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NBR plunges into turmoil

Revenue officials launch fresh wave of protests demanding removal of NBR chairman, repeal of reform ordinance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The crisis at the National Board of Revenue is deepening as disgruntled employees have launched a fresh five-day protest, demanding the chairman's removal and the repeal of a new ordinance that splits the tax authority. The protest

days before the failed negotiations, exacerbating concerns over the NBR's ability to meet its fiscal year targets amid already sluggish revenue growth.

In a press briefing at the NBR headquarters yesterday, the NBR Reform Unity Council vowed not to cooperate with NBR Chairman Abdur Rahman

Protesters' principal grievance lies in a clause of the ordinance splitting NBR that allows general administration cadre officers to lead the two new divisions, sidelining experienced revenue cadre officers.

threatens to disrupt tax collection, delay trade and further strain the country's revenue targets.

The demonstrations resumed yesterday after a one day pause for negotiations between interim government advisers and the aggrieved officials, who argue that the new ordinance undermines their benefits.

Customs clearance and business operations have been hampered due to the protests that continued for five

Khan at work.

"From the outset, it was clear to us that the NBR chairman failed to provide accurate information to the government's policymakers about the scope and rationale of our lawful movement. Instead, he concealed the truth, leading to the current situation," said Shahadat Jamil, a protest leader and deputy commissioner of NBR.

MORE ON BI

NCP won't run in any polls under current EC

Says it'll force 3 govt advisers to quit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the National Citizen Party yesterday said they would not take part in any polls under the current Election Commission.

Accusing the EC of bias and terming it a "party office" of the BNP, they demanded its reconstitution.

Addressing a rally, NCP's Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwari stated that the party would stage protests to force the resignations of Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed, Planning Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud, and Law Adviser Asif Nazrul.

He alleged that their mismanagement was causing the downfall of the finance, law, and other ministries.

The NCP leader was speaking at the rally in front of EC on the demands, including reconstructing the commission and holding local government polls.

Before the rally, the NCP leaders and activists held a sit-in for two hours.

Patwari said the current EC is illegal as it was formed under the law enacted by the Awami League regime, which was rejected by all anti-fascist political parties and groups during the mass uprising.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Robbers take over bus again, 'assault' female passengers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Just months after a robbery on a moving bus, in which female passengers were allegedly sexually assaulted, a similar incident occurred on the Dhaka-Tangail highway on Tuesday night.

The incident came to light yesterday after a passenger, Minu Miah from Piroganj in Rangpur, filed a case with the Tangail Sadar Police Station.

According to the case statement, a group of robbers allegedly took control of a passenger bus, looted valuables, and sexually assaulted female passengers.

On February 17, robbers similarly looted a bus and assaulted female passengers on the same highway, triggering nationwide outrage and calls for improved safety on the roads.

In his statement, Minu Miah said he boarded a Rangpur-bound Al Imran Paribahan bus from Dhaka's Abdullaahpur at 7:00pm. The journey

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4



Supporters of Ishraque Hossain demonstrating in the capital's Kakrail yesterday, demanding that the BNP leader be sworn-in as the mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation following a court order. Inset, Ishraque addresses the demonstrators in the evening.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN



Polls should be held by December

Says army chief in Officers' Address, touches on corridor, port and other issues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Chief of Army Staff General Waker Uz Zaman yesterday said the national election should be held by December this year, according to three sources with direct knowledge of his remarks made at a high-level gathering in Dhaka Cantonment.

"Bangladesh needs political stability. This is only possible through an elected government, not by unelected decision-makers," one source quoted the army chief as saying in an Officers' Address.

All three sources spoke on condition of anonymity, citing official protocol.

Gen Waker warned that keeping the army deployed for civil duties for long may compromise defence preparedness.

"The army is meant for defending the nation, not for policing ... We must return to barracks after elections," he was quoted as telling the event at Senaprangon, where he delivered a 30-minute speech followed by an hour of question-answer session.

Officers from across the country and UN missions abroad joined in physically and virtually -- all in full combat uniform, signalling unity and readiness, the sources said.

Earlier in September last year, Waker told Reuters that the army was ready to support the interim government to help it complete key reforms so the elections can be held within 18 months.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

DIPAN NANDY

The ongoing movement demanding Ishraque Hossain's immediate swearing-in as mayor of Dhaka South spread across several key locations in the capital yesterday, including Matsya Bhaban, Kakrail, and the Jatiya Press Club.

