



Nothing justifies the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

Antonio Guterres
UN secretary general

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India curbs land port imports from Bangladesh

RMG, agro-processed food, furniture, plastic goods face restrictions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India has imposed restrictions on the import of garments, agro-processed foods, furniture and other goods from Bangladesh through land ports, a move likely to disrupt trade flows and increase logistical challenges for exporters.

According to a notification issued yesterday by India's Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), garments -- the single largest Bangladeshi export to India -- will only be allowed entry through two sea ports: Kolkata and Nhava Sheva near Mumbai. The rules take immediate effect.

The notification also bars imports of fruits, carbonated and fruit-flavoured drinks, processed foods, cotton and cotton yarn waste, PVC and plastic products, and wooden furniture via land ports in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, and the West Bengal crossings at Phulbari and Changrabandha.



This is essentially a non-tariff barrier to our garment exports. Now that shipments must go through sea ports, lead times will increase significantly, which in turn will raise costs for Indian importers sourcing from Bangladesh.

Anwar-Ul-Alam Chowdhury (Parvez)
ex-BGMEA president

However, the restrictions will not apply to fish, liquefied petroleum gas, edible oils, or crushed stone. Nor will they affect Bangladesh's exports to Nepal and Bhutan transiting through Indian territory.

The move follows India's earlier decision in April to suspend transhipment facilities for Bangladeshi cargo bound for third countries via Indian land borders, raising concerns about tightening trade conditions.

India is one of Bangladesh's fastest-growing apparel markets, with garment exports valued at about \$700 million annually. Around 93 percent of those shipments

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

10 ministries brace for budget cuts

ADP for FY26 to be finalised today

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The allocation for the top 10 ministries and divisions is set to be trimmed by 13 percent in next fiscal year's annual development programme (ADP) due to the government's cost cutting measures and shying away from mega and low-priority projects.

In the budget for next fiscal year, Tk 163,103 crore would be earmarked for the ministries, which is about 70 percent of the total ADP allocation. The Daily Star has learnt from planning ministry officials involved with the proceedings.

Among the top 10 ministries and divisions,

The railway ministry, the power division, and the primary and mass education ministry will see the biggest chop

eight are getting fewer allocations than this year, but two are getting more resources: the secondary and higher education division and the road transport and highway division.

The railway ministry, the power division, and the primary and mass education ministry will see the biggest chop.

The railway ministry's allocation would almost be halved to Tk 7,715 crore in fiscal 2025-26 as foreign funds have dried up for the sector. Of the total allocated amount, Tk 3,258 crore would be foreign funds.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Yunus for a bank dedicated to microcredit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday proposed the establishment of a dedicated microcredit bank based on the social business model.

While inaugurating the Microcredit Regulatory Authority (MRA) building in the capital's Agargaon, he said the proposed bank would not be a conventional one.



"A new perspective is needed here [microfinance sector], and that is establishing a microcredit bank," said Yunus, who pioneered the concept of microcredit and microfinance.

Yunus and Grameen Bank, which he founded, were jointly awarded the Nobel

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

MAGURA RAPE, MURDER Quick trial marks a watershed

1 to die; family unhappy as 3 accused acquitted

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and AZIBOR RAHMAN

In one of the swiftest and most significant verdicts in recent memory, a Magura court yesterday sentenced 44-year-old Hitu Sheikh to death for the rape and murder of the eight-year-old sister of his daughter-in-law.

His wife Jaheda Begum, 38, and sons, Ratul Sheikh, 18, and Sajib Sheikh, 20, were acquitted as the charges against them could not be proven beyond reasonable doubt, according to the prosecution.

The victim, younger sister of Sajib's 14-year-old child bride, died at Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka on March 13, a week after she was raped.

The court handed down the verdict in record time, 24 days after the trial started on April 23, 2025.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

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Hundreds killed in Gaza

Israel launches expanded offensive aimed at defeating Hamas; ceasefire talks resume

AGENCIES

Israel and Hamas yesterday resumed ceasefire talks in Qatar, both sides said, even as Israeli forces ramped up a bombing campaign that has killed hundreds of people over 72 hours, and mobilised for a massive new ground assault.

Palestinian health authorities said at least 146 people had been confirmed killed in the third day of Israel's latest bombing campaign, one of the deadliest waves of strikes since a ceasefire collapsed in March. Many hundreds more wounded were being treated in hospital, and countless others were still buried under rubble.

Israel says it is mobilising to seize more ground in Gaza in a new campaign dubbed "Operation Gideon's Chariots", which follows a visit this week to the Middle East by US President Donald Trump. It has halted all supplies entering Gaza since the start of March, leading to rising international concern over the plight of the enclave's 2.3 million residents.

Taher Al-Nono, the media advisor for the Hamas leadership, told Reuters a new round of indirect talks with the Israeli



A Palestinian woman sits under the open sky in Deir Al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday. Displaced multiple times, she and her family found temporary shelter at a tent site in the area, which was targeted by an Israeli airstrike overnight, leaving her displaced again.

PHOTO: REUTERS

that the talks had started without Israel first agreeing to a ceasefire or to lift its blockade.

Israel's military said it was conducting extensive strikes and mobilising troops with the aim of achieving "operational control" in parts of Gaza.

Gaza health authorities said most of those killed yesterday were in towns on the northern edge of the enclave, including Beit Lahiya and the Jabalia refugee camp, as well as in the southern city of Khan Younis. They said 459 people had been injured.

Israeli forces had told people to leave the northern areas on Friday.

"Northern Gaza is witnessing a systematic campaign of extermination," Hamas said in a statement, calling on Arab

leaders at a summit in Baghdad to take practical steps to stop the aggression and ensure the delivery of aid.

Talks since March have failed to restore a truce under which Hamas would release remaining hostages captured in the October, 2023 assault on Israel that precipitated the war. Hamas has long said it would not free them unless Israel ends its campaign; Israel says it will fight on until Hamas is dismantled.

At the Arab League summit, Egypt's President Abdel-Fatah al-Sisi, whose country mediates Gaza peace talks alongside Qatar, said Israel's actions aimed at "obliterating and annihilating" the Palestinians and "ending their existence in the Gaza Strip".

United Nations experts say famine now

looms in Gaza more than two months after Israel halted all deliveries of supplies. UN aid chief Tom Fletcher asked the Security Council this week if it would act to "prevent genocide".

On Friday, Trump acknowledged Gaza's growing hunger crisis and the need for aid deliveries.

A US-backed foundation aims to start distributing aid to Gazans by the end of May using private U.S. security and logistics firms. The U.N. has said it won't work with the group because it is not impartial, neutral or independent.

Gaza's health system is barely operational with hospitals hit repeatedly by the Israeli military during the 19-month war and medical supplies drying up.

The head of the Indonesian Hospital in northern Gaza, Marwan Al-Sultan, said huge numbers of wounded victims of the latest bombing campaign were in critical condition.

"Since midnight, we have received 58 martyrs, while a large number of victims remain under the rubble. The situation inside the hospital is catastrophic," he said on X.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on May 5 that Israel was planning an expanded, intensive offensive against Hamas as his security cabinet approved plans that could involve seizing the entire Gaza Strip and controlling aid.

Since October 7, 2023, Israel's military campaign has devastated the tiny, crowded enclave, pushing nearly all inhabitants from their homes and killing more than 53,000 people, according to Gaza health authorities.

NBC News reported on Friday, citing five people with knowledge of the matter, that the Trump administration is working on a plan to permanently relocate as many as one million Palestinians from the Gaza Strip to Libya. All major Palestinian political groups reject any such displacement.

Photographer killed after being lured to fake event: Police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The men who killed a photographer on Friday night and snatched three expensive cameras posed as clients and took two photographers to Shankar, according to police.

The suspects then snatched three expensive cameras, stabbing Nur Islam Fakir, 26, to death, while Nur Alam Emon managed to run away, leaving his camera.

The attackers took away two of Nur's cameras worth around Tk 5 lakh and Emon's camera worth Tk 3 lakh, Emon told The Daily Star.

Emon said a man hired him and Nur to cover an event in Shankar for Tk 10,500.

"We went there on a battery-run rickshaw. The man who hired us was sitting in the front seat next to the driver. As soon as we reached the Durga Mandir Goli area around 8:00pm, 6-7 masked men armed with machetes stopped us.

"When they grabbed our camera bags and began to flee, Nur tried to stop them. Then they stabbed him."

Shahadat Hossain, inspector of Dhanmondi Police Station, said police watched CCTV footage and spoke to witnesses.

"We suspect it was a planned robbery that ended in the killing," he said.

The man who hired the photographers is currently on the run, he added.

Rallies, procession prohibited in certain areas of capital from today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All forms of gatherings, rallies, processions, and demonstrations in several parts of Dhaka have been banned from today until further notice, said the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) in a statement.

The restrictions will be in effect in and around Kochukhet Road, from Bijoy Sarani to the Chief Adviser's Office area, near Birsreshtha Shaheed Jahangir Gate, from BAF Shaheen College to the Mohakhali Flyover, Sainik Club Mor, Bhashantek, Matikata, ECB Chattar, and surrounding areas.

Later, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) also issued a release prohibiting public gatherings in the same locations.

Quick trial marks a watershed

FROM PAGE 1

In Bangladesh, rape case trials can often take several years to conclude, even at lower courts. The trial was completed in 13 working days, which is groundbreaking in the country, lawyers on the court premises said.

Judge M Zahid Hasan of the district's Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal pronounced the verdict in front of the four accused in a packed courtroom at 9:30am, said Public Prosecutor Monirul Islam Mukul.

The tribunal also fined Hitu Tk 1 lakh.

Before the delivery of the verdict, Hitu, Jaheda and their two sons were brought to the courtroom amid tight security.

Hitu and his two sons were garbed in flak jackets and helmets with protective visors to save them from the ire of the masses, who have been demanding justice since the girl's rape and death that shocked the nation.

Soon after hearing her husband's death sentence, Jaheda broke down in tears inside the dock.

The victim's mother, grandmother and several relatives came to the court premises, but they could not enter the courtroom due to the crowd.

They all expressed dissatisfaction over the acquittal of the three accused after hearing the verdict from others outside the courtroom.

While the prosecutors were busy briefing the media, the aggrieved mother was seen quietly leaving the court premises.

"I am not happy. All three of them might do the same thing [to others] after being released -- what will

happen then?" she said firmly while standing outside the court premises. "I am not satisfied. The three deserved punishment, as they assisted in the murder and concealed information."

Hitu's mother, Rokeya Begum, however, maintained that her son is innocent.

"I have not got justice. They have bound my son and taken him to the gallows," she said, crying for her son on the court premises.

"I could not hire any good lawyer for the lack of money. No lawyer wanted to stand for us here. One lawyer from the state was appointed to defend my son, but he did not do his job properly. So my son was sentenced," she added. "I will challenge the verdict in the higher courts."

Given the gravity of the case, the home ministry appointed Ehsanul Haque Shomaji, a lawyer ranked as an attorney general, as a special prosecutor.

Shomaji told the journalists on the court premises yesterday, "We are satisfied that the main accused has been given the death penalty. However, we are not happy with the acquittal of the other three. We will try to understand why they were acquitted after receiving the full verdict. After reviewing it, we will discuss with the appropriate authorities and then decide our next steps."

Jyotirmoy Barua, a Supreme Court lawyer, said in reaction to the verdict, "There appears to be an effort to expedite the trials of cases that receive significant media attention. This is referred to as selective justice."

"In Bangladesh, there are already a

huge number of pending cases related to rape and murder in various courts. If those cases are not resolved at the same pace, it will create disparity, leading to judicial inequality."

"Equality in the application of the law is a fundamental aspect of article 27 of our constitution, which must be upheld. Therefore, all cases must be given equal priority when it comes to swift disposal," he added.

Hitu was charged with rape and murder, Sajib and Ratul were charged with criminal intimidation, and Jaheda was charged with tampering with evidence, according to the case dossier.

According to the case documents and the probe report, the child went to visit her elder sister's house on March 1.

On March 6 morning, the elder sister woke up to find the girl lying unconscious on the floor instead of beside her on the bed.

The child later complained of severe pain and burning in her genital area. The girl said her brother-in-law had unlocked the door, allowing his father to come, according to her sister.

The victim told her sister that she was forcibly taken to another room, gagged, and raped before being left unconscious on the floor of the room her sister was in.

The case statement said that when the elder sister tried to inform their mother over the phone, her husband snatched the phone and physically assaulted her. The two sisters were then locked in separate rooms, where the younger fell unconscious.

Sajib went to the room the child was kept in and poured water on her

so that she could regain her sense, said the case statement.

However, as her condition kept worsening, Jaheda, with the help of some neighbours, took her to a local hospital and left her there.

Afterwards, she was taken to a hospital in Faridpur, then to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, and eventually Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka.

The victim's mother filed the case against Hitu, Jaheda, Sajib and Ratul with Magura Sadar Police Station on March 8.

The comatose victim battled for her life for about a week, suffering multiple cardiac arrests before succumbing to her injuries on March 13.

Hearing the news of her death, enraged locals set fire to Hitu's house.

Md Alauddin, an inspector (investigation) of Magura Sadar Police Station, who investigated the case, submitted the charge sheet naming the four accused on April 13.

The death of the girl had sent shockwaves across the nation, with many demanding that the government expedite justice for rape victims and reform laws related to the safety of women and children.

The court took two days -- May 12 and 13 -- to hear the arguments from the prosecution and the defence before setting the verdict date. It also took eight days to record the testimonies of 29 out of 40 prosecution witnesses mentioned in the charge sheet. They included the victim's sister.

Journalists from Dhaka and the district were not allowed to enter the courtroom to hear the judgment.

banking continues to grow. "Right now, microcredit institutions have around 26,000 branches, while agent banking branches have surpassed 20,000. This healthy competition is fostering formal financial integration into rural economies, and microfinance institutions must adapt to these challenges to remain relevant."

