turn.

Pacers usually get high dividends for bowling it full and on a good length, especially when the cherry is shiny and the wicket is conducive to fast bowling.

But Muzarabani opted to go against the norm, and perhaps, it was not a surprise.

“That’s my strength, to bowl the hard length on the body. It is my No. 1 skill,” Muzarabani had said on Tuesday.

The Zimbabwean quick deciphered what was going to work for him and stuck to shorter lengths. Till Day 4, his short-ball percentage was the highest – 69.6% – amongst bowlers from both sides.

Muzarabani, undoubtedly, stood out in Zimbabwe’s pace attack but his fellow quicks also played their part in making him shine as Victor Nyachii and Richard Ngarava bowled with discipline and sacrificed on extravagance. The trio definitely won the pace battle between both sides as they accounted for 13 wickets in the match, while Bangladesh’s pace battery, comprising Nahid Rana, Hasan Mahmud, and Khaled Ahmed, picked up five in total.



Even after an underwhelming game overall, Bangladesh almost turned things around in the final session of Day 4 of the first Test against Zimbabwe at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium yesterday. It was all-rounder Mehedi Hasan Miraz, who almost made it seem like the Tigers had a chance of defending a low 174-run target. Miraz scalped fifiers in both innings, becoming the only Bangladeshi player to get 10-wicket hauls three times in Tests, surpassing Taijul Islam’s record of two 10-wicket hauls. Miraz finished with figures of 10 for 102 runs in the game, with most of his wickets coming in the final session yesterday which helped Bangladesh reduce Zimbabwe to 161 for seven after the visitors got off to a flying start by amassing 95 for no loss at one stage of the game. With the final wicket of the day, Miraz, playing his 52nd Test, also became only the third Bangladeshi to reach 200 wickets (after Taijul Islam and Shakib Al Hasan). However, despite providing a scare to the visitors, Miraz could only help Bangladesh reduce the margin of defeat as Zimbabwe ended up winning the contest by three wickets.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Shanto blames ‘mental lapses’ as home woes mount

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN, from Sylhet

During the current ICC World Test Championship cycle, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) opted for a significant shift – moving away from spin-friendly pitches to more balanced, sporting wickets for home Tests. The change came after years of criticism, with many arguing that doctored pitches may have helped secure occasional home wins but left the team exposed abroad, where they consistently suffered heavy defeats.

Criticism had long come from all quarters – journalists, organisers, administrators, players and coaches – over the preparation of pitches tailored to Bangladesh’s spin strength. But once BCB committed to preparing fairer wickets for both domestic and international matches, the response was largely positive.

And initially, the gamble appeared to work as the Tigers began to show results overseas. Last year, they won three of their six away Tests – the most in a single year in their history. Highlights included a historic first-ever Test series win against Pakistan and a long-awaited victory over the West Indies on their turf after 15 years.

However, the picture at home was less encouraging. Since beating New Zealand in the opening match of the WTC 2023–25 cycle at Sylhet International Cricket Stadium in November 2023, Bangladesh have lost six consecutive home Tests – the latest being a three-wicket defeat to Zimbabwe at the same venue yesterday, which gave the visitors a 1–0 lead in the series.

As in this Test match – where

“I think the more Tests you can win, the more you’ll be on the radar. As tough as Tests are, it is what every player wants to play and get better at. It really does test you over four or five days. The smaller teams want to play good, hard Test cricket against tough opposition. That’s the only way you’ll improve as a team.”

Zimbabwe captain
CRAIG ERVINE

**** Since beating New Zealand in November 2023, Bangladesh have lost six consecutive home Tests.**

**** Out of the last 14 home Test innings, the Tigers have folded for under 200 on nine occasions, and only four times have they crossed the 300-run mark.**

**** With yesterday’s three-wicket win, Zimbabwe ended a four-year wait for a Test win.**

Bangladesh batters failed to put up good totals on the board – managing only 191 and 255 runs in their innings – the main reason behind their home Test debacle has been the inconsistent performance from their batters.

Out of the 14 home Test innings since the start of the last WTC, the Tigers have folded for under 200 on nine occasions, and only four times have they crossed the 300-run mark. Meanwhile, during this same period, their highest score was 338 runs against New Zealand in Sylhet.

Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto, who has led the side throughout this period, was asked to explain their continued poor form despite the shift to better wickets. He didn’t go into great detail, but admitted that “mental lapses” and poor decision-

making were to blame.