The demonstrations, which began at the Nagar Bhaban, continued till the filing of this report at 12:30am near Kakrail Mosque, in line with Ishraque's instruction to his supporters to remain on the streets "for as long as necessary".

Around 7:30pm yesterday -- the seventh day of protests -- BNP leader Ishraque himself joined the protests near Kakrail Mosque and demanded the resignations of LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain and Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam.

He said, "These two advisers are working for a new political party while still in government."

"We have come with rightful demands as per the court's verdict. This movement is not to install any individual in the mayor's office. It is a movement to ensure a fair upcoming election. The court has thoroughly analysed the entire case,

and the Election Commission has done a detailed review before giving their opinion. It is the responsibility of the local government [ministry] to administer the oath. Yet, the adviser of that ministry is giving personal opinions. This goes

This movement is not merely about securing an individual position, but rather about determining whether a free and fair election will take place by December.

BNP leader ISHRAQUE HOSSAIN

against our fundamental rights."

The BNP leader, who was present at Kakrail till the filing of this report, added, "We demand an immediate announcement of a roadmap for the national election. At the same time, we

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Bumper-to-bumper traffic on both sides of Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue at Paribagh yesterday. City dwellers suffered immensely in jams caused by sporadic heavy rains and demonstrations.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Ishraque joins in as protests swell

Calls for resignation of two advisers; supporters vow to stay on streets

Talks only on sending aid to Rakhine, not corridor Khalilur says he is not citizen of any other country

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman has said the government has not discussed with anyone about humanitarian corridor through Bangladesh into Myanmar and will not do so in future.

"The UN only asked if Bangladesh could assist in sending humanitarian aid near the border, to be delivered to the Rakhine state by UN partners. We said we can consider," he told a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy yesterday.

The issue of humanitarian corridor is a rumour and is being spread by the media of a neighbouring country, he said.

Khalilur explained that a corridor is typically meant

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

2nd DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Tribute to Al-Hajj Mohammad Shahjahan Khan, former President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Bangladesh Thai Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Barishal Zila Samity; former Managing Director of S.S. Shipping & Trading Ltd., S.S. Shipping & Chartering Ltd. and Fatema Real Estate & Developers Ltd.; and former Chairman of S.S. Builders & Developers Ltd. and prominent social worker.



(19.02.1950 - 22.05.2023)

Tribute from Family Members and All the officers and employees of his organisations

3 FREED FROM CUSTODY NCP asks Hannan Masud to explain his role

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party yesterday sought an explanation from its leader Abdul Hannan Masud regarding his role in securing the release of three young men from police custody.

According to a show-cause notice signed by NCP Joint Member Secretary (Office) Saleh Uddin Sifat, three individuals were detained on Tuesday from a residential area under Dharmundi Police Station on charges of "creating chaos" by identifying themselves as "coordinators".

Among the three was Saiful Islam Rabbi, who had earlier been relieved of his position as Mohammadpur Thana coordinator of the Students Against Discrimination "due to moral misconduct", the notice said.

"Despite this, you [Abdul Hannan Masud] appeared at the police station and ensured their release through an undertaking," the notice said.

The notice further instructed Hannan to submit a written explanation to the chief of the party's disciplinary committee within the next three days.

He will also have to explain why organisational measures should not be taken against him.

NBR plunges into turmoil

FROM PAGE 1

The platform of tax, customs, and VAT officials and employees said they will submit a memorandum to the chief adviser, followed by sit-in demonstrations at NBR offices across the country today.

However, export-related functions and international passenger services will remain unaffected, the protesters said in a statement.

The group further threatened complete work abstention in all tax, customs, and VAT offices, excluding Customs Houses and Land Customs Stations, on May 24-25. A full work stoppage will begin on May 26 across all relevant offices.

The protest casts a shadow over the NBR's revenue goals. In the first 10 months of the current fiscal year, the tax authority collected Tk 2.85 lakh crore, reflecting a modest year-on-year growth of nearly 3 percent, according to provisional data.

The government has lowered its revenue target for fiscal 2024-25 by Tk 18,500 crore to Tk 463,500 crore. With Tk 178,500 crore still to be collected as of April, the ongoing unrest poses a clear risk to meeting that goal.

WHY NBR EMPLOYEES PROTESTING?

The protests were triggered by a midnight ordinance issued on May 12 by the interim government, which dissolved the NBR and the Internal Resources Division and created two separate divisions – one for tax policy and the other for revenue collection.