To improve the functionality of the microcredit sector, he said the regulatory authority and Bangladesh Bank will work together. "A draft law on microcredit regulation has already been prepared and will soon be presented to the government."

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed emphasised that the regulations must be user-friendly rather than overly restrictive, ensuring that nothing is imposed forcefully.

He also said the MRA should focus not only on regulation but also on promotion of the sector.

Anisuzzaman Chowdhury, special assistant to the chief adviser, Nazma Mobarak, secretary to the Financial Institutions Division, and Prof Mohammed Helal Uddin, executive vice chairman of the MRA, also spoke at the event.

"Meanwhile, the microcredit system holds assets equivalent to 10 percent of the banking industry. More importantly, where traditional banking has weaknesses, microcredit has established a strong foundation."

He noted that members' savings have exceeded Tk 68,000 crore, while the accumulated surplus has surpassed Tk 61,000 crore.

Mansur added that the microcredit system will face new challenges as the rural economy expands and agent

India curbs land port

FROM PAGE 1

move through land ports, making the new restrictions especially disruptive. Bangladesh exported \$1.55 billion worth of goods to India in fiscal 2023-24, down 9 percent year-on-year, according to data from the Export Promotion Bureau.

Anwar Ul-Alam Chowdhury (Parvez), former president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), said the restrictions will hurt Bangladesh's apparel exports.

"This is essentially a non-tariff barrier to our garment exports," he said. "Now that shipments must go through sea ports, lead times will increase significantly, which in turn will raise costs for Indian importers sourcing from Bangladesh."

RN Paul, managing director of RFL Group, expressed concern over the sudden restrictions on road-based land port exports.

"We were not informed in advance that several items would no longer be exportable via Indian land ports. The list reportedly includes plastic goods and plastic granules, which we export in significant volumes," he said.

"These restrictions will severely disrupt our trade. These exports form a vital part of our monthly revenue," Paul said.

"We may have to scale up our Agartala and West Bengal operations. We already have small supply chains there, but this situation may force us to expand quickly," he added.

Paul also said confectionery products, another major export, are included in the new restrictions. "This is not just an RFL issue. At least 20 Bangladeshi companies would be affected," he said.

"We must act now. Exporters need time to adjust. We should also begin identifying alternative export corridors," he added, pointing to an old transit route near Bishramganj, adjacent to Agartala, as a potential option.

Mohammad Hatem, president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said the move will force exporters to rely solely on sea routes.

"This decision will ultimately hurt Indian importers more than anyone else," he said. "Sea shipment is time-consuming and lacks the flexibility of land port logistics. Indian buyers who depend on

Opening aid corridors

FROM PAGE 12

unnecessarily complicating the country's political situation. He underscored the need for establishing a government accountable to the people through their direct votes in a credible national election, reports UNB.

Otherwise, "it will not be easy to confront the fallen and runaway despotic Awami League", he said.

"We hope that the interim government will soon announce the date for the national election and fulfil its responsibility to establish the rights of the people of Bangladesh, rising above greed and temptation," the BNP leader said.

He said that political parties prepare themselves to serve the people through the practice of party politics, ideals, and political discourse, and to govern the country with the people's mandate.

"It is very important to strengthen democratic political parties, political norms, rules and systems, instead of depoliticisation," Tarique said.

He also stressed the urgent need to strengthen constitutional institutions, which can only be achieved through continuous democratic practice. He said it is the right time to implement the process of institutionalising democracy so that no future dictator or fascist can be a threat to the people of their rights.

Tarique said BNP and other political parties have called for a clear roadmap of action from the government.

"But if we consider all the developments so far, we see that the government has not responded accordingly. Rather, it seems they have tactically entangled the announcement of a definite election date within an innovative condition of minor and major reforms."

The event was presided over by NDM Chairman Bobby Hajaj. NDM leaders Monirul Amin and Parvez Khan, BNP leader Syed Moazzem Hossain, Chief Coordinator of Ganjamhati Andolon Zonyad Saki also spoke.

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BNP wants restoration of democracy thru polls

Says Moyeen Khan

UNB, Dhaka

BNP wants to quickly restore democracy in Bangladesh through a credible election for the country's progress, said the party's senior leader Abdul Moyeen Khan yesterday.

He made the remarks while speaking to reporters at party founder Ziaur Rahman's grave.

Moyeen, a member of the BNP standing committee, along with leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Baul Dal, paid tribute to Zia by placing a wreath at his grave, marking the 18th founding anniversary of the Baul organisation.

Awami League, which claims to be the main force behind the independence, destroyed democracy -- the main spirit of the Liberation War, he said.

Moyeen said BNP has long been struggling for the restoration of democracy. He said one-party rulers may showcase power, but they do not win the love of people.

"That is why we, BNP, do not believe in the politics of revenge. We advocate for the rights and freedoms of all," he said.

A place of hope, healing for cancer patients

Bangladesh's first 'cancer care village' project launched in Manikganj; 5,000 patients to benefit annually

ARAFAT RAHAMAN, back from Manikganj

At Joymontop village in Manikganj, a long-held dream is starting to become reality. A reality where cancer patients would no longer suffer in silence or lose their life because of poverty.

The Bangladesh Cancer Aid Trust (BANCAT), in partnership with Mosabbir Alok Nibash, officially launched the country's first ever "Cancer Care Village" project at a ceremony in Manikganj yesterday.

At the heart of this initiative is Nazmus Ahmed Albab, who was diagnosed twice with cancer himself.

Albab, also the executive director of BANCAT, said, "We wanted to create something that makes a lasting difference."

"Cancer is not easily defeated. But if patients receive proper mental and physical care, along with some financial support, we have seen that, by the grace of Allah, many recover."

"This initiative is for those who have nothing left, who sell everything they have but still cannot afford treatment. They are the ones who suffer the most, and we want to stand beside them."

"Our humble request is that people stand by us, advise us, and help us make this work as a model for the entire subcontinent," he added.



Organisers lay the foundation stone of the country's first ever "Cancer Care Village" project at a ceremony in Manikganj yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Among those supporting this mission is Lt Col (retd) Mudassir Hossain Khan, Bir Pratik, a freedom fighter who experienced the pain of losing his son, Mosabbir Hossain Khan, to cancer.

"We had three children. One of them, Mosabbir, was diagnosed with cancer and passed away. I have felt the pain of sitting beside a dying child. That is a pain only a

parent can truly understand," he said.

In memory of his son, Mudassir established the Mosabbir Cancer Care Centre in 2004. Over the past 22 years, the centre has provided free treatment, food, and shelter to around 12,000 underprivileged cancer patients.

During the pandemic, he too was

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

PROPOSED UNIVERSITY
Issue gazette to
form interim
admin by today
Demand students of
seven colleges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of seven colleges in the capital yesterday issued a 24 hour ultimatum demanding the immediate issuance of a gazette notification to form an interim administrative body for the proposed Dhaka Central University.

They warned of launching tougher programmes if their demand is not met by today. They said they would lay siege to the relevant ministry instead of holding protests that could cause public disruption.

The announcement came at an emergency press conference in front of Eden Mohila College around 4:00pm, where students gathered to protest what they termed unacceptable delays in the transition process.

Zafirin Akter of Begum Badrunnesa Government Girls' College and Abid Hasan of Dhaka College, both members

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Ishraque supporters lock down DSCC Nagar Bhaban

Services disrupted across Dhaka south

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Supporters of BNP leader Ishraque Hossain yesterday padlocked all entry points of the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) headquarters, Nagar Bhaban, bringing all service-related operations to a halt.

The gates were locked around 9:00am as part of an ongoing demonstration under the banner of "Dhakabashi", protesting the government's delay in appointing Ishraque as mayor.

Hundreds of his supporters gathered at the site, claiming they used 65 locks to seal the building.

Protesters demanded the resignation of Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain, adviser to the Ministry of Local Government. They also declared Local Government Division (LGD)

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1



Supporters of BNP leader Ishraque Hossain gather in front of Nagar Bhaban yesterday, protesting the government's delay in appointing Ishraque as the mayor of DSCC.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

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SHAMMO MURDER Three placed on six-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed three arrestees on a six-day remand each in connection with the killing of Dhaka University student Shahriar Alam Shammo near Suhrawardy Udyan on May 13.

They are Tamim Hawlader, 30, Samrat Mallick, 28, and Palash Sardar, 28.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Shahin Reza passed the order after Taufiq Hasan, a sub-inspector of Shahbagh Police Station, also the case's investigation officer, produced them before the court with a 10-day remand prayer.

In the remand prayer, the IO said all the three accused were directly involved with killing the victim. So, they need to be remanded to find out vital clues about the killing.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Momtaz sent to jail after remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent former lawmaker of Manikganj 2 constituency and singer Momtaz Begum to jail after rejecting her bail petition in a case filed over the murder of Md Sagor in Dhaka's Mirpur area during quota reform protests on July 19 last year.

Metropolitan Magistrate Md Minhazur Rahman passed the order after police produced Momtaz before the court on completion of her remand.

In the forwarding report, police said Momtaz gave important information about the incident which was being verified. So, she needs to be confined to jail until the investigation is completed.

The magistrate then sent her to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj. Police arrested Momtaz from the city's Dhanmondi area on May 12.



Severe traffic congestion grips both sides of Mirpur Road in the Shyamoli area of the capital. Although Saturdays are usually weekends, yesterday was a working day following a government notification, leading to weekday-like gridlocks across the city.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

কমার্শিয়াল ফ্ল্যাট/জায়গা বিক্রয়
ধানমন্ডিতে ২২৬৮ স্কয়ার ফিল্টের কমার্শিয়াল পাশা-পাশি ২টি ফ্ল্যাট
বিক্রয় এবং ইকাটনে ১৫ তলা কমার্শিয়াল বিল্ডিং বিক্রয় ও
ফার্মেটে শ্রীন রোডে ১১.৫ কাঠা কমার্শিয়াল জায়গা বিক্রয় হচ্ছে।
যোগাযোগ: ০১৭৫৭-০৬৯৫৯৮, ০১৯১২-৮২৯৩৭৮

STATUTORY NOTICE
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 717 OF 2025

An application under Section 81(2) and 85(3) read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994, and
AND

IN THE MATTER OF:
Md. Foyal Mahmud, Managing Director of "The Yolk Garments Ltd.", and
son of Golam Mostafa and mother's name- Setara Begum, having address at
Holding No. 64/B, Middle Madarik, Post- Basabo-1214, Police Station-
Sobujbag, Dhaka South City Corporation, Dhaka.

—Petitioner.

The Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms, and another.

—Versus.
Notice is hereby given that an application under Section 81(2) and 85(3) read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994, was moved by the petitioner before the Hon'ble High Court Division of Bangladesh Supreme Court comprising My Justice Abul Sohel for condoning the delay of holding Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the company in the name & style as "The Yolk Garments Ltd.", and after hearing the learned Advocate and considering the submission, the Hon'ble Court has been pleased to admit the said application on 5th of May, 2025 and fixed for compliance on or before 22nd June, 2025. Any person interested in the said application may appear before the Court either himself or through his Advocate. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges.

Sachchidananda Ballav
Advocate, Bangladesh Supreme Court
Hall Room No. 1, Supreme Court Bar
Association Building, Shahbagh, Dhaka
Mobile: 01890-308640

Woman scammed out of gold, cash

3 held, over 100 bhori gold recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman in Dhaka was scammed out of Tk 6,100 and 25 bhori of gold after falling prey to a Facebook post offering a so-called spiritual cure for infertility.

She responded to a post in a group called "Doa Kobuler Aloukib Golpo" (Miraculous Stories of Prayers Fulfilled), where a woman claimed to solve personal problems through divine rituals.

She first sent Tk 6,100 via a mobile transfer app and later couriered used clothes, shampoo, soap, oil and gold jewellery, allegedly for a "spiritual cleansing" ritual that would help her conceive. After receiving the items, the woman blocked her from social media.

Police have since arrested three members of an online fraud syndicate -- Md Asifur Rahman, 20, Md Al Amin, 25, and Anamika, 24 -- in separate drives in Savar and Mohammadpur early Friday.

During the raids, law enforcers recovered 85 bhori of gold, 26 bhori of gold mixed with copper, Tk 3.5 lakh in cash, and several high-end mobile phones.

At a press briefing yesterday, Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Ramna Division, said the scam began in January when she contacted the fraudsters through Facebook Messenger.

She then filed a complaint with New

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Issue gazette to form

FROM PAGE 3
of a transition oversight team, presented a five-point list of demands.

"Students of the seven affiliated colleges have repeatedly taken to the streets, faced police action, shed blood, and some even lost limbs while demanding their right to a proper education," said Zafirin. "If the gazette is not issued by May 18, we will be compelled to resume our protests from Sunday."

She said further details of the movement would be shared through press releases depending on

developments. "If we return to the streets, we won't go back to the campus without the new university ordinance in hand."

The students' key demands include: immediate issuance of the gazette forming the interim body, publication of an academic calendar to address session backlogs, cessation of unauthorised fee collection, admission test arrangements for the 2024-25 session

within two working days of forming the interim body, publication of the university's outline and logo within five working days

They also called for the formal ordinance to be issued by June 16 and for budget allocations for Dhaka Central University to be included in the 2025-26 national budget.

The seven institutions -- Dhaka College, Eden Mohila College, Begum Badrunnessa Government College, Government Bangla College, Kabi Nazrul Government College, Government Titumir College, and Government Shaheed Suhrawardy College -- were re-affiliated with Dhaka University in 2017.

However, amid ongoing protests over academic and administrative issues, DU authorities and the colleges agreed in January this year to sever the affiliation.

Three placed

FROM PAGE 3
No lawyers stood at the court to defend them.

The victim's brother filed the murder case with Shahbagh Police Station, accusing 8-10 unnamed persons.