“It’s difficult to say what the problem is. If you see our batting, all were soft dismissals. I don’t think we threw away our wickets to good balls,” Shanto said during a press meet after the match.

“There can be mental errors and every individual can talk about their dismissals. I reckon the batters should have taken more responsibility – especially those who were dismissed after getting set at the crease.”

Bangladesh will have a chance to redeem themselves in the second and final Test, starting April 28 in Chattogram. However, unless they address the problems quickly, they risk further embarrassment – particularly against a Zimbabwe side that just ended a four-year wait for a Test win.

AHF CUP

Bangladesh set up semifinal against Oman

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh emerged Pool B champions with an all-win record in the AHF Cup following a 5–0 win against Sri Lanka in their fourth and last final pool match in Jakarta, Indonesia on Wednesday.

The result set up Bangladesh’s semifinal on April 25 against Oman, who emerged Pool A runners-up by virtue of goal difference against group winners Chinese Taipei.

Like the previous matches, the men in red and green initially struggled against Sri Lanka and were held goalless in the first half.

The charges of Mamun Ur Rashid, however, broke the deadlock from open play with Rakibul Hasan giving a 39th-minute lead before Bangladesh added four more goals in a span of only 11 minutes.

Rakibul doubled the margin in 42nd minute from open play before Fazla Rabby and Arshad Hossain widened the margin in the 43rd and 49th minutes with field goals. Naim Uddin sealed the victory from a penalty corner in the 50th minute.

SHORT CORNER

Nazmul appointed convener of CDM technical committee

Following the upheaval in relation to the reduction of Towhid Hridoy’s suspension which led to Enamul Haque Moni’s resignation as convener of technical committee, BCB director Nazmul Abedeen Fahim has been appointed as convener of the technical committee. The umpires’ committee had also embroiled itself in controversy by signing a sanction table revision, which allowed Hridoy to play after serving a one-match ban.

Soumya hits 153, Abahani-Mohammedan title race going down to the wire

Abahani maintained their two-point advantage over Mohammedan at the top of the table as the title race builds up ahead of the final stages of the Dhaka Premier League Super League stage. Meanwhile national team opener Soumya Sarkar hit a blistering 153 not out for Legends of Rupganj against Agrani Bank at BKSP four to help his side to a big win.

Remainder of Fed Cup final next Tuesday in Mymensingh

The Professional League Management Committee (PLMC) of Bangladesh Football Federation on Wednesday decided to hold the remainder of the Federation Cup final between Abahani and Bashundhara Kings next Tuesday at the same venue – Rofique Uddin Bhuiyan Stadium in Mymensingh. The meeting also decided to restart the game at 3:30pm.

***Read full stories on The Daily Star website.*

Cabrera asked to reconsider Fahamedul for Singapore tie

SPORTS REPORTER

On the eve of the national team’s departure for Shillong to face hosts India in their Asian Cup qualifier on March 25, Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Tabith Awal found himself addressing a group of disgruntled fans. Their concern centred around the omission of Italy-based teenager Fahamedul Islam from the squad.

Head coach Javier Cabrera had released the young winger from the training camp in Saudi Arabia, explaining that he needed more time to adapt to the team’s system and that more suitable options were available.

Media reports, however, later revealed that Fahamedul had grown frustrated during the camp, alleging a lack of support from local teammates in practice matches. He repeatedly voiced his concerns to Cabrera, who, displeased with the player’s attitude, ultimately sent him back to Italy. Nevertheless, Cabrera acknowledged the player’s talent and praised his efforts during the camp.

The issue resurfaced during Wednesday’s meeting of the national teams committee, where the Spanish coach was asked to include Fahamedul – along with other interested foreign-based players – in the upcoming training camp for the June 10 fixture against Singapore.

“The meeting focused on our preparations for the

Singapore match,” BFF media committee chairman Amirul Islam Babu told reporters at the BFF House on Wednesday. “We stressed the need for a strong performance and positive result, and the coach gave his assurance after we discussed the shortcomings from previous games.”

Fahamedul’s name inevitably popped up in the discussions. “The committee recommended his inclusion in the next camp,” Babu confirmed.

“Of course, to field a foreign-based player in the national team, we need the necessary clearances. The BFF president is already trying to get Fahamedul’s clearance...”

When asked if the committee had interfered with player selection, Babu clarified that the coach has full authority to include any foreign-based player he sees fit, and the board will support the decision.