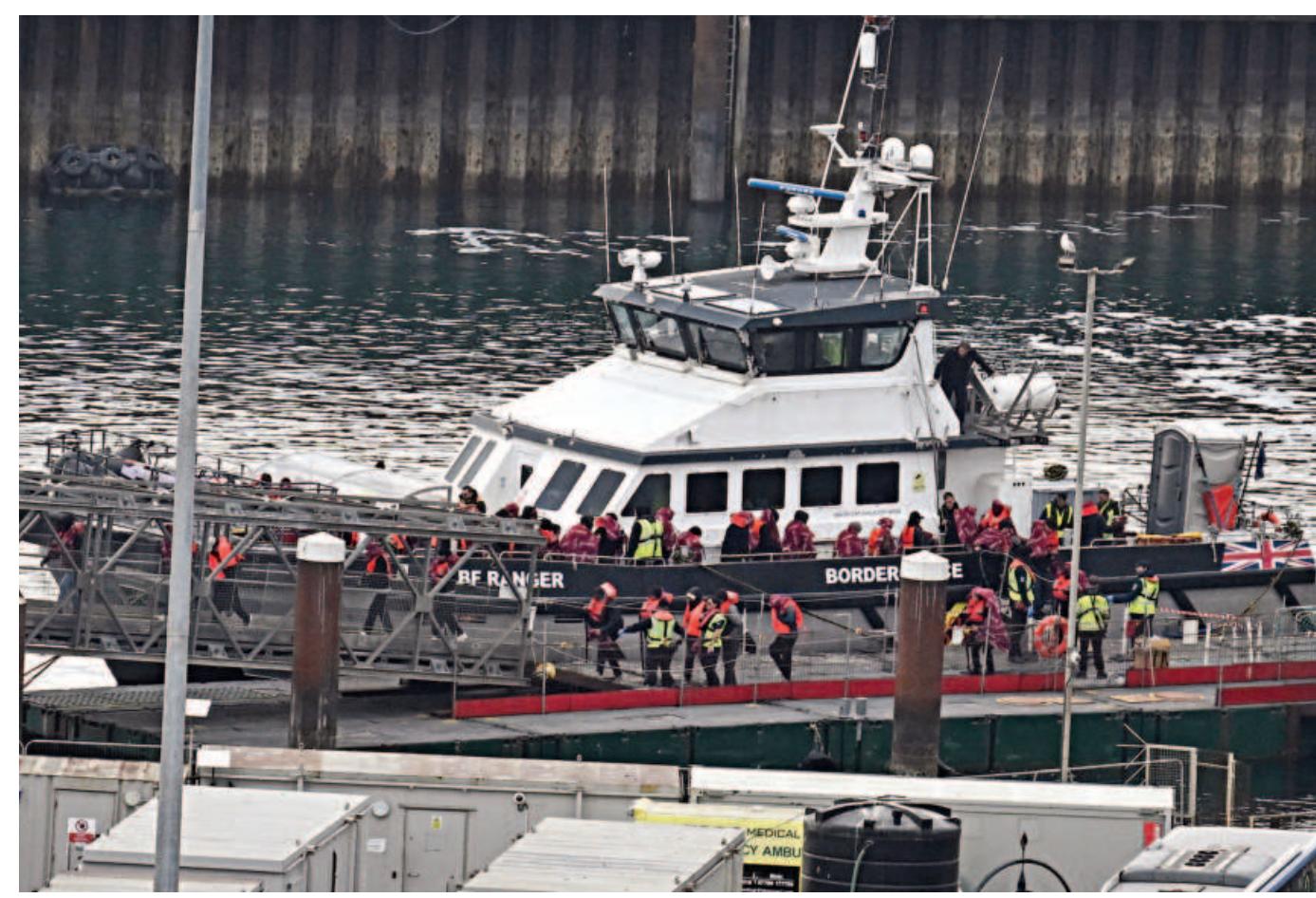
While the government argues that the structural overhaul is aimed at preventing conflicts of interest between policymaking and implementation, revenue officials claim that provisions of the ordinance are discriminatory.

Their principal grievance lies in a clause that allows civil servants from the general administration cadre to lead the two new divisions, sidelining experienced officers from the revenue cadre.

Protesters say they are not opposed to the separation itself, but demand clarity and fairness in the appointment process, particularly in ensuring that seasoned professionals from the revenue sector are included in key policy roles.