Shammo, 25, was a student of Dhaka University student and the literature and publication secretary of the Sir AF Rahman Hall unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatri Dal.

Road crashes kill 5 in Khulna, Dinajpur
STAR REPORT

At least five persons were killed in road accidents in Khulna and Dinajpur yesterday.

In Khulna, three people were killed as a human haulier collided with an oil tanker around 10:30am in front of Dumuria Fire Service Station in Dumuria upazila.

The crash left the human haulier's driver and two passengers dead on the spot, said Shimul Mondal, a sub-inspector at Kharnia Highway Police Station.

The identities of the victims could not be known immediately, he added.

In Dinajpur, a truck hit a motorcycle from behind on Dinajpur-Birampur regional road in Phulbari upazila around 1:00am and fled the scene, leaving the motorcyclist Sohag Hossain, 26, dead on the spot and his pillion, Md Tojammel Haque, 36, critically injured, said Abdulla Al Mamun, inspector (investigation) of Phulbari Police Station.

Tojammel died at a local health complex.

Sohag's elder brother Rashidul Islam filed a case in this connection.

Police are trying to trace the truck and its driver, the inspector said.

Media, CSOs should collaborate more on energy issues

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The media can make use of civil society organisations' (CSOs) manpower and resources for investigation and data analysis, as most media outlets do not have such teams, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They said although coverage of energy-related stories has increased since the pandemic, there is still room for improvement.

The Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) organised the discussion, titled "Sustainable Energy Civil Society Collaboration," at YWCA Bhaban in Dhaka.

We all talk about Dhaka only. But we need to talk to rural people to understand their needs. We need to find local experts to express their problems.

KHONDAKER GOLAM MOAZZEM
Research director at CPD

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

TENDER NOTICE

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar hereby announces the launch of the following tender:

TENDER REFERENCE NUMBER	ITEM DESCRIPTION
BGD-UNHCR RFP-1303	FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRAME AGREEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF CLEANING, GARDENING AND JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR UNHCR OPERATIONS IN BANGLADESH

Interested and bona fide vendors are invited to participate in this Request for Proposal (RFP) by accessing and downloading the tender documents at the following web link:

<https://www.unm.org/Public/Notice/266578>

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: You are requested to inform us of the receipt of this RFP by using a message functionality in Cloud ERP Supplier portal or by sending an e-mail to BGDCOSUP@UNHCR.ORG against this negotiation as to:

- Your confirmation of receipt of this RFP
- Whether or not you will be submitting a Proposal

Sending your confirmation above will enable us to send you any updates or any changes in the tender documents.

Proposal to be submitted: Proposal must be submitted through the Cloud ERP portal. In case you have never registered before, you can register a profile using the registration link <https://ids-c870ac6c2db844cb41e7c1be0c0c329.identity.oraclecloud.com/ui/v1/signin>. Supplier Registration (oraclecloud.com) and follow the instruction in guides available in the UNHCR website https://fa-esrv-saasfprod1.fa.ocs.oraclecloud.com/fscmUI/faces/PrcPosRegisterSupplier?prcBuild=30000009859468&adf.ctrl.state=1a62dnlt8q_6038_afrLoop=3685396842549113&frWindowMode=0&frWindowId=null&afr=16&afrMT=screen&afrMFV=1920&afrMFH=911&afrMDW=1920&afrMFH=1080&afrMFC=8&afrMCI=0&afrMFM=0&afrMFR=96&afrMFG=0&afrMFS=0&afrMFO=0 to register as a prospective supplier and UNHCR Supplier portal registration manual. Do not create a new profile if you already have one. Use the forgotten password feature in case you do not remember your password or username from previous registration.

Bid submission deadline: Monday, 9 June 2025 - 05:00 PM Bangladesh time.

Kindly note that no hard copy is acceptable. The offer to be submitted only through Cloud ERP portal.

পাওয়ার শিল্প বাংলাদেশ পিএলজি
POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212
স্মারক নং- ২৭.২১.০০০০.২০.০২.২৫.১১২

www.powergrid.gov.bd

তারিখ: ০৮/০৫/২০২৫

যানবাহন মেরামতে ওয়ার্কশপ তালিকাভুক্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার শিল্প বাংলাদেশ পিএলজি এর (ক) যানবাহনের নিয়মিত মেরামত (খ) যানবাহনের এসি'র যানবাহন সরবরাহ ও মেরামত (গ) যানবাহনের টায়ার ও ব্যাটারি সরবরাহ/সংযোজন এবং (ঘ) যানবাহনের এক্সেসরিজ ও ডেকোরেটিভ আইটেম সরবরাহ কাজের জন্য কিছু সংখ্যক মানসম্পন্ন যানবাহন মেরামতকারী ওয়ার্কশপ তালিকাভুক্ত করা হবে। উপর্যুক্ত ও আগ্রহী প্রতিটাকে নিকট হতে দরপত্র আঞ্চন করা হচ্ছে।

প্রতি সেট আবেদনপত্র টাকা ১০০০/-এক হাজার) মাত্র (অফেরতযোগ্য) পাওয়ার শিল্প বাংলাদেশ পিএলজি এর অনুরূপে যে কোন ফর্মালিয়ান প্রেসে হতে পে অর্ডার ব্যাক্স ড্রাফ্ট এর মাধ্যমে প্রদেয়।

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INTERNATIONAL

DHAKA SUNDAY MAY 18, 2025

JAISHTHA 4, 1432 BS

The Daily Star

5

Trump is lying when he speaks of peace

Says Khamenei

REUTERS



Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei yesterday accused Donald Trump of lying when the US president said during his Gulf tour this week that he wanted peace in the region.

On the contrary, said Khamenei, the United States uses its power to give "10-ton bombs to the Zionist (Israeli) regime to drop on the heads of Gaza's children".

Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One after departing the United Arab Emirates on Friday that Iran had to move quickly on a US proposal for its nuclear programme or "something bad's going to happen".

His remarks, said Khamenei, "aren't even worth responding to." They are an "embarrassment to the speaker and the American people," Khamenei added.

"Undoubtedly, the source of corruption, war, and conflict in this region is the Zionist regime — a dangerous, deadly, cancerous tumour that must be uprooted; it will be uprooted," he said at an event at a religious centre in Tehran.

Earlier on Saturday, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said Trump speaks about peace while simultaneously making threats.

"Which should we believe?" Pezeshkian said at a naval event in Tehran. "On the one hand, he speaks of peace and on the other, he threatens with the most advanced tools of mass killing."

Teheran would continue Iran-US nuclear talks, but is not afraid of threats. "We are not seeking war," Pezeshkian said.

Pull back troops before truce

Russia tells Ukraine as talks in Turkey yield no result; Kyiv calls on allies to put more pressure on Moscow

REUTERS, Istanbul

Russian negotiators at peace talks in Istanbul demanded Ukraine pull its troops out of all the Ukrainian regions claimed by Moscow before they would agree to a ceasefire, a senior Ukrainian official familiar with the talks told Reuters.

The Kremlin declined to comment on the terms that Russia had put forward at Friday's meeting in Turkey — the first time the warring sides had held face-to-face talks since March 2022, weeks after Russia's full-scale invasion.

The talks lasted only one hour and 40 minutes, and yielded an agreement to trade 1,000 prisoners of war on each side. The two countries have not specified when that will happen.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday called for stronger sanctions on Moscow after a Russian drone killed nine bus passengers in the Sumy region of northeastern Ukraine. "This was a deliberate killing of civilians," he said.

"Pressure must be exerted on Russia to stop the killings. Without tougher sanctions, without stronger pressure, Russia will not seek real diplomacy."

Russia, which denies targeting civilians, said it struck a military target in Sumy. Its defence ministry said Russian troops had captured another settlement in eastern Ukraine.

Ukraine and Western governments, including the US, have demanded that Russia agree to an immediate, unconditional ceasefire lasting at least 30 days.

But the Ukrainian source said Moscow's negotiators had demanded the withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from the Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson and Luhansk regions of Ukraine, with a ceasefire to take place only after that.

The source said that and other demands went beyond the terms of a



Ukrainian rescuers remove the bodies of passengers from a destroyed bus following a drone attack near the village of Bilopillya, Sumy region, yesterday. Nine people were killed in the strike.

PHOTO: SAFP

draft peace deal that the United States proposed last month after consultations with Moscow.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declined to comment on the Ukrainian account, saying talks should be conducted "absolutely behind closed doors".

He said the next steps would be to carry out the prisoner exchange and conduct further work between the two sides. Peskov said it was possible that President Vladimir Putin could meet Zelenskiy, but only if "certain agreements" were reached, which he did not specify.

Zelenskiy had challenged Putin earlier in the week to meet him in person, an offer the Russian leader ignored.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said his country, after hosting the talks, was determined to continue its

mediation role.

Both Ukraine and Russia are under pressure from US President Donald Trump to end what he calls "this stupid war". He has threatened to abandon US efforts to broker an agreement unless they demonstrate clear progress.

After Friday's meeting, Ukraine began rallying support from its allies to take tougher action against Moscow.

British Foreign Secretary David Lammy told Reuters: "Yet again we are seeing obfuscation on the Russian side and unwillingness to get serious about the enduring peace that is now required in Ukraine."

"Once again Russia is not serious," he said during a visit to Pakistan. "At what point do we say to Putin enough is enough?"

French President Emmanuel Macron also said the talks in Istanbul had been fruitless.

Worker faces deportation

FROM PAGE 12

more than Tk 5 lakh to reach the country and is still in debt because the company had not paid him regularly, according to the email.

"Please discuss with the company and stand by me and my family," Nahid wrote.

Nahid told The Daily Star yesterday that neither the adviser's PS nor the High Commission responded to the email.

They have also requested

the company to pay the full recruitment fee in a single installment.

Earlier, Mediceram had deported 35 workers to Bangladesh without any notice. Currently, the work permits of 170 have not been renewed. Some have been without a visa for a year, others for two years.

A few months ago, four workers were arrested as they had no valid visas, but the company has not taken any responsibility, the letter says.

"We urge that our visas be renewed within next month and earnestly request you to resolve all these issues," the letter said.

Prof Asif met these migrants on the Mediceram company premises, advised them to solve any problem through discussion and not do anything that can be harmful for them or the company.

He also provided the email and phone number so that the migrants could directly contact him.

Adviser Asif and his PS Sarower could not be reached over phone for comments yesterday.

The Daily Star emailed Mediceram seeking comments on the allegations, but was yet to receive a reply as of last night.



বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক

বগুড়া।

ঠিকাদার তালিকাভুক্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি।

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক, বগুড়া অফিসে নিম্নলিখিত কাজসমূহ সম্পাদনের মাধ্যমে সরবরাহ/সেবামূলক কাজে নিযোজিত গ্রন্ত ব্যবসায়ী/ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে ০১/০৭/২০২৫ তারিখ হতে পরবর্তী ৩ (তিনি) বৎসরের অন্ত তালিকাভুক্তি নিম্নত আবেদনপত্র আবাহন করা যাচ্ছে। নিম্নের খাতাভুক্তির পৃথক পৃথকভাবে ঠিকাদারদের তালিকা প্রয়োগ করা যাবে:

ক। বাংকের অফিস ও আবাস ভবনের পৃষ্ঠা কাজ (শান্তিতারী ও প্রাথমিক কাজের মালামাল/সরকারী সরবরাহ/সেবামূলক);

খ। বাংকের অফিস ও আবাস ভবনের বৈদ্যুতিক ও যাত্রিক সরকারী সরবরাহ/সেবামূলক।

অর্থনৈতিক ব্যবসায়ী/ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহকে ০৮/০৬/২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে এতদ্বিষয়ক শর্তাবলীসহ নির্ধারিত ফরমে নিম্নোক্ত পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক, বগুড়া-এর অন্তর্ভুক্ত আবেদনপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। নির্ধারিত ফরম ০৩/০৬/২০২৫ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন অত্য বাংকের ইমারত প্রকল্প শাখা হতে অফেরতমোট ১২০০.০০ (টাকা দুইশত মাত্র) নগদ মুদ্রা পাওয়া যাবে।

তিসিপি : ৪৮/১০২৫-১২৭১

তারিখ : ১৭/৬/২০২৫

ব্যাংকের ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়ের দিকের হতে কিনো

কেনে অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২০৩ নথরে কেন করোন।

তেলন : ০২-৯৮৯৯-০০১৬৩

GD-1186

Remove 'NCP advisers'

FROM PAGE 12

The rally, organised by the BNP's affiliated bodies — Chhatra Dal, Jubo Dal, and Sweekhchasebok Dal — saw a huge turnout of young leaders and activists from the Khulna and Barishal divisions.

Salahuddin also criticised the appointment of a foreign national as the national security adviser.

"Don't you have the sense to realise the implications of giving a foreign citizen access to our army's security reports?" he questioned.

"He is trying to turn Bangladesh into a battleground in the name of the Rohingya/humanitarian corridor," he added.

Claiming that the issue was not consulted with the people or the political parties, he said that the appointed person had "arrogantly" said, "It doesn't matter".

He said it would be unfortunate if people had to go against the government in the near future.

He said if Prof Yunus

does not weed out the

fascist elements from the

government and does not

listen to the people, his exit

might not be a glorified one.

trying to create instability in the country. We cannot allow it."

The BNP leader also accused the government of exceeding its mandate by moving to make agreements involving the country's ports and corridors.

"What agreements have you made abroad? What mandate do you have? What gives you the authority to make such deals?"

He said the government's focus should be on carrying out election-oriented reforms to hold the polls by December.

"Your only mandate is to conduct a general election in Bangladesh. Don't undermine our democracy indefinitely in the name of reforms and justice."

He said it would be unfortunate if people had to go against the government in the near future.

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government and does not

listen to the people, his exit

might not be a glorified one.