To aid preparations, the committee also announced plans for a practice match against a foreign team on June 5.

“With the domestic league ending on May 29, we’ll call up the national squad on May 31,” said Babu, further informing that Sudan have shown the most interest to play the friendly in Dhaka.

Additionally, the meeting explored the idea of forming a selection committee to assist the head coach, though no final decision was reached. The committee also urged the BFF boss to appoint a foreign goalkeeping coach to strengthen the backroom staff.



Dani Olmo celebrates the only goal in Barcelona’s hard-fought 1–0 home win over Mallorca on Tuesday with Eric Garcia, who provided the assist inside the first minute of the second half of the LaLiga game. The win saw Barcelona extend their lead over Real Madrid at the top of the table to seven points with five games to go. Real visit Getafe late on Wednesday and will be in with a chance to cut the gap with Barca to four points.

PHOTO: BARCELONA

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Five Islamist parties reach consensus, call for Islamic welfare state

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five Islamist parties yesterday jointly expressed a “strategic consensus” to nominate single candidates for each seat in the next national election.

They also resolved to unite in establishing an Islamic welfare state free from hegemony and imperialism, so that fascism cannot be re-established in any form.

Islami Andolon Bangladesh (IAB) organised the meeting at its headquarters in Paltan, in the capital, with the party’s Ameer Syed Muhammad Rezaul Karim in the chair.

The four other parties were represented by Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish Ameer Mamunul Haque; Jamiat e Ulama-e-Islam Bangladesh Vice-President Abdul Rob Yousufi; Khelafat Majlish Secretary General Ahmad Abdul Kader; and Bangladesh Nejam-e-Islam Party Vice-President Maulana Abdul Majed Athari.

The four-party alliance is also known as Samomona Char Dol (‘Like-minded Four Parties’).

At the meeting, the five parties demanded that the interim government hold the next parliamentary election only after the trial of those responsible for the July massacre, and for enforced disappearances and killings over the past 15 years.

IAB General Secretary Yunus Ahmed told The Daily Star, “We’ve agreed that the election will be held only after completion of necessary reforms within a rational time.

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The Shitalakkhya has long been a victim to severe pollution, with waste and toxic chemicals from dyeing and other industrial factories in Narayanganj being dumped into its waters. The photo was taken at Demra Ghat, near the capital, where the river’s darkened hue and toxic odour clearly indicate its deteriorating condition.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

JULY ATROCITIES No permission needed to arrest FIR accused

HC stays DMP order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday cleared the way for law enforcers to arrest any accused or suspects without permission from the higher authorities in connection with the cases filed over atrocities during the July uprising.

The court stayed for three months the Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner’s order to get permission from the higher authorities before arresting any accused named in the First Information Report (FIR) or suspects in these cases.

It also issued a rule asking the government authorities concerned to explain why the DMP commissioner’s order should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Fatema Najib and Justice

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6

Tobacco use declines 13% in 13 years

Meeting UN target for tobacco use reduction unlikely

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The slow rate of decline in tobacco use suggests that Bangladesh is unlikely to achieve the UN-set target for 2030, according to an analysis of six relevant surveys by the Bangladesh Medical University (BMU).

Bangladesh is supposed to reduce tobacco use by 40 percent by 2030 as per the World Health Organisation’s extended target and by 30 percent by 2025 as per the WHO Implementation Roadmap for Global Action Plan for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease 2013-2030.

Between 2009 and 2022, Bangladesh saw a 13 percent relative decline in tobacco use, meaning the country made only 30 percent progress towards the 2030 target and 40 percent towards the 2025 target, said M Mostafa Zaman, executive editor of BMU Journal, while presenting the findings of the analysis on six nationally representative surveys yesterday.

Given the current rate of decline, Bangladesh is unlikely to achieve the target, he said.

“So, we have to intensify our efforts three to four times to achieve the targets.”

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



Door for US trade talks ‘wide open’

Says China after Trump signals tariffs will fall

AFP, Beijing

China said yesterday the door was “wide open” for trade talks with Washington, a day after US President Donald Trump signalled the possibility of a “substantial” lowering of tariffs on Beijing.

Bringing further relief to global markets spooked by his aggressive trade policies, Trump also said on Tuesday he had no intention of firing US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell.

Since returning to the White House in January, Trump has imposed additional tariffs of 145 percent on many products from China.

These include duties initially imposed over China’s alleged role in the fentanyl supply chain and later over practices Washington deemed unfair.