The ordinance states that a "suitably qualified" individual will head the policy division, but does not mandate prior experience in the revenue sector, a key point of contention.

The aggrieved employees grouped under the banner of the NBR Reform



Migrants rescued at sea while attempting to cross the English Channel from France disembark from the Border Force vessel 'Ranger' upon its arrival at the marina in Dover, southeast England, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Ashraf Ahmed, former DCCI president, warned that unless the policy unit is aligned with growth objectives, the reforms may prove ineffective. "We need tax reforms that support investment – for instance, the removal of stamp duties on bonds helped create a bond market," he said. "Administrative disputes have little bearing on taxpayers or the broader economy."

NBR Chairman Abdur Rahman did not respond to requests for comments over the phone.

CALLS FOR A SOLUTION

"Resolving this situation is essential. We're already witnessing its impact on revenue collection, and if it escalates further, the consequences could be serious," said Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, chairman of the Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID).

Razzaque said the unrest, if handled wisely, could serve as a turning point for genuine reform. "If the government realigns the structure and addresses all stakeholders' concerns, it could lead to a stronger, more functional NBR," he said.

He added that the tax authority should be developed into a career-based institution that promotes professionalism. "But that requires institutional thinking – not disruption in the name of reform," Razzaque said.

Ittekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International, Bangladesh, recommended an "independent strategic" review that should incorporate the NBR reform committee's report and draw on lessons from international best practices.

More importantly, it should address the sources of deep-rooted internal resistance that, over the years, have turned the NBR into a haven for tax evaders and money launderers, while creating a hostile environment for honest taxpayers, he said.

Towfiqul Islam Khan, senior research fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, criticised the lack of transparency in the reform process. "This shouldn't be seen as a turf war between civil service groups," he said.

"The previous regime's poor record of transparency and accountability should not be repeated by the interim government."

He stressed that reforms of such magnitude, legal and institutional, require consultations with stakeholders across the political, business, and expert communities. "The last major attempt in 2008 failed due to a lack of political consensus. This one must succeed."

Regarding demands to publicly expose dismissed personnel involved in misconduct, he responded with caution: "Our values teach us not to shame others publicly. But if limits are crossed, we might have no choice."

Officers spoke openly about the targeted smear campaign against Gen Waker and the army in general, the sources said.

According to Gen Waker, these are not merely an attack on the army, but part of a bigger plan to weaken public confidence in the armed forces.

He explained that these forces believe that if they can weaken the army and its leadership, they can push the country into chaos and then take advantage of the situation for their personal gains.

"But they are mistaken. We will not allow anyone to harm Bangladesh," the army chief was quoted as saying.

Officers at the event raised concerns about false online campaigns to damage the army's reputation.

The army chief ordered actions against such misinformation and

warned that discipline within the forces will be maintained strictly, according to the sources.

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Talks only on sending aid to Rakhine, not corridor

FROM PAGE 1

for emergency evacuation, which is not applicable here.

Asked about his citizenship, Khalilur said he does not have a US passport.

On April 27, Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain said the interim government agreed in principle to provide humanitarian passage, not corridor, to Rakhine state with certain conditions. He, however, did not mention the conditions.

Since then, political parties have been critical of the issue, saying it is a matter of security, independence, and sovereignty and that any such decision should have been taken in consultation with all stakeholders.

"We don't have any divergence of opinions with our army. I had a detailed discussion with the army chief. We are on the same page. I'm also working closely with the foreign ministry," said Khalilur, who is also high representative of the chief adviser on Rohingya and other priority issues.

Asked about the rumours of US pressure for the humanitarian channel, he said there is no pressure from anyone.

He explained that the Arakan Army now controls 90 percent of the Rakhine state where there is a shortage of food and medicine as all the supply channels to Rakhine have been severed because of the conflicts between the Myanmar junta and Arakan Army.

He said some Rakhine people

also approached Bangladesh border

searching food and medical aid. "If that increases, we may face a new wave of refugees, which we want to avoid."

Bangladesh is already overburdened with the 1.2 million Rohingya and cannot accept any more from Rakhine. This crisis needs a sustainable solution, which lies in the repatriation of the refugees, he said.

The security adviser said the Arakan Army has assured Bangladesh that repatriation is one of their core principles, and they would initiate it once conditions are favourable.

Bangladesh is considering this strictly on humanitarian grounds under clear conditions, he said, adding, "Aid must be non-discriminatory. It must not be used for military purposes. Also, Rohingya participation in any emerging administrative, political, and security structure in Rakhine must be ensured."