Government of The Peoples Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department

Office of the Executive Engineer

District: Chapainawabganj.

www.lged.gov.bd

15/05/2025 প্রিস্টার্ড

০১/০২/১৪৩০ বঙ্গল

e-Tender Notice No : 51/2024-25

Tendering Method (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following Packages :

Sl No	Description of Work, Package No & Tender ID	Tender Last Selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)	Re- marks
01	Improvement of Mastan Bazar-Adina College via Khonda RNGPS Monakosha UP Road from Ch.00-2650.00m & Construction of 04 Nos U-Drain Size 0.625m X 0.600m at Ch.110m, 1380m, 1465m & 1945m On Same road;[Road ID:170885120] [Salvege Cost:23,38,540.00] under Shibganj Upazila, District: Chapainawabganj. (Package No. RDRIDP/Chap/Shibganj-68/24-25), (Tender ID: 110342).	16 Jun-2025 16:00	17 Jun-2025 11:00	17 Jun-2025 11:00	OTM
02	a) Improvement of Shabpara Bazar - Shabpara Bostoli Bazar muri via Chilapahara Monakosha UP road at Ch.0-3842.00m by Construction of 05Nos U-Drain Size 0.625m X 0.600m at Ch.3196m, 1440m, 1995m,2436m & 2454m On Same road; c) Construction of 01Nos Box Culvert Size 3.00mX3.00m at Ch.2651 On Same road; [Road ID:170885390] [Salvege:30,64,25,00], (Package No. RDRIDP/Chap/Shibganj-70/24-25), (Tender ID: 110343).	16 Jun-2025 16:00	17 Jun-2025 11:00	17 Jun-2025 11:00	OTM

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 Banks Branches up to Last Selling Date & Time as mentioned above. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

(Md. Anwar Hussain, 15/05/2025)

Govt must listen to women's voices

Moitree Jatra calls for a discrimination free country

We congratulate the Women's March for Solidarity (Moitree Jatra), which drew in thousands of women to Manik Mia Avenue in a show of strength, unity and resoluteness to stand up to oppression and discrimination. Several thousand women, along with hundreds of men, marched in Dhaka city with three main demands: that the government take action against threats to women and minority communities, the misinformation campaign against the Women's Affairs Reform Commission, and the weaponisation of religious sentiments to create an environment of fear. They also stated that political parties that want women's support must clearly express their stance on women's complete political, economic and personal freedom.

What was most heartening to see was women from all walks of life and from diverse communities taking part in this grand rally. They included tea garden workers, garment workers, home workers, Indigenous and Dalit women, teachers, students, development workers, cultural activists and human rights defenders. Fifty progressive organisations comprising women workers, cultural activists, students and professionals expressed their solidarity with this unique March.

This March has come at a time when women and girls are facing all kinds of threats, especially in the public sphere. Abusive and threatening language has been used against women both in public rallies as well as online. Women have faced assaults in the streets and while playing sports. Sexual violence against women and girls continues unabated, with perpetrators becoming emboldened by the unhindered hate speech and moral policing of certain groups. Threats of rape and abusive language have increased significantly on social media. Mob violence has also targeted women.

We have also seen how women, even those who were instrumental in the people's uprising, are being sidelined and their voices silenced through misogynistic speeches and exclusion. All this does not bode well for Bangladesh, a nation built on the principles of equality and justice for all and an end to all kinds of discrimination. The July uprising, too, was primarily based on removing discrimination of all kinds.

We agree with their declaration that the government must take action against these threats to women's active participation in all spheres of life. The virtual silence of the interim government after the vicious verbal attacks on its own appointed commission and its members has been disturbing and disheartening. We expect the government to make it clear that it will not tolerate misogyny and will punish violence against women in any form. The interim government, and the government that will be elected in the future, must ensure a safe environment for women and girls, free from violence and discrimination.

Fairly investigate cases against journos

Retaliatory cases risk undermining press freedom

We are concerned about how journalists continue to be targeted through retaliatory cases since the fall of the Awami League (AL) government in August last year. Very recently, 26 journalists were accused in an attempted murder case filed by Rezaul Islam, a lawyer affiliated with the Jatiyabadi Ainjibi Forum's Chattogram unit. The case, filed on May 13, alleges that the journalists, along with others, were involved in an attack on Rezaul on May 1, 2025. However, many of the accused journalists strongly deny the charges, claiming that the allegations are based on distorted facts. They assert that they are victims of retaliatory cases, similar to previous incidents where journalists were indiscriminately targeted. Such arbitrary filing of criminal cases against journalists undermine press freedom.

In the case statement, Rezaul alleges that many of the accused are affiliated with the AL, Jibon League, and their associated groups. He accuses them of extortion, murder, and attacking protesters during the July uprising. He further claims that they repeatedly threatened him to withdraw cases filed on behalf of the families of July victims, and that they attempted to abduct him, robbed him, and even hurled a crude bomb at him. However, the journalists accused in the case have narrated a completely different version of events. According to them, Rezaul threatened to disrupt a picnic event via a Facebook post on April 30. On the day of the picnic, May 1, he and his group allegedly assaulted one of the journalists near Premier University. Furthermore, several journalists who were nowhere near the scene that day were nonetheless implicated. Additionally, law enforcement officials have raised doubts about some of the claims in the case statement. The Officer-in-Charge of Kotwali Police Station stated that no reports of a crude bomb explosion had been received in his jurisdiction. The inconsistencies between Rezaul's allegations and the journalists' accounts must be addressed through a fair and impartial investigation, as demanded by the Chattogram Union of Journalists (CUJ).

We therefore urge the government to conduct a fair investigation into this case and take strong measures to prevent the misuse of the legal system. While the government previously stated that legal action would be taken against those filing false cases, we have yet to see any meaningful steps to this effect. This is deeply concerning. At present, journalists remain imprisoned due to cases filed out of personal or political vendettas. These cases should be resolved through due process.

EDITORIAL

Unpacking the proposed reforms to our revenue system



Syed M. Ahsan,
PhD is professor emeritus
of Economics at Concordia
University in Montreal, Canada.

SYED M. AHSAN

The low tax-GDP ratio of Bangladesh has often been attributed both to the weakness of the tax administration and to the lack of innovation and reform in the tax system. Successive administrations have set lofty revenue collection targets without undertaking meaningful reforms and have remained oblivious to capacity concerns. The large annual shortfalls (e.g., typically about 14-15 percent) in realised revenue over target have hardly been a surprise.

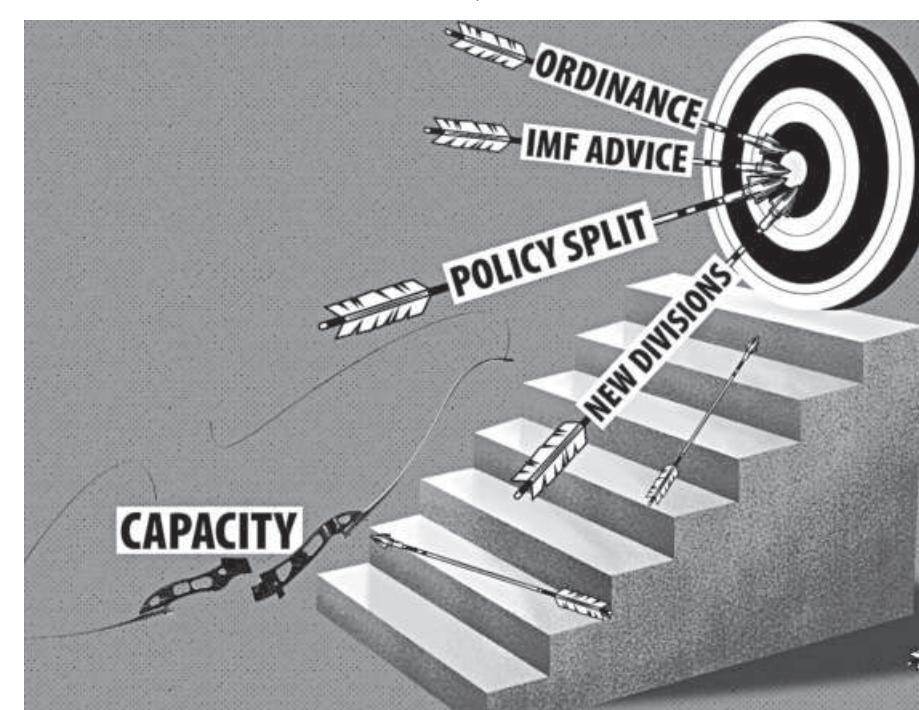
The interim government (IG) has just passed an ordinance dissolving the erstwhile National Board of Revenue (NBR) and has created two new bodies, namely the Revenue Policy Division (RPD) and the Revenue Management Division (RMD), under the direct oversight of the Ministry of Finance (MoF). This has been done in the anticipation that separating the revenue policy setting process from that of tax collection would permit the RMD to devote more energy to tax administration. Indeed, this view has been promoted by multilateral agencies, especially the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Promulgation of the ordinance was preceded by the MoF launching an Advisory Committee to investigate the subject, which duly submitted its recommendations some months ago.

Two salient points are in order. First, a separation of policymaking from that of tax administration is standard practice in most modern revenue systems. In Canada, the Canada Revenue Agency is in charge of tax collection. It even reports to a separate minister of national revenue, not finance. Secondly, merely splitting the tasks by itself, IMF notwithstanding, will not breathe new life into the stagnant tax-GDP ratio. That would require both significant tax reforms as well as augmenting tax administration capacity.

The primary logic behind the separation of revenue tasks at issue is to inject an element of operational independence into the proposed bodies. Revenue administration regimes in OECD countries operate as independent entities, albeit working within the broader framework of public accountability. Creating a division within the MoF is not a step in the right direction. Worse, the draft ordinance proposes that the RPD will be entrusted with the task of monitoring the application of tax laws as well as revenue collection undertaken by the RMD (Section 5, Clause 6, "cha"). The latter implies a hierarchical pattern between the two divisions, contrary to

the spirit of their separation. This is a no-go. Several members of the MoF Advisory Committee have spoken out, arguing that the ordinance grossly misrepresents their recommendations; the committee's vision was to create an autonomous entity outside the direct control of any ministry.

Beyond the principle outlined above, the proposed ordinance points to a misconception of how to improve the efficacy of the revenue administration



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

process. With an unchanged tax code, the tax-GDP ratio can be enhanced only if the administrative body can expend greater effort, benefit from additional training, and adopt suitable technology. To that end, it will be necessary to bring about innovation whereby suitable candidates can be recruited, promoted, and retained through timely performance reviews, thereby upgrading the overall tax administration capacity on a sustained basis. That goal would require a compensation structure commensurate with safeguarding high professionalism in the cadres and weeding out endemic corruption. The statutes posed in the proposed ordinance are at odds with these objectives. To boost staff morale, one needs transparency in the staffing modalities in terms of experience and qualifications required, especially at the upper echelons. This aspect has already caused dissension among the ranks, who have reportedly called for

grandiose demands. Alternatively, the policy body may, of its own volition, examine the feasibility of a certain tax-revenue reform. Whatever the task—directed from above or arising from within—the revenue policy entity must have administrative freedom and adequate resources (including suitable staffing) to do its job without hindrance. The design of tax reforms is inherently difficult, often requiring substantial input from advisers from academia, the legal and/or the business community. These processes require independence rather than interference from the higher administration.

Furthermore, it is the revenue administration body that needs to be insulated from political pressure in conducting its routine work, namely, to implement the tax/revenue laws of the nation without fear or favour. On the issue of capacity, the recruitment process of taxation/excise/tariff staff should be separated from that of general

in fulfilling their mandates, though the case is stronger for the tax administration entity. Hence, creating two divisions within the MoF is not the way to safeguard this objective. The two entities should be renamed to better fit their mandates—namely i) Bangladesh Revenue Authority; and ii) Bangladesh Revenue Policy Institute. In view of the presumed responsibility, each entity should be headed by a minister of state, especially the former. In terms of the allocation of staff, the existing NBR personnel should be invited to indicate a preference to work in one of the two bodies, with a one-line explanation in support of their choice. The Internal Resources Division (MoF) staff may likewise be asked for their preference to join the new policy entity or be absorbed into the general administration. And the process of staff allocation can be reviewed by an expert body made up of both internal and external members.

Confronting Dhaka's battery-run rickshaw dilemma

Tanjil Sowgat
is professor of urban and rural planning at
Khulna University.

Shilpi Roy
is professor of urban and rural planning at
Khulna University and working as an expert in
the Fair Urban Transition project funded by
Porticus.

TANJIL SOWGAT and SHILPI ROY

One of the more recent manifestations of informal urban expansion is the proliferation of battery-run rickshaws. One may claim that rickshaws are eco-friendly, cost-effective, and a source of livelihood for many, but these advantages come at a heavy cost. A large number of battery-run rickshaws are currently operating in Dhaka, with many lacking legal registration or fitness clearance. Their prevalence, largely unregulated, has contributed to a range of unintended traffic consequences.

Firstly, battery-run rickshaws introduce extreme variations in vehicular speed on city roads. Unlike motorised vehicles that maintain relatively stable speeds, these rickshaws frequently cause abrupt stops or unexpected slowdowns, thereby increasing the likelihood of accidents and congestion. Secondly, the uncontrolled acceleration capacity of many battery-powered rickshaws exceeds the structural limits of their makeshift bodies, making them prone

to accidents. Thirdly, the continued operation of these unfit and illegal vehicles creates a precedent that encourages further violations of road and transport regulations. If authorities are seen to tolerate such infractions, other transport providers may be emboldened to neglect licensing, maintenance, and safety standards. Fourthly, the presence of these rickshaws severely disrupts lane discipline, especially in already congested corridors, contributing to overall traffic disorder. Finally, law-abiding road users—both motorists and pedestrians—become demoralised, as the perceived inequity in enforcement undermines the legitimacy of the entire regulatory system.