Beijing has responded with sweeping counter-tariffs of 125 percent on US goods, but reiterated yesterday that it was willing to engage in trade talks.

“China pointed out early on that there are no winners in tariff wars and trade wars,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun told a daily news conference in Beijing. “The door for talks is wide open.”

Chinese President Xi Jinping also

warned yesterday that trade wars “undermine the legitimate rights and interests of all countries, hurt the multilateral trading system and impact the world economic order”, state media said.

The reiteration from Beijing comes after Trump acknowledged that 145 percent was a “very high” level and that will “come down substantially”.

“They will not be anywhere near that number” but “it won’t be zero”, he said. “Ultimately, they have to make a deal because otherwise, they’re not going to be able to deal in the United States.”

Those comments came after Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told a closed-door event on Tuesday that the tariffs amounted to a reciprocal trade embargo.

Bessent said he expected a de-escalation in the near future, according to a person who was in the room.

Such a development should bring markets some relief, he added at the JPMorgan Chase-hosted event, which was not open to the press.

Trump’s recent tirades against Powell had fanned fears of an ouster, sending jitters through markets already spooked by the aggressive trade policies.

12 key AL leaders took shelter in JS on Aug 5

Palak tells court they were rescued by the army

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former state minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak yesterday told a court that he was among 12 high-profile individuals of the fallen Awami League regime who took shelter in a special room inside the National Parliament from the morning of August 5, the day the AL government fell, to 2:30am the following day.

Later, the army rescued all of them, including former speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury and former deputy speaker Shamsul Haque Tuku.

He, however, did not mention the other people who were with him during a remand hearing in a murder case filed with Badda Police Station linked to the July uprising.

The hearing was held at Dhaka Metropolitan

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

TALKS WITH IMF Consensus likely on exchange rate, revenue issues

2 instalments may be released at once

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

Key differences with the International Monetary Fund on revenue generation and exchange rate policies have narrowed during the ongoing discussions in Washington DC, in a development that is likely to trigger the release of the fourth and fifth instalments of the \$4.7 billion loan.

“We are in dialogue and nearing a consensus,” said Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed, who is leading the Bangladesh side in the talks, according to the video statement issued by Golam Mortuza, the press minister in Washington DC.

The fourth tranche of the instalment was deferred due to disagreements and now talks are going on to release two tranches at once.

Since Saturday, the delegation has been engaged in a series of meetings with IMF officials, including Deputy Managing Director Nigel Clarke.

Multiple sessions have been held to address sticking points in the loan programme, The Daily Star has learnt from people involved with the proceedings.

Prior to the Washington visit, an IMF delegation concluded a two-week mission to Dhaka on April 17, which ended without a staff-level agreement.

Disagreements persisted over the flexibility of the

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



4 indicted in Magura child rape case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenaidah

A court yesterday framed charges against four individuals in connection with the Magura child rape and murder case.

It set April 27 as the next date for the hearing.