"We told the Arakan Army directly: any ethnic cleansing or exclusive governance by Rakhines alone will not be tolerated – it would amount to an apartheid-like state, which we reject."

The UN will be in full charge, including safety and security of the aid, and Bangladesh will secure the border and ensure no drugs or weapons cross through if there is finally such cross-border aid arrangement, he added.

"If the Arakan Army doesn't stop its military actions and Myanmar

doesn't stop airstrikes, no aid will be sent from our side."

The UN said that for any cross-border arrangement, all sides – Arakan Army, Myanmar, and Bangladesh – must agree.

Asked if Myanmar agrees to such a cross-border arrangement for aid to Rakhine, why it cannot support aid delivery internally, Khalilur said Myanmar may have strategic or tactical reasons for not opening certain areas. "But we won't force it open either."

"We will consider this option only on our terms. If aid can be delivered without using our territory, great. If people are starving and crossing into our territory, it's a problem for us. So, it must happen on terms that safeguard our national interest."

CITIZENSHIP
Khalilur said some people are questioning his citizenship, but the fact is that he has only one nationality: Bangladeshi.

"Though I lived in the United States with my family, I never held an American passport. If simply living abroad makes someone a foreign national, then others – such as Mr Tarique Rahman – would fall under that category too."

He said these baseless accusations are hurtful and unjustified and requested everyone to speak with responsibility.

"If there is any claim against me, prove it in court. As a Bangladeshi citizen, I have rights, and I expect those to be respected."

Ishraque joins in as protests swell

FROM PAGE 1

believe a neutral election is not possible under this government, as some of its advisers are conspiring against the BNP."

Meanwhile, all civic services of DSCC have been suspended due to the demonstrations and work stoppages by various employee unions supporting Ishraque.

With the Nagar Bhaban locked, all internal operations have ceased, and its eight regional offices outside the main building have also shut down, DSCC Administrator Md Shahjahan Mia confirmed to The Daily Star.

"For the past few days, all civic services inside the Nagar Bhaban have been suspended. Today [yesterday], the regional offices outside the building have also been closed. As a result, we are unable to provide any civic services to the residents of Dhaka south," he said.

Regarding communications with the employee unions, he added, "We've informed our higher authorities ... They'll take necessary decisions."

Around 10:30am, demonstrators had gathered at key locations including Matsya Bhaban, Kakrail and the Jatiya Press Club to press home their demands.

On Tuesday, the bench had set yesterday for delivering the verdict following the conclusion of the hearing.

On March 27, Dhaka's First Joint District Judge and Election Tribunal Judge Md Nurul Islam overturned the 2020 DSCC election results, declared Ishraque the rightful winner, and instructed the EC to issue a gazette notification within 10 days.

The EC complied and published the gazette on April 27, officially recognising Ishraque as DSCC mayor.

However, on May 14, a DSCC resident named Mamanur Rashid

41 Aussie MPs urge Yunus for election roadmap

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

As many as 41 Australian MPs wrote to Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus calling for a specific electoral roadmap, justice for victims of the Monsoon Revolution and supporting justice for the victims of the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB).

"We urge your administration to immediately and publicly announce a specific, time-bound electoral roadmap. This is an urgent and non-negotiable step toward ensuring credible, transparent and inclusive elections in Bangladesh," they said in a letter yesterday.

Delays or ambiguity at this stage will only deepen public distrust and jeopardise the country's democratic future.

"The people of Bangladesh and the international community are watching closely. We call on your leadership to act decisively. We are prepared to engage constructively to support this essential step toward restoring democratic legitimacy," the letter said.

The MPs include senators Larissa Waters, David Shoebridge, Jordon Steele-John, Fatima Payman, Lidia Thorpe, Penny Allman Payne, Mehreen Faruqi, Steph Hodgins-May, Barbara Pocock, Peter Whish-Wilson, Dorinda Cox, Nicki McKim, Sarah Hanson-Young, Elizabeth Watson Brown, Abigail Boyd, Amanda Cohn, Katherine Copsey, Sue Higginson, Cate Faehrmann, Anasina Gray-Barberio, Aiv Puglielli, Sarah Mansfield, among others.

The letter comes at a time when Yunus remains unwilling to commit to a definite timeframe five months after announcing that the next general elections would be held between December this year and June next year.