Urban planning in the Global South is often faced with a dilemma of informality—an unregulated sector that arises from necessity, yet poses complex governance challenges. Dhaka serves as a compelling case study where unchecked informal developments such as illegal retail activities and unplanned slum settlements have placed immense pressure on infrastructure, governance, and public space. This illustrates a broader problem: the government finds itself in a precarious position, sheltering a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the longer such informality is left unchecked, the stronger the claims of ownership become; on the other, abrupt removals could devastate livelihoods and

escalate urban poverty. This paradox of informality, if not addressed strategically and promptly, can have far-reaching consequences not just for land use, but for urban mobility and functionality as well. The crisis around battery-run rickshaws poses a similarly critical challenge.

To mitigate the challenge of battery-run rickshaws, immediate and integrated interventions are essential, including the introduction of dedicated bus lanes and well-managed bus services. This would improve the reliability and attractiveness of public transport for daily commuters. A good example within Asia is TransJakarta, Southeast Asia's first bus rapid transit (BRT) system, which has grown into the world's longest, spanning over 250 kilometres. As of 2024, it serves more than 1.3 million passengers daily, offering a reliable and affordable alternative to Jakarta's congested roads. The system features dedicated bus lanes, elevated platforms for rapid boarding, and an integrated fare system, enhancing efficiency and accessibility.

TransJakarta's success uses a public-private operational model, where the government oversees infrastructure and regulation, while private operators manage bus services. This collaboration has led to improved service quality and operational efficiency.

Another vital shift could be the implementation of mandatory school bus provisions to significantly reduce

the number of trips during peak hours, easing pressure on roads. Furthermore, current rickshaw drivers could be integrated into cooperative public transport initiatives, such as low-cost community bus services, allowing livelihood transition while enhancing overall urban mobility.

In contrast to these structured solutions, the current approach of deploying rickshaw traps, which restrict rickshaws from certain roads, is praised as an immediate response, but it remains piecemeal and potentially counterproductive. Not only do these traps obstruct the normal flow of traffic for other vehicles, but they also represent unsustainable interventions unless supported by a comprehensive mechanism to permanently regulate rickshaw operations. Short-term resolutions, such as impounding rickshaws and shaming the drivers in public, can only make short-term impacts.

The issue of battery-run rickshaws in Dhaka must be understood as part of a broader governance challenge in managing urban informality. As the adage goes, "a stitch in time saves nine," but this stitch must be strategic and grounded in sustainable urban transport planning. That stitch should begin with the provision of disciplined, inclusive, and efficient public transport services—capable of meeting the city's mobility needs while gradually phasing out harmful informal practices in a just and equitable manner.

The case for cultural pluralism in urban spaces



Farah Kabir
is country director at
ActionAid Bangladesh.

FARAH KABIR

Despite living alongside one another, each culture often maintains its own distinct identity, and the richness of a society can often be measured by its ability to embrace and sustain this diversity. Cultural pluralism refers to the coexistence of diverse cultural and ethnic groups within a society, wherein each group retains its unique customs, language, traditions, and values while sharing a common civic space. This principle is especially critical in urban areas, where diverse communities must interact, negotiate, and coexist within close proximity.

Cultural pluralism manifests most visibly in cities—spaces defined by density, diversity, and dynamism. In urban contexts, people from different cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic backgrounds converge, often leading to a vibrant mixture of traditions, but also to tensions over identity, belonging, and representation. Cultural pluralism, therefore, is not merely about tolerance, but about active recognition and validation of difference. It seeks to ensure that all groups, regardless of their size or power, are able to maintain their cultural identity while participating fully in the social, political, and economic life of the city.

Pluralism, as a political philosophy, supports this idea by promoting the peaceful coexistence of various interests, beliefs, and lifestyles within a political body. It is often linked to democratic governance, which provides the most equitable structure for accommodating multiple perspectives. A democratic system grounded in pluralism encourages dialogue over domination, negotiation over suppression, and representation over exclusion. It seeks to avoid the extremes of

monoculturalism, which may demand assimilation into a dominant identity, and relativism, which might prevent the development of shared norms and values altogether.

In a pluralistic society, the "common good" is not a fixed ideal but a constantly evolving negotiation between diverse interests. For pluralism to function meaningfully, there must be a minimal consensus that the pursuit of shared values, such as justice, equity, and mutual respect is worthwhile. This requires a spirit of humility: the courage to admit what we do not know and the willingness to listen to others to understand what they need. As one philosopher noted, we must be bold enough to acknowledge our uncertainties and work to discover what others require—not just for their own sake, but for ours as well.

In Bangladesh, and particularly in its rapidly expanding urban centres like Dhaka, cultural pluralism is becoming increasingly relevant. Cities are turning into mosaics of language, ethnicity, class, and gender. As urban populations grow and become more diverse, the challenge becomes how to create inclusive spaces where all cultural groups can feel seen, heard, and valued. This demands not just infrastructural planning but a conscious cultural shift in how urban spaces are imagined and governed.

Using a comparative framework, urban diversity can be analysed through the lens of inclusion and exclusion. Scholars have identified specific arenas where these tensions play out, including public spaces and amenities, local governments, civil society, cultural institutions, and even digital platforms. It becomes critical to identify the mechanisms—

both social and economic—that can promote inclusive pluralism and position diversity as an asset rather than a threat.

Inclusivity and equity in urban pluralism

Inclusivity must be at the heart of urban cultural pluralism. This involves creating opportunities

not mean assimilation. Cultural pluralism supports integration that allows for shared civic engagement while preserving cultural distinctiveness. Assimilation often demands that minority groups abandon their customs and identities to conform to a dominant norm, something that can lead to alienation and resentment. A pluralistic society,

dialogue across cultures.

2. **Bilingual education:** In neighbourhoods with significant non-Bangla speaking populations, schools can offer bilingual education, allowing children to retain their linguistic heritage while learning the national language.

3. **Cultural neighbourhoods:** Like "Chinatown" or "little Italy" in many

vital. These could include the right to use minority languages in public institutions or funding for cultural centres.

7. **Ethnic studies programmes:** Educational curricula should include the histories and contributions of various cultural groups to promote empathy and awareness among students.

8. **Cultural exchange programmes:** Initiatives such as artist residencies, student exchanges, and community collaborations across different cultures can break down barriers and build trust.

Challenges to cultural pluralism

Despite its many benefits, cultural pluralism also faces serious challenges. Prejudice, discrimination, and xenophobia remain significant barriers to inclusion. Economic inequality can further marginalise minority groups, limiting their access to opportunities and voice in public affairs. Dominant groups may fear cultural dilution and resist pluralist policies. Meanwhile, political institutions often lack the diversity or will to enact meaningful change.

Conflicts can also arise due to differing values or social norms. These tensions require strong communication and negotiation mechanisms to manage disagreements respectfully and constructively. And finally, many individuals may simply resist change due to fear or unfamiliarity.

In an era of increasing urban complexity and cultural convergence, cultural pluralism is not just a lofty academic concept—it is an urgent necessity. Cities like Dhaka are evolving into dense, multifaceted tapestries of human identity. For these cities to thrive, they must not only accommodate difference but actively value it.

True inclusivity is not about tolerating difference from a distance but participating in it closely. It requires equity, empathy, and the willingness to build together without erasing each other. The future of our cities depends not on our sameness but on our shared commitment to coexist, to collaborate, and to celebrate what makes us unique—together.



FILE VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

for participation from all cultural groups in decision-making processes, from community boards to policy discussions. Ensuring that diverse voices are heard means that societal decisions better reflect the needs and aspirations of all residents, not just the dominant group.

Equity is also a foundational principle. This goes beyond equal treatment and requires addressing historical and systemic inequalities that have disadvantaged specific groups. Policies and programmes must be tailored to recognise and correct disparities in access to education, employment, housing, and healthcare.

Importantly, integration should

by contrast, encourage cultural expression and exchange.

Building a culturally pluralistic city

Cultural exchange is essential to fostering understanding and mutual respect. Bangladesh, with its rich tapestry of traditions and languages, stands to gain from initiatives that promote cross-cultural learning. Some practical applications of cultural pluralism in urban spaces include:

1. **Multicultural festivals:** Cities like Dhaka could host annual festivals celebrating the various cultural heritages present within the community. These events can feature traditional foods, music, dances, and art, fostering appreciation and

global cities, Bangladesh's urban spaces could formally recognise and preserve culturally significant neighbourhoods that offer unique customs, languages, and cuisines.

4. **Media representation:** Diverse and inclusive media helps dismantle stereotypes and provides platforms for minority voices. When people see themselves represented accurately and respectfully, it affirms their identity and belonging.

5. **Interfaith dialogues:** Encouraging conversations between different religious communities can reduce tension and foster spiritual and social harmony.

6. **Minority rights policies:** Legal frameworks that protect linguistic, religious, and cultural practices are

general of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Abbas was revered for his research

on Bangla folk music, especially Bhawaiya, Murshidi, and the songs of Bhati Bangla. His writings and television works brought national attention to little-known rural musicians and lyricists.

Many rural artists were first introduced in his television programmes, either Amar Thikana or later in Bhora Nadeer Banke, which he anchored for many years.

He received the Ekushey Padak for his contribution to music in 1995, the National Press Club Literary Award in 2008, and the lifetime achievement

award at the Nazrul Mela in 2013 for his work on our national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Abbas's long-running column "Godhulir Chhayapotho" in the daily Prothom Alo was revered by readers for its blend of memory, insight, and musical history.

Besides Rumir Aloukik Bagan, he wrote or edited 45 other books including, Jibon Nodir Ujane, Mohammeder Naam, Sufi Kobita, Japan: Surjo Utheche Jekhane, Bhawaiya Jonmohbumi, the novel Horinakhhi, Pramer Geet, Amar Mayer Mukh, Bhatir Desher Bhativali, Shopnora Thake Shopnere Odhare, and his autobiographical volumes.

He was a polymath: performer, writer, researcher, and cultural organiser. Abbas represented Bangladesh at cultural forums in 25 countries, performing folk genres including Bhawaiya, Bhatiali, Chatka, Bichchedi, and Nazrul Sangeet.

I first met him in Dhaka on January

Coonch Bihar. He studied at Balrampur High School and Jenkins School in Cooch Bihar, and Modern School in Park Circus, Kolkata. After moving to Dhaka, he completed his education at St. Gregory's High School (which later became St. Gregory's High School and College later) and Dhaka College before enrolling at the University of Dhaka, where he earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in history.

He founded and, for 50 years, led the folk music research group, which collected thousands of folk songs. He was a senior research scholar at the Kazi Nazrul Islam and Abbasuddin Ahmed Research and Study Center of Independent University, Bangladesh. He was also appointed as the director

of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

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ANGELINA JOLIE

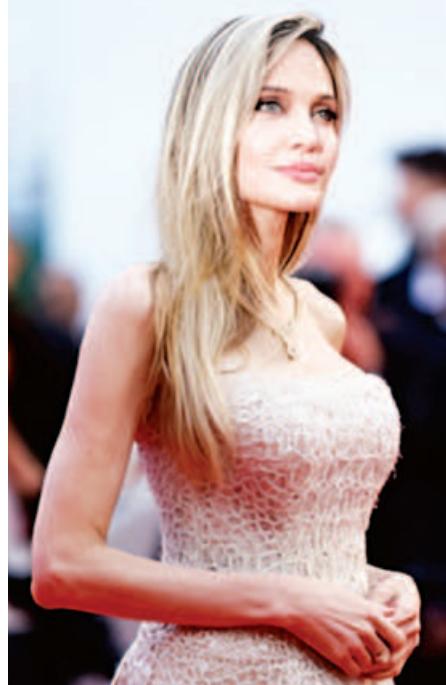
makes stunning comeback at Cannes

Angelina Jolie returned to Cannes after almost 14 years, yesterday. She graced the red carpet in a breathtaking strapless gown in shades of white and silver. For the 78th edition of the festival this year, she attended the premiere of Ari Aster's *Eddington*.

The Oscar-winning actress took on the esteemed role of Cannes godmother for the landmark 25th anniversary of the Trophée Chopard—an accolade that celebrates the most promising emerging talents in global cinema.

Angelina Jolie has now become part of a notable lineup of past Trophée Chopard godmothers and godfathers.

Over the years, international icons such as Charlize Theron, Cate Blanchett, Julianne Moore, Zhang Ziyi, Julia Roberts, Robert De Niro, and Sean Penn have been linked to this prestigious honour.



'Fyakra' was an experience: Nishat Priom

SHARMIN JOYA

The making of the web-series *Fyakra* was nothing short of a battle. Amid political unrest, torrential rain, and unexpected public reactions, the team behind this genre-bending web series had to fight tooth and nail to bring it to life.

Actress Nishat Priom, who plays Annie Rozario, shares an inside look at what went into the making of the project.

"We were filming right in the middle of the July unrest," she recalls. "There were gunshots, all sorts of chaos and disturbances going on, and yet we continued shooting amidst it all." At times, the cast and crew had to stay up all night keeping watch for *dakats* (robbers), only to report back on set early the next morning. "Those sleepless nights are moments the entire team will never forget," she adds.

Directed by Asif Chowdhury and co-written by Neamoth Ullah Masum and Ahammad Saad, *Fyakra* premiered on Bongo on May 8 bringing together



a compelling mix of thriller, romance, horror, and family drama. According to Priom, "This is a multidimensional genre work. It can't be classified under a single

label." The story revolves primarily around Annie (played by Priom) and Golapi (played by Nidra). Annie is a Christian woman who marries a Muslim man, Ashfaque (played by Shamol Mawla). "Annie sacrifices everything to marry

Ashfaque, including her family," says Priom.

"So, at any cost, she wants to keep her marriage alive." But constant emotional distance and unfulfilled expectations weigh heavily on their relationship—until one life-altering incident related to Golapi and Samad (played by Partho Sheikh), turns everything upside down.