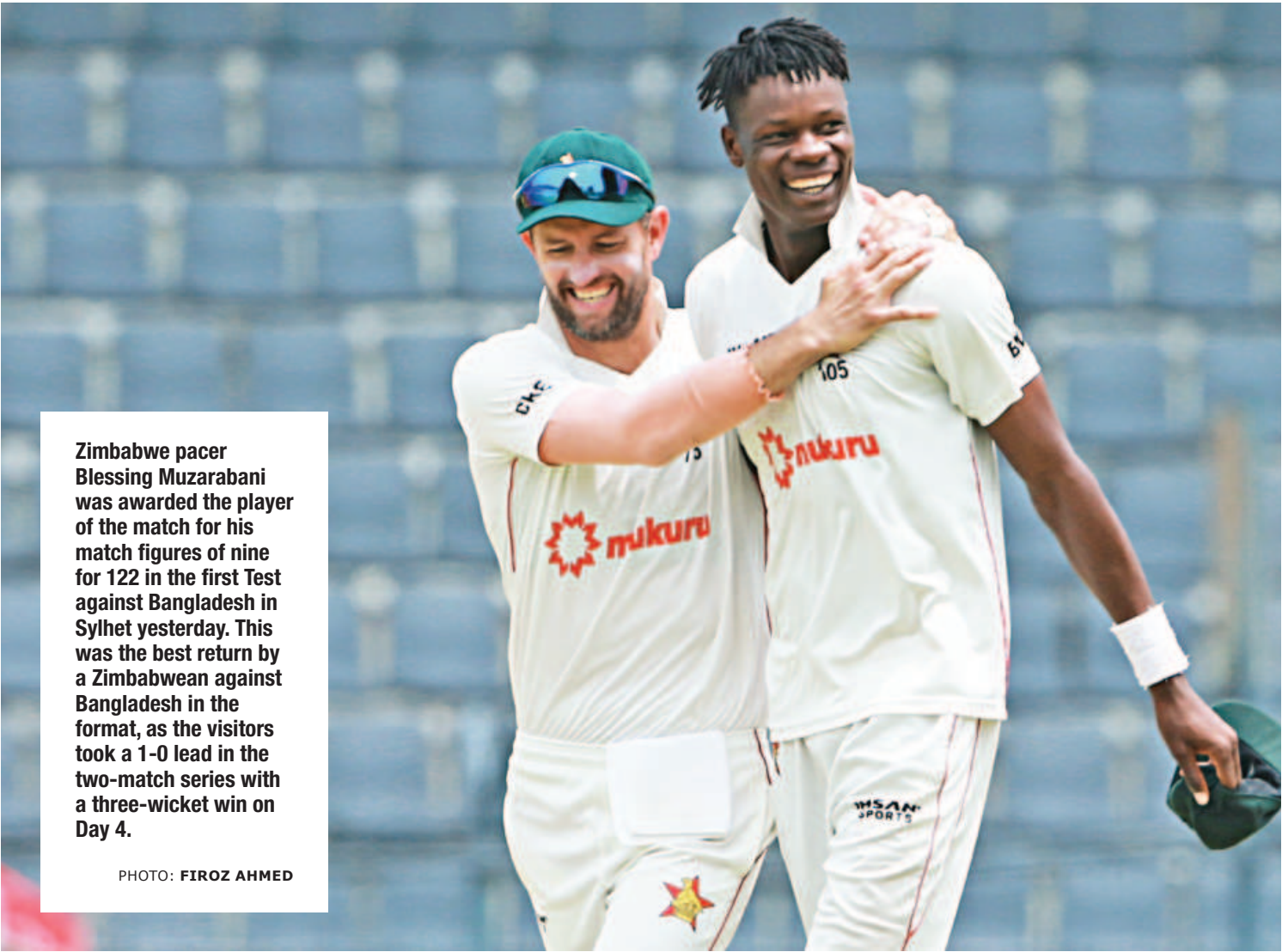
Judge M Zahid Hasan of the Magura Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal framed the charges in the presence of the accused in the courtroom around 10:30am.

The accused are Hitu Sheikh, father-in-law of the victim’s sister; his wife, Jaheda Begum; their son and the victim’s brother-in-law, Sajib Sheikh; and Sajib’s brother, Ratul Sheikh.

Public Prosecutor Advocate Monirul Islam Mukul, along with other lawyers, was present at the hearing.

In view of the significance of the case, senior lawyer Ehsanul Haque Samaji, special

SEE PAGE 6 COL 6



Zimbabwe pacer Blessing Muzarabani was awarded the player of the match for his match figures of nine for 122 in the first Test against Bangladesh in Sylhet yesterday. This was the best return by a Zimbabwean against Bangladesh in the format, as the visitors took a 1-0 lead in the two-match series with a three-wicket win on Day 4.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Kuet withdraws suspension of students

Opens dorms; demo demanding VC’s resignation continues

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

With Kuet students continuing a hunger strike demanding the resignation of the vice-chancellor, the university authorities yesterday withdrew the suspension of 37 students and reopened all seven dormitories.

The decision was made during a syndicate meeting, said Anisur Rahman Bhuiyan, registrar of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet).

The suspension orders were withdrawn after a review of the situation, he told The Daily Star.

Classes are scheduled to resume on May 4, said a Kuet press release issued following the meeting.

Although the university officially announced the reopening of the dormitories yesterday, students forcibly entered six male dormitories on April 15 and broke the locks of the only female dormitory on Tuesday.

Education Adviser CR Abrar yesterday visited the university and spoke to students on hunger strike, urging them to end the protests and trust the ongoing investigation, but the students refused.

A three-member delegation from the University Grants Commission (UGC) also met the protesting students on the campus yesterday morning to review their demands and promised appropriate action.

Out of the 32 students participating in the hunger strike, nine reportedly fell ill and received medical care.

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