

## Polytechnic students shut down campuses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of polytechnic institutes across the country yesterday announced that all campuses would remain shut until a proper roadmap for implementing their six-point demand is formulated.

“Administrative and academic buildings will be locked, and all campus activities will remain suspended,” said Mashfik Islam Dewan, a leader of Karigori Chhatra Andolon (Technical Students’ Movement), while speaking at Dhaka Polytechnic Institute. Afterwards, students locked the campus entrances around 11:30am.

Shutdown programmes were also enforced at institutes in Sirajganj, Chapainawabganj, Kushtia, Jhenaidah, Lakshimpur, Rajshahi, Chattogram, and other districts under the same platform.

Protesters said the move came in response to the slow progress of the committee formed by the Technical and Madrasah Education Division. The committee has only held one meeting so far, with no significant updates on the roadmap’s preparation.

“We are not seeing any tangible progress. The committee is not working with the urgency the situation requires,” said Mashfik.

He warned that the shutdown would continue until the authorities officially publish a detailed roadmap outlining the implementation timeline of their six-point charter.

Earlier, on April 22, the

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



PHOTO: RH RUHAN

Using horse carts, agricultural produce is transported to markets in Fulchhari upazila from Fulchhari Ghat in Gaibandha. This ghat on the Jamuna serves as the main gateway for crops from around 32 chars (islands) to reach the mainland. The photo was taken recently.

## INT’L DAY TO END CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

# Country failing to protect children from violence

Experts call for cultural shift, stricter enforcement of laws

TAHIRA SHAMSI UTSA

A 16-year-old madrasa student in Jhenaidah was hospitalised last month after being beaten by an assistant teacher – reportedly for eating two slices of leftover orange after iftar, with the madrasa superintendent’s permission.

Unaware of the approval, the teacher allegedly beat the boy so severely that seven sticks were broken during the assault.

Despite longstanding legal prohibitions, the presence of corporal punishment remains a major barrier to ending violence against children, say

**To truly protect children, Bangladesh must enact a comprehensive law banning corporal punishment in all settings, including the home. Many parents are unaware that parenting itself is something that can and should be learned.**

Laila Khondkar  
Convener of Shishurai Shob

experts.

Today, as Bangladesh joins the global observance of the International Day to End Corporal Punishment of Children – celebrated on April 30 every year – child rights advocates are renewing calls for stricter enforcement of laws, greater public awareness, and a shift in cultural attitudes.

As a signatory to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Bangladesh has committed to ending all forms of violence against children by 2030 under Target 16.2.

Although the High Court Division of

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

## Not forming edn reform commission a ‘national failure’

### Says Centre for Policy Dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government’s failure to form an education reform commission, despite setting up 11 other reform bodies, is a form of national failure, said Debapriya Bhattacharya, distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), yesterday.

Debapriya, who also serves as the convener of the Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, made the remarks at a media briefing titled “Technical and Vocational Education in Bangladesh: Current Situation and Reform Thinking,” held at the CPD office in the capital’s Dhanmondi.

“The most sensitive question is why the government did not set up an education reform commission,” he said.

“Education is not just a technical matter. It includes values, worldviews, and perspectives on humanity, the world, and the nation. It also carries historical awareness. These issues have become especially

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



Students of the Dhaka Polytechnic Institute locked the doors of its administrative and academic buildings yesterday to press home their six-point demand. PHOTO: STAR

## Migrants stranded as ‘Ami Probashi’ app goes offline

MD ABBAS

Abdul (not his real name) paid for his Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) clearance through the Ami Probashi app, completed all the necessary steps online, and was ready to board his flight to Saudi Arabia.

But when the app abruptly became inactive following the government’s decision not to renew its contract, his dreams were grounded—literally.

“The ticket was bought, and bags were packed,” he said.

“Then, just because the app was blocked and no one had any answers, I had to stay behind. I don’t even know if I’ll get another visa.”

He is one of more than 2,100 migrant workers left in limbo after the Ami Probashi app—once widely used to apply for BMET clearance—ceased functioning on April 19 when its agreement expired.

Over 20 workers have already missed their flights, while at least 50 are on the verge of losing their visas.

“My visa will expire in a few days. I completed everything through the Ami Probashi app and was just waiting for clearance. Now I don’t know what will happen,” said another affected worker.

Launched in May 2021, Ami Probashi was a privately developed

app that partnered with the Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare to digitise services including BMET registration, emigration clearance, and Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) bookings.

Though optional, the app became immensely popular—particularly among

**Though optional, the app became immensely popular as a transparent and agent-free method to complete formalities. Over four million people used the platform, often bypassing middlemen and associated costs.**

tech-savvy migrants—as a transparent and agent-free method to complete formalities. More than four million people used the platform, often bypassing middlemen and associated costs.

Now, with operations suspended, thousands are struggling. Over 10,000 workers trying to book daily PDO sessions cannot secure slots. Another 5,000 are

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3

UNVEILING

20

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