The chaos wasn't just limited to on-screen drama. Partho, Mir Rabbi, and Abdulla Al Sento, dressed in full underworld get-up and carrying prop guns, once caused panic in a neighbourhood after shooting wrapped up. "People thought they were real dacoits and attacked their car with sticks," Priom laughs. "They had to convince everyone they were just actors. It is one of the instances of such real 'Fyakra' the entire team had to go through."

While the official shoot took 15 days, it took nearly two months to wrap the project. Delays caused by rain were frequent. "There were days when we returned home at 5am with just being able to finish only half of a single scene," she says.

With a diverse set of six-seven protagonists from all walks of life, *Fyakra* promises relatability for viewers across generations. "The entire team was totally invested—both literally and emotionally," Priom signs off with a smile.

Documentaries on July uprising being showcased in London

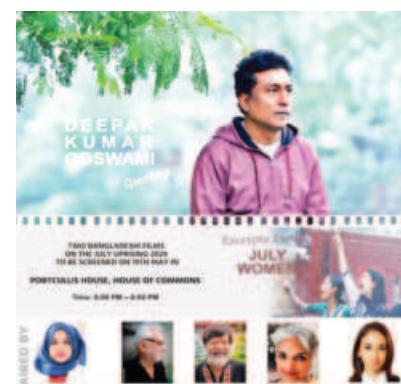
A powerful documentary series on Bangladesh's July uprising is being screened in London. Cultural Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki posted about these films on Facebook last Friday.

The screenings began on May 16 at SOAS with the international premiere of *Deepak Kumar Goswami Speaking* and *Jatrabari - Evidence of a Massacre*.

On May 19, Portcullis House, House

of Commons, will host *Deepak Kumar Goswami Speaking* and excerpts from *July Women*, featuring speakers like MP Apsana Begum, and internationally renowned photographer Shahidul Alam among others.

The series concludes on May 20 with the world premiere of *July Women*, spotlighting women's leadership during the uprising, at the Frontline Club.



NEWS

10 ministries brace for budget cuts

FROM PAGE 1

Most of the railway mega projects have already been completed and the projects under Indian line of credits (LOC) are progressing at a snail's pace.

Besides, no mega projects would be initiated by the interim government, which resulted in major cuts in the railway ministry.

The power division's allocation would be downsized 30.5 percent to Tk 20,284 crore, which is the third highest allocation in the upcoming fiscal year's ADP.

Although the local government division is getting less allocation than this year, it is still getting the top share: Tk 36,099 crore.

The local government is not functioning in many places but it is still getting preference as the interim government is looking to increase temporary employment in rural areas, officials said.

The road transport and highway division, which has several ongoing projects, is getting the second-highest allocation: Tk 32,330 crore. This year, the division got Tk 32,043 crore.

The allocation for the primary and mass education ministry will be downsized to Tk 11,399 crore from Tk 16,136 crore but the secondary and higher education division will get Tk 2,000 crore more than this fiscal year. The division is likely to get Tk

13,625 crore in fiscal 2015-26.

The health services division, which spends around half of the health sector allocation, is expected to get Tk 11,618 crore—Tk 2,000 crore less than this fiscal year.

The science and technology ministry's allocation is likely to be trimmed by about 5.7 percent to Tk 12,155 crore. Of the allocation, a big portion is kept for the Rooppur nuclear power plant, whose first unit is expected to start commercial operation in the upcoming fiscal year.

The total ADP for fiscal 2025-26 is likely to be Tk 230,000 crore, up 6.5 percent from this year's revised ADP.

Of the total allocation, Tk 144,000 crore would come from domestic resources, down 12.7 percent year-on-year. About Tk 86,000 crore would be foreign funds, down 14 percent year-on-year.

Besides, the allocation for the state-owned enterprises would be Tk 8,000 crore, which is nearly half their original allocation this fiscal year.

In the first nine months of this fiscal year, ADP implementation stood at just 36.65 percent, the lowest in at least 15 years.

The proposed ADP will be finalised today at the meeting of the National Economic Council.

The non-development allocations would be finalised later and the budget would be announced on June 2.

28 more pushed in from India

FROM PAGE 12

Panchagarh, BGB detained 11 individuals—two men, eight women, and one child—from Malkadanga and Dhamerghat border areas in Boda upazila early yesterday.

Major Riyadul Morshed, acting commander of Nilphamari BGB 56 Battalion, told this correspondent that during preliminary questioning, the detainees said they had been working in various parts of India for a long time.

They were reportedly detained by Indian police and later handed over to the BSF, who subsequently pushed them into Bangladesh, he added.

The BSF also denied this allegation during a flag meeting with the BGB, he said.

Two cases have been filed with Haripur Police Station in Thakurgaon and Boda Police Station in Panchagarh after the BGB handed over the detainees to police, sources at the stations said.

Emon's record ton

FROM PAGE 12

looked in with a good chance but once he fell off the second ball of the 19th over, with the hosts still needing 35 runs, their hopes were all but gone.

Eventually Bangladesh's superior experience held sway as Bangladesh's three pacers—Mustafizur Rahman (2-17), Tanzim Hasan Sakib (2-22) and Hasan Mahmud (3-33)—helped bundle out the hosts for 164 runs in 20 overs.

Off-spinner Sheikh Mahedi was expensive but took two wickets while left-arm spinner Tanvir Islam took one for the visiting side.

Police hunt gunmen after 8 killed in South African bar

AFP, Johannesburg

Police in South Africa launched a manhunt on Saturday for gunmen who killed eight customers at a tavern in the southeastern city of Durban.

The attack late on Friday evening was the latest mass shooting in the crime-weary African nation that has one of the world's highest murder rates.

Follow the protocol, don't push people in

FROM PAGE 12

remain united and cooperative, India will not be able to carry out such push-ins."

The adviser also said India had recently demolished a Bangalee settlement in Gujarat, where some Rohingya from Bangladesh had also migrated.

"Push-ins increased following the demolition. Among those India has attempted to push into Bangladesh are Rohingya members with UNHCR cards and even some identified as Indian Rohingya."

About the floating border out post, operated by BGB, he said, "The Boeving Floating BOP is not just an infrastructure project—it is a strategic security measure, reflecting BGB's commitment to peace, stability, and

public safety in border regions."

The adviser noted that a specialised Riverine Border Guard Battalion under BGB is currently in the works, aimed at establishing effective water-based surveillance.

"This initiative will play a transformative role in future border management," he said.

Rear Admiral Md Ziaul Hoque, director general of Bangladesh Coast Guard, and Maj Gen Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui, director general of BGB, were present at the event.

3 journos assaulted after covering arson attack

FROM PAGE 12

when the journalists were returning after reporting on an arson attack on a house, said Ali Akbar, officer-in-charge of Aditmari Police Station.

The attackers also made off with two cameras worth around Tk 1.05 lakh, the victims said.

Faruk has filed a written complaint, naming 20 individuals, OC Ali Akbar said.

Police are conducting raids to apprehend the suspects.

The house set on fire is of an individual who earlier accused a man named Muhammad Habib of attempted rape, the OC said, adding that the accused had recently been released on bail after spending a month in jail.

He and his associates might have set the house on fire, he added. Faruk told The Daily Star that while returning from the scene, the journalists were assaulted by Habib and his men.

"They beat us mercilessly," he added.

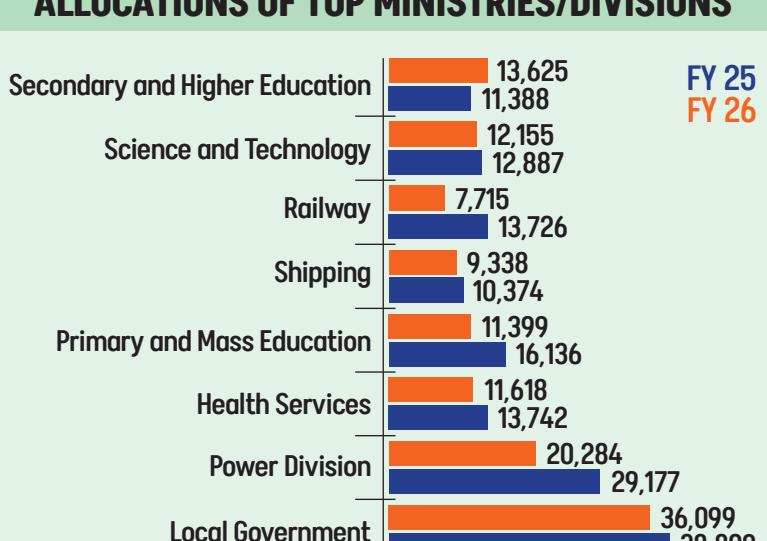
The woman, who filed the attempted rape case, also said, "Habib had been threatening us ever since he got out of jail on bail. Yesterday, he and his men torched our house. I have filed a complaint with the police."

Habib has reportedly gone into hiding, and his mobile phone remains switched off.

OC Ali Akbar confirmed receiving the complaint from the woman and said an investigation is underway.

"Legal action will be taken upon completion of the probe," he added.

ALLOCATIONS OF TOP MINISTRIES/DIVISIONS



Jolitorongo's annual musical programme blooms with literary riches



Cultural organisation Jolitorongo hosted its annual musical programme last Friday evening at the Chhayanaut Cultural Centre in Dhammandi, titled *Bhalo Theko Phool*. The opening line of a poem by renowned writer Dr

Humayun Azad inspired the entire arrangement.

Jolitorongo's artistes took the stage, after months of preparation, with timeless songs presented in solo, duet, and choral formats, showcasing the best of Bengali lyrical heritage.

This year's event paid homage to the legacy of Bengali songs, featuring lyrics penned by literary icons such as Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Jibanananda Das, Shamsur Rahman, Abu Hena Mustafa Kamal and many others.

Melodies by legendary composers were also celebrated, with young sarangi players adding charm to the harmonious affair.

Paresh Rawal confirms exit from 'Hera Pheri 3'



Veteran actor Paresh Rawal confirmed he will no longer be part of the highly anticipated film *Hera Pheri 3*, leaving fans of the iconic comedy franchise shocked and disappointed.

Sources close to the production revealed that the decision came after creative differences between the actor and the filmmakers.

The news sparked strong reaction online, with many fans calling for the film to be scrapped altogether. "No Paresh Rawal, no *Hera Pheri 3*," read one tweet. Others called on Akshay Kumar to convince Rawal to return.

Rawal previously spoke about the weight of being associated with the Babu Rao character. He felt "suffocated" by the typecasting. "I'm an actor, I don't want to be stuck in that rut," he admitted.

Brighter bricks, cleaner air: simple changes in brick kilns bring big benefits

Brick manufacturing is a vital industry in Bangladesh and South Asia, but it is also a major source of harmful air pollution and carbon emissions. These kilns, often powered by coal, contribute significantly to respiratory problems and climate change.

However, a new study led by researchers from Boston University, Stanford, icddr,b, and the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology has found a way forward. By providing simple training and support to 276 kiln owners in Bangladesh, the researchers encouraged energy-efficient changes—like better stacking of bricks and using cleaner fuels. These changes led to a 23% drop in energy use and reduced harmful emissions by 20%.

Importantly, 65% of kiln owners adopted these improvements voluntarily—without being forced by law—because they also saved money and improved brick quality. In fact, the social benefits from reduced carbon emissions outweighed the cost of the changes by an incredible 65 to 1.

The success continued into the following year, showing that the improvements were sustainable. If adopted widely, this approach could cut Bangladesh's annual carbon emissions by 2%.

Practical, profit friendly solutions have the potential to improve industries such as brickmaking, provided that there is an investment in training, support, and the well-being of workers. Achieving cleaner air, healthier populations, and a more robust economy can indeed be complementary goals.



Is stress wrecking your immune system?

DR NUR-A SAFRINA RAHMAN

Stress! It is the constant hum in the background of modern life—whirring through overflowing inboxes, surprise bills, and an endless scroll of bad news. We get used to it, even call it normal. But here's what we rarely talk about: chronic stress does not just mess with your mood—it slowly wears down your immune system.

How stress disarms your body's defences: Your immune system is a finely tuned defence network. But when stress lingers, it starts to tamper with your body's built-in protections.

Chronic stress can actually reduce the effectiveness of vaccines. People under high stress may produce fewer protective antibodies—meaning your body may not fully “remember” how to fight off future infections.

The real immunity myth: can you supplement away stress? Each winter, there is a rush for vitamins, herbal teas, and “immune boosters”. But the real threat to your immunity might not be in your medicine cabinet—it is in your calendar, your phone, and your overdrive lifestyle. That is not to say nutrition does not matter. But without managing stress, even the best supplements can only go so far. It is time to flip the script on what true immune support looks like.

Five proven ways to protect your immune system: The solution is not complicated—but it does require consistency.

1. **Sleep like you mean it** - Your immune system does its best work while you sleep. Aim for 7-9 quality hours. Wind down with rituals—dim lights, a book, deep breathing—and skip the screens before bed.

2. **Move more, not harder** - Exercise strengthens immunity and reduces stress—but more is not always better. Choose moderate activities like walking, yoga, or swimming. Overtraining can backfire, raising cortisol levels.

3. **Feed your defences** - A balanced diet supports gut health—home to a large part of the immune system. Prioritise:

- Brightly coloured fruits and vegetables
- Lean protein sources like legumes, eggs, and fish
- Fermented foods (think yoghurt or kimchi) for beneficial bacteria

4. **Make time to de-stress** - Mindfulness is not fluff—it is medicine. Just 5-10 minutes of daily meditation, breathing exercises, or journaling can help lower cortisol and calm your nervous system.

5. **Do not isolate—connect** - Strong relationships buffer stress. Even short, positive interactions with friends, family, or community members can have measurable effects on immune resilience.

Your strongest shield? Stress awareness: Stress is invisible, but its effects are not. And while supplements may help, no pill can offset a lifestyle that is constantly in overdrive.

Supporting your immune system starts with giving your mind and body a break. That does not mean overhauling your life—it means tuning in, slowing down, and making space for rest, connection, and joy.

Your immune system is always working for you. Is not it time you returned the favour?

The writer is a public health specialist. E-mail: safrinarahman16@gmail.com

BREASTFEEDING VS. THE BOARDROOM

Workplace barriers to breastfeeding

DR SHAHED IMRAN

Exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) is considered the gold standard for child nutrition, significantly contributing to the intellectual development and overall health of a child. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, followed by continued breastfeeding along with appropriate complementary foods up to two years of age.

Breastfeeding provides essential nutrients crucial for a newborn's growth, development, and survival. Despite these well-established benefits, globally only 44% of infants aged 0-6 months are exclusively breastfed. Alarmingly, according to the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) 2022, the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in Bangladesh has declined from 65% in 2018 to 55% in 2022.

Research shows that exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months strengthens a child's immune system, protecting them from diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections—leading causes of child mortality in underdeveloped countries.

Qualitative studies conducted in Dhaka and other urban and rural areas have identified significant barriers to optimal breastfeeding practices among working mothers. However, comprehensive research focusing specifically on exclusive breastfeeding practices among corporate-sector working mothers in Bangladesh remains limited.

Breastfeeding not only enhances sensory and intellectual development but also protects children from infectious and chronic diseases later in life. It reduces infant mortality, speeds up recovery from illness,



and offers long term benefits for maternal health, including regulating menstrual cycles. Failure to breastfeed exclusively for the first six months is linked to various childhood illnesses, stunted growth, poor academic performance, reduced productivity, and compromised intellectual development.

While the desire to breastfeed is natural for mothers, environmental challenges can often disrupt this process. Common issues such as breast engorgement, plugged ducts, and mastitis can lead to temporary or permanent cessation of breastfeeding.

Several factors contribute to the low EBF rates, including cultural and traditional beliefs, socioeconomic conditions, maternal employment, educational background, father's occupation, misinformation, delivery method and positioning, and maternal health complications.

Additionally, inadequate laws and regulations surrounding maternity leave pose significant challenges.

Studies suggest that a mother's mandatory presence at the workplace can hinder consistent breastfeeding. With rapid development and industrialisation, over 600,000 women have joined the workforce in Bangladesh, making this issue even more pressing.

Promoting exclusive breastfeeding is vital for improving child health outcomes and reducing infant mortality rates in Bangladesh. Government and NGO initiatives are working to educate mothers and communities about EBF and to provide the necessary support for its successful practice.

Corporate workplaces need to become more mother-friendly. Implementing and maintaining inclusive maternity and paternity leave policies is essential. With cooperation from all sectors, Bangladesh can work toward achieving a higher rate of exclusive breastfeeding—benefiting not just mothers and children, but society as a whole.

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Which is better for children with asthma: syrup, nebuliser, or inhaler?

DR AHAD ADNAN

Treating a child's asthma presents certain difficulties for paediatricians. The first is that parents are unwilling to acknowledge that asthma may strike youngsters as well. Child asthma is indicated by recurrent coughing, nighttime awakenings due to coughing, and temporary alleviation of respiratory symptoms following the use of certain medications, particularly nebulised treatments. These kids frequently have a runny nose, scaly scalp, itchy skin, and a family history of the same condition.

Worldwide asthma treatment guidelines are established by the Global Initiative for Asthma (GINA), an international organisation. For specific reasons, medical professionals are recommending the use of inhalers for asthma medicine and discouraging the use of oral medications.

1. The oral version of a certain medication is required in the greatest quantity, followed by the nebulised form and the inhaler in the least amount. Therefore, the latter version is likely to have the fewest adverse effects.



2. In addition to the lungs, oral medications have adverse effects on the stomach, kidneys, liver, and heart. In contrast, inhaler drugs only directly affect the lungs.

3. The cornerstone of asthma treatment is steroids. After extended use, they cause a number of adverse effects. These oral medications might cause short stature, mouth infections, heart problems, stomach issues, and other issues in growing children. It is surprising to learn that inhaled steroids virtually never cause these issues.

4. Controlled asthma is achieved by using a regular inhaler.

5. The cost of treatment is a significant concern. The initial cost of the inhaler and spacer is a clear worry. However, we can conclude that inhalers are reasonably priced when taking into account the limited usage of other treatments and overall health over time.

Despite the foregoing counselling, the guardians continue to have doubts, primarily due to superstition and carelessness. For these, we also have answers.

• Does an inhaler have a negative

impact on the heart?

The right inhaler dosage and timing have no effect on the heart. Instead, some oral medications can occasionally produce tremors, palpitations, and an elevated heart rate.

• Is an inhaler a medication that lasts a lifetime?

Asthma in children is basically unrelated to adult continuation. The majority of teenagers are symptom-free from childhood asthma. Two elements are important here: confirming asthma with tools like the FeNO test and spirometry, and adjusting medication through regular evaluation. Maintaining a respiratory-friendly lifestyle is essential.

• Is not the inhaler a module for adults?

The inhaler is only a method of drug use. Medication dosages for children are closely adhered to.

• Despite utilising an inhaler, asthma control is not being attained. Why?

A child's doctor must verify that a spacer is being utilised correctly. It is necessary to screen out other potential related morbidities such as immunological deficiency, GERD, heart disease, TB, and cystic fibrosis. Asthma control is required for a considerable amount of time with “difficult asthma”.

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HAVE A NICE DAY
Troubled parents, troubled children

DR RUBAIUL MURSHED

Parenting is one of life's most powerful responsibilities. It is not just about raising kids—it is about shaping the next generation. Research in behavioural genetics and developmental psychology shows that while genetics accounts for about 40-50% of differences in traits like temperament and intelligence, the rest is shaped mainly by environmental factors, particularly the home. Other key influences include friendships, access to education, and connection with nature—elements of the broader social and ecological systems that shape a child's life.

Parents are a child's first and most lasting environment. The way they express love, set boundaries, and manage emotions teaches children how to understand relationships, self-worth, and safety. Between the ages of 4 and 16, children go through critical developmental changes that shape how they think, feel, and interpret the world. These years build the foundation for emotional regulation, confidence, and core beliefs.

When parents struggle with unresolved emotional pain—chronic stress, trauma, or neglect—those wounds can silently ripple into a child's life. As Dr Bruce Perry emphasises, early experiences do not just affect feelings—they shape brain development. A home filled with fear or criticism can leave lifelong scars.

Research shows that harsh parenting—yelling, scolding, or physical punishment—can harm a child's emotional well-being. Such children may grow up anxious, withdrawn, or insecure. However, this is not about blaming parents—it is about awareness. Children do not need perfect parents; they need present, caring ones. Even imperfect efforts at consistency, listening, and love can heal and shape resilient adults.

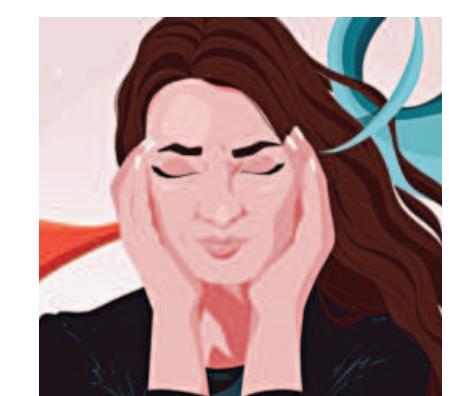
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New guidelines aim to help prevent migraine attacks

The American College of Physicians (ACP) has released new guidelines to help prevent episodic migraines—those intense, recurring headaches that can last from hours to days and are often accompanied by nausea, light sensitivity, and more.

Many people suffer from migraines but never receive proper preventive treatment. The updated guidelines focus on helping doctors choose effective medications that patients can afford and are likely to stick with.

The ACP recommends starting with commonly available oral medications that have been proven to reduce the frequency and severity of migraine attacks. If those are not effective or cause side effects, newer treatments—designed specifically to



Youth wellness in focus: insights from the 2025 festival survey

STAR HEALTH REPORT

Dhaka Flow's Second National Youth Wellness Festival 2025 brought together students from ten top universities in Bangladesh to explore mental health, emotional wellbeing, and sustainable living. Key messages included: “Healing is cool, seeking help is courageous, and movement is critical.”

A large-scale survey conducted during the festival revealed youth realities—stressing both urgent challenges and powerful potential. Reaching hundreds of students aged 19-24, primarily from Computer Science & Engineering (25.3%) and Business Administration (24.1%), the data showed 35% feel stressed daily and 20.8% feel mentally overwhelmed every day. Nearly a quarter sleep only 5-6 hours per night.

Despite these struggles, 85% of students actively participate in climate-positive



actions, and 75% feel confident leading community change. Yet emotional isolation remains: 19% feel lonely often, and 28.6% lack a safe space for creative expression. While 43% engage in moderate physical

activity, 12% are sedentary. Abuse is a key issue, with over 11% reporting regular experiences.

The report offers concrete recommendations: policymakers should fund campus-based mental health programmes and expand access to green spaces; universities must enhance counselling and create 24/7 wellness zones. Curriculum designers should integrate emotional intelligence and sustainability, while companies can offer flexible internships and wellness benefits.

Students are urged to build peer support networks and prioritise self-care. Media must promote youth-led change and reject burnout culture.

Bangladesh's future depends on empowered youth. Let us ensure their journey is not only ambitious—but supported, sustainable, and whole.

block migraine-related proteins—may be considered. As a third option, other well-studied medications can be tried when earlier treatments do not work.

Cost and personal preference matter. Some treatments are much more expensive than others, and not everyone wants to use injectables or newer drugs. The guidelines encourage doctors to consider a patient's financial situation and lifestyle when choosing the best option.

Sticking with treatment is important, as benefits might not show up right away. It can take several weeks to see real improvements, so consistency is key.

These evidence-based recommendations are designed to help doctors better manage migraine prevention in everyday clinical settings—improving care for millions of people living with this disabling condition.

Source: <https://www.acponline.org/acpnewsroom/new-acp-guideline-on-migraine-prevention-shows-new-clinically-important-advantages-for-newer>

'We have brought back people's love for the club'

Mohammedan clinch maiden BPL title

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan coach Alfaz Ahmed said it was time for the club to pay back for the sacrifice of the players and the coaching staff after guiding the Black and Whites to their first professional football league title.

The former national team captain, along with his charges, watched on YouTube as their closest rivals, Abahani, got beaten 2-1 by Fortis FC at the Shaheed Dharendranath Dutta Stadium in Cumilla on Saturday afternoon, effectively handing the Bangladesh Premier League to Mohammedan with three games in hand.

Their first title in 18 years of professional football era also ended a 23-year wait for Bangladesh's most successful club. The 89-year-old club had gone through a lot of ups and downs this century -- having won their last title in 2002 when the league was called Dhaka Premier Division League -- before making a bit of a resurgence under Alfaz, a prodigal son of the club.

Following the success, Alfaz said that their biggest satisfaction is bringing back the love and conviction of legions of fans.

"What we have done is bring back people's love for the club. We have instilled belief that we can beat teams



like Bashundhara Kings," the 51-year-old coach told The Daily Star over phone from the club tent.

Abahani, the six-time BPL winners, had the chance to delay Mohammedan's title party had they even been able to register a draw. However, Abahani's defeat against 10-man Fortis had set the players and coaching staff up for party mood.

Alfaz, though, isn't entirely convinced

that they should start the party already. He feels their success will only be meaningful once they are rewarded by the club management, both figuratively and literally.

In the wake of the change in political landscape last year, many sporting clubs have suffered, not the least of whom were Mohammedan themselves. The club has struggled to pay the salaries to the players

and the coaching staff, with close to three months' salaries remaining unpaid. Alfaz believes the club's 20th top tier league title -- the most in Bangladesh's domestic football -- was a result of the sacrifice of the coaching staff and the players as well as contribution of the club's president and the football committee chairman.

"We want that everyone gets paid their dues," Alfaz said. "You don't win championships every other day... It's time for the officials to pay back."

Under Alfaz, Mohammedan had shown resurgence over the last three seasons. They had won the Federation Cup title in 2022-23 season and reached the final last year. They lost the final to Bashundhara Kings and endured the same fate in both league and Independence Cup.

There was belief, Alfaz said, that the club could become league champions this time, focusing all their energy on this title. Led by their inspirational skipper Souleymane Diabate, Mohammedan notched 38 points from 15 matches, having lost only once.

"It is a dream come true for me. I've been here for six or seven years. Many teams wanted me to leave but I told them I want to stay here to give something to Mohammedan," the Malian told reporters at the club tent.

Can Rakibul become the next Rafique or Shakib?

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Bangladesh have long celebrated left-arm spinning all-rounders -- from the trailblazing Mohammad Rafique to the iconic Shakib Al Hasan. Now, another name is quietly entering the conversation: Rakibul Hasan.

Known primarily for his left-arm spin, Rakibul is beginning to showcase the kind of all-round ability that could one day earn him a similar status. His recent match-winning performances with both bat and ball in the emerging team suggest that Bangladesh may have found a new



finished as the joint highest wicket-taker with 30 wickets alongside his Abahani Limited team-mate Mosaddek Hossain.

But little was known about his ability with the bat, which finally came to light during the emerging team's three-match one-day series against South Africa, where he played two crucial innings of 24 not out and 42, both contributing to his side's victories in Rajshahi.

"I think playing in the DPL really helped me a lot. I'm happy to contribute to the team's victories," Rakibul told The Daily Star yesterday, as his side reached Chattogram from Rajshahi to play the opening four-day match of a two-match series against the same opponents.

In the series opener, Rakibul walked in

with Bangladesh at 263 for seven, chasing 302. He smashed 24 off just 10 balls, including three sixes, sealing the win with two deliveries to spare.

Rested for the second game to allow squad rotation, Rakibul returned for the decider and once again made an impact. This time, the home team were in deeper trouble at 118 for eight. His 40-ball 42, in an 84-run partnership with Mahfuzur Rahman Rabby, helped the hosts post 225 -- a total that proved more than enough.

He followed up his rescue act with the bat by taking four for 26 in 10 overs, helping secure a 34-run victory and the series, ending with five wickets at an economy of 3.25.

Rakibul acknowledged that his work with High Performance batting coach Rajin Saleh had paid off, and that he is "not worried" about getting a national team call-up yet; even though many of his 2020 U-19 World Cup-winning teammates have already made the step up.

Rajin, however, sees Rakibul as a potential all-round option for the senior side.

"Rakibul worked with me last year in the HP unit," the former Bangladesh player informed. "With the maturity and experience he has now, if he works on a few areas and performs consistently well, he has the potential to serve Bangladesh as a quality all-rounder."

U-19s face toughest test in SAFF final today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will be up against a formidable Indian side when they look to defend their title of the SAFF U-19 Championship in the final at the in Yopia, Arunachal Pradesh today.

The title-deciding fixture between the two unbeaten sides will kick off at the Golden Jubilee Stadium in Yopia at 7:30pm Bangladesh time.

The men in red and green, who had won the title of the SAFF U-20 Championship last year, have set their sights on the title again after edging past a gritty Nepal side 2-1 in the semifinals on Friday.

Bangladesh's inspirational skipper Nazmul Huda Faisal, who racked up a goal and an assist in each of the three matches, said they are determined to win the title despite having utmost respect about the quality of the opposition.

"We didn't face each other in this tournament before. So it will be new for both teams, not a problem though," Faisal said at the pre-final press conference yesterday.

"We were confident about our team and the players since the first match of the tournament.



Since it's India in the final, so it will be a bit different," Faisal said. "We respect India as a good team. But we will try to give our 100 percent to achieve our target."

The hosts have been flawless in the tournament so far, having racked up 15 goals in three matches without conceding any.

India coach Bibiano Fernandes showed respect to his opponents too, but said they were fully prepared for the final.

"They [Bangladesh] have shown good character in the semifinals, beating Nepal. We respect that. We will prepare from our side and get ourselves ready and make sure we give best efforts in the final," Fernandes said.



Jasmine Paolini ended a 40-year wait for Italian glory at the Italian Open, beating world No. 3 Coco Gauff 6-4, 6-2 in Saturday's final. The 29-year-old claimed her second WTA 1000 title — and biggest clay-court win — following her Dubai triumph last year. Roared on by a passionate home crowd, Paolini became the first Italian woman to win in Rome since Raffaella Reggi in 1985. The victory gives her a timely boost ahead of the French Open, where she was runner-up last year.

PHOTO: REUTERS

ITALIAN OPEN

Sinner, Alcaraz set up blockbuster final

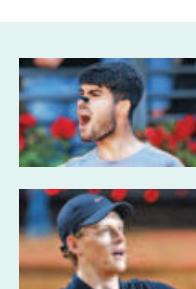
AGENCIES

World number one Jannik Sinner produced a sublime semifinal display as he fought back from a set down to beat American Tommy Paul 1-6 6-0 6-3 on Friday to set up today's Italian Open final showdown with Carlos Alcaraz.

Sinner ended a 47-year wait for an Italian to reach the men's singles final in Rome after Adriano Panatta lost the title match to Bjorn Borg in 1978.

Serving first, 11th seed Paul stunned the crowd and went up 5-0 in the first set against Sinner, who approached the clash on a career-best 25-match winning streak. The last time Sinner lost a set 6-1 was in the quarterfinals of the 2024 US Open against Daniil Medvedev, a match he won on his way to his second Grand Slam triumph.

But the Italian top seed, making his comeback this week after serving a three-month doping ban, kept his cool and orchestrated a stunning comeback in the second. He delivered a bagel, giving his rival no chance when forcing a decider.



Sinner and Alcaraz have clashed 10 times since their first encounter at the 2021 Paris Masters. Alcaraz holds a 6-4 advantage in the head-to-head, having won each of their last three matchups. Sinner's most recent victory came at the 2023 Beijing Open.

A win for Sinner will make him the first Italian to win the title since Adriano Panatta in 1976.

Sinner, who is playing in his first tournament since capturing Australian Open title, was up 3-0 in the final set before marching on to reach his seventh ATP Masters 1000 final.

The 23-year-old will face world number three Alcaraz today, the last player who beat him when the pair met in the China Open final in October before Sinner embarked on his now 26-match winning run, with all eyes on another potential final between arguably the two best players of the modern era at the French Open next month.

"If I want to win Sunday, I have to play some of my best tennis," Sinner added. "Carlos played some incredible tennis today. Let's see what's coming."

Alcaraz reached the Rome final for the first time after a thrilling 6-3 7-6(4) win over local hope Lorenzo Musetti earlier on Friday.

"It wasn't about playing brilliant, spectacular tennis. It was about playing smart tennis, playing solid, going to the point when you can, and waiting for the chance to play aggressively. I think I did that pretty well," said Alcaraz.



PALACE REWRITE HISTORY

Crystal Palace players celebrate with the FA Cup trophy at Wembley yesterday after a stunning 1-0 victory over Manchester City, sealing the club's first major title in their 120-year history. The match was decided by a 16th-minute strike from Eberechi Eze, while goalkeeper Dean Henderson produced a string of crucial saves, including a first-half penalty stop. As Palace rejoiced, City were left reeling from a trophyless season, with Pep Guardiola's star-studded side once again faltering on the big stage.

PHOTO: REUTERS

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Remove 'NCP advisers' for sake of neutrality

Salahuddin asks govt, says polls its only mandate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna



BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday urged the interim government to remove two of its advisers, whom he claimed are members of the National Citizen Party, for the sake of neutrality.

Addressing a rally in Khulna, he also criticised the government for what he said was giving the country's ports and corridors to foreign powers.

Salahuddin said the interim government was formed with high hopes after the ouster of an autocratic rule in a popular uprising.

"But don't assume we want you to remain in power until the Day of Judgment," he told the rally, saying the current government's only mandate is to organise a free, fair, and neutral national election.

Referring to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, the BNP leader said, "People now call your administration an 'NCP-backed government.' Your government has two representatives of the NCP ... They are not officially members of the NCP, but it is an open secret. If you truly want to uphold neutrality, ask those two to resign. If they refuse, remove them."

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Move to redefine freedom fighter rejected

Advisory council asks for revised draft ordinance

BAHARAM KHAN

The Advisory Council has rejected the Liberation War affairs ministry's proposal to amend the definition of 'freedom fighter' and instructed the ministry to submit a revised proposal in its draft ordinance, according to council sources.

Apart from the definition, the rest of the ministry's draft ordinance -- aimed at amending the National Freedom Fighters' Council Act 2022 -- was accepted during the 28th meeting of the Advisory Council on May 15.

At least four senior government officials with direct knowledge of the matter told The Daily Star that the Advisory Council did not accept the proposed redefinition of freedom fighter.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a senior official said, "The council said the current definition should remain. The definition proposed by the ministry will not be adopted."

In response to a query, the official clarified, "There will be no separate category called 'associate freedom fighter'. The existing definition will remain unchanged."

Another government source said that due to a lack of consensus at the meeting, the ministry was instructed to revise the proposal in the ordinance and place it before the council again.

Contacted yesterday, Ishrat Chowdhury, secretary of the Liberation War affairs ministry, said, "After the draft ordinance was placed before the Advisory Council, it gave instructions regarding the definition [of freedom fighter]. Once we receive a resolution from the Cabinet, we'll be able to say what changes will be made."

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3 journos assaulted after covering arson attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Lalmonirhat

Three journalists were assaulted and their cameras snatched after covering an arson attack in Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat on Friday, police said.

The injured journalists are Faruk Ahmed Surjo, 41, Lalmonirhat district correspondent of Dainik Bhorer Chetona; Khairul Kabir, 40, district correspondent of Dainik Janobani; and Rabbani Islam, 28, district correspondent of Dainik Gonodatanta.

Locals rescued them and admitted them to Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital. Samina Hossain Chowdhury, resident medical officer, said the journalists suffered injuries and their condition was stable.

The attack took place in the Sapti Bazar area

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Bangladesh opener Parvez Hossain Emon jumps in the air after scoring a record-breaking 53-ball century against United Arab Emirates during the first T20I at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium in UAE yesterday.

PHOTO: EMIRATES CRICKET

Opening aid corridors, leasing out ports not this govt's job

Says Tarique

STAR REPORT

Making decisions on a "humanitarian corridor" to Rakhine and leasing out container terminal of Chittagong Port to foreign companies are not the interim government's job, said BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman last night.



"It seems that the interim government is prioritising providing corridors or handing over port management to foreign entities. We want to make it clear that the government elected by the people will make decisions regarding corridor or leasing out port management."

Tarique was addressing a discussion marking the 8th founding anniversary of Nationalist Democratic Movement (NDM) at a city hotel.

The BNP acting chairman urged the government to announce a clear date for the national election without

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Thousands of BNP leaders and activists from different districts of Khulna and Barishal divisions throng Khulna Metropolitan Circuit House Ground for the party's youth rally yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

MIGRANTS IN MALAYSIA Worker faces deportation after speaking up

PORIMOL PALMA

A Malaysian company has revoked the work permit of a Bangladeshi migrant and threatened to do the same to 60 others on Thursday, a day after the workers talked to Expatriates' Welfare Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul about poor working conditions, several workers have said.

The management of Negeri Sembilan-based Mediceram, which manufactures rubber gloves, called the worker named Nahid Ibrahim and told him that his work permit would be revoked and he would be deported, they said.

During his three-day visit to Malaysia from May 13-16, he met the Mediceram workers and held meetings with three Malaysian ministers to discuss how the Southeast Asian country can reopen its labour market for Bangladeshis and address the problems facing the workers.

Amid reports of irregularities

in overseas recruitment, Malaysia suspended hiring Bangladeshi workers in May last year.

Requesting anonymity, a worker of the gloves factory said, "We were shocked when we heard that Nahid would be deported and protested. Then, the management said it has a list of 60 of us who would be deported."

Nearly 200 workers then began a strike on Friday, he said, requesting not to be named for fear of backlash.

In an email to Prof Asif's Private Secretary Sarwoer Alam, Nahid wrote, "The company followed me and heard what I said about labour issues with our adviser. All of a sudden, they called me to the office and said I would be deported."

The email was also sent to the Bangladesh High Commission in Kuala Lumpur.

Nahid went to Malaysia under a three-year contract and his visa expired in August this year. He spent

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28 more pushed in from India

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Thakurgaon

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) detained 28 individuals after they were pushed in by India's Border Security Force (BSF) through the Thakurgaon and Panchagarh borders early yesterday.

In Thakurgaon, 17 were detained by BGB personnel at the Chapsar border in Haripur upazila in the morning, said Lt Col Abdullah Al Muin Hasan, commanding officer of Dinajpur BGB 42 Battalion.

The group had two men, 11 women, and four children, he said.

According to the BGB official, BSF forcibly sent them into Bangladesh.

Of the 17, five are from Jashore, one from Jhenidah, one from Patuakhali, five from Khagrachhari, one from Barishal, and four from Narail, he claimed.

Lt Col Hasan said the BGB lodged a protest during a flag meeting with BSF officials in the afternoon. However, BSF representatives denied any involvement in push in, he said.

Meanwhile, in

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Follow the protocol, don't push people in Home adviser urges India

A CORRESPONDENT, SATKHIRA

Bangladesh does not carry out push-ins like India and remains committed to resolving such border issues through diplomatic means, Home Adviser Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said yesterday.



He made the comments while speaking to reporters after inaugurating a floating border outpost at the confluence of the Raimangal river and Boyesing canal in Satkhira's Shyamnagar.

The adviser said Bangladesh believes diplomacy can prevent the push-in of individuals identified as Bangladeshis through different border points by India.

"Bangladesh always adheres to international laws and protocols," he added.

Jahangir said the issue has already been raised with Indian authorities through the foreign ministry. Diplomatic efforts are currently underway, led by Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain and Khalilur Rahman, the chief adviser's high representative for the Rohingya issue.

"We have informed India that if any Bangladeshi is found staying in India illegally, they should be returned through the appropriate channels. Similarly, if there are any Indian nationals residing in Bangladesh without legal permission, we will repatriate them through the proper procedures."

"India has been urged to follow established protocols instead of conducting push-ins," the adviser said.

Jahangir said an attempted push-in occurred on Friday along the Brahmanbaria border, which was successfully resisted by the Border Guard Bangladesh with the help of Ansar and local residents. "If people in the border areas

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Emon's record ton hands Tigers 27-run win over UAE

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parvez Hossain Emon scored the fastest T20I century by a Bangladeshi and only the second T20I century for the country as the Tigers beat UAE by 27 runs in the first match of a two-match series at the Sharjah International Cricket Stadium on Saturday.

Emon reached his century off 53 ball, beating Tamim Iqbal's record of 60-ball 100 which the former captain had scored during a 103-run knock against Oman in the 2016 T20I World Cup. Emon, who hit nine sixes and five fours during whirlwind knock, also broke the record for most sixes by a Bangladeshi batter, beating Rishad Hossain's (7) effort.

Although Emon fell in the next ball following reaching the landmark during the last over of the innings, he had made sure Bangladesh got enough ammunition to challenge the hosts. Eventually Bangladesh managed to reach 191 for seven, adding 88 runs in the last 10 overs after being asked to bat first.

Aside from Emon, only four other batters reached double-digit scores, with the second-highest contribution coming from extras (21).

Jawadullah returned the best figures for the hosts, scalping four wickets for 21 in his four overs.

UAE gave Bangladesh a run for their money, with captain Mohammad Wasim's 39-ball 54, Rahul Chopra's 22 ball 35 and 42 off 21 balls taking the match down to the wire.

As long as the big-hitting Asif was at the crease, UAE

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