Iran lawmakers ratify partnership treaty with Russia

AFP, Tehran

The Iranian parliament ratified a 20-year strategic partnership treaty with Russia yesterday, state media reported, consolidating closer ties between the two countries amid growing tensions with the West.

The deal, which was signed by Presidents Masoud Pashayev and Vladimir Putin in January, was already ratified by Russia's State Duma last month.

It passed the Iranian parliament with 191 votes in favour, eight against and three abstentions among the 212 members present, Iran's official IRNA news agency reported.

The treaty provides for joint efforts to counter common security threats but stops short of a mutual defence agreement.

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Dhaka in touch with Delhi over push-ins, port restrictions

Says foreign adviser

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh has been in touch with New Delhi over reported border push-ins and recent restrictions on imports of Bangladeshi goods through Indian land ports, said Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain yesterday.

"They [India] have conveyed their position to some extent, and we have explained ours. We are trying to make them understand that this is not the right approach," he told reporters while responding to a question at the foreign ministry.

The foreign adviser addressed reports of push-ins along the border and stressed the importance of adhering to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in place between the two countries.

He said India has shared a list of individuals alleged to be Bangladeshi nationals, which is currently being verified by the home ministry of Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



Leaders and activists of National Citizen Party (NCP) gather in front of the Election Commission office in Agargaon around 12:00pm yesterday, demanding the reconstitution of the commission and the holding of local government election before the national polls. They ended their demonstration around 2:00pm.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Accelerate democratic transition
Moyeen Khan urges govt

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior leader Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan yesterday urged the interim government to expedite the democratic transition in Bangladesh, warning that the people of the country can swiftly grow intolerant and turn against even those they once held in high esteem.

"We're providing the interim government with all-out cooperation. We hope that the government will complete the process of transitioning to democracy in Bangladesh within the shortest possible time," he said.

He made the remarks during a discussion, titled "The Role of Martyr Zia in

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Skills, not certificates, needed to meet job market demands

Speakers stress technical education, change in mindset to reduce educated unemployment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The flaws in the conventional education system are contributing to rising unemployment among educated youth, and it is time to place greater emphasis on technical education, as hands-on skills are now more valuable than university degrees, said speakers at an event yesterday.

They shared these views at a conference titled "Youth Perspectives on Reform: Employment and Technology", organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at the Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Center in the capital's Agargaon.

"In our country, the least educated and least privileged are pushed into work or sent off as child labourers. They often end up in mechanical shops or similar jobs. We need to rethink our approach. Not everyone needs to go to a university," said Labour and Employment Adviser Brig Gen

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote technical, skills-based education
- Rethink the push for university degrees
- Align education with labour market needs
- Treat skilled migration as national priority
- Formalise informal sectors like freelancing
- Shift focus from government jobs
- Involve universities in research, innovation

(retd) M Sakhawat Hossain.

He said even those with a Master's degree often lack the necessary skills. "But if you are technically skilled, that is what the world needs today," he added.

Stating that the biggest

problem in the country is educated unemployment, the adviser said, "After graduation, everyone wants a job -- ideally a government one -- because of the many perks. No matter the salary, the benefits are attractive."

He added, "This trend has developed over the years. If something costs Tk 100, another Tk 200 is added on top, which then gets shared among people. This has been my observation over the past 10-11 months."

The adviser further said many Bangladeshis are willing to drive taxis or work in restaurants abroad, but not at home due to social taboos.

On the issue of research, he said, "You won't get this kind of thinking from government employees because our mindset is 9-to-5. After 5 o'clock, we're done. We move files all day but don't do real research."

He stressed the need for

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

Reform commissions followed a top-down approach

SAYS FARHAD MAZHAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Poet and writer Farhad Mazhar yesterday criticised the formation of the Women's Affairs Reforms Commission, saying it was done without involving the general public.

Speaking at a discussion titled "Equity for Women and Women's Affairs Reforms Commission", organised by Gonoshakti Sobha at the Jatiya Press Club, he said, "Even if the Women's Commission has positive goals, people cannot connect with them. That itself creates complications."

Mazhar said not only the women's commission but

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

From 'TikTokers' to murderers Photographer lured to fake wedding, stabbed to death for his cameras

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

What began as a seemingly harmless obsession with TikTok turned into a chilling tale of murder in Dhaka's Hazaribagh, where a photographer was killed on May 16.

The alleged killers -- aged between 18 and 20 -- often created and shared photos and videos on TikTok.

Striving for higher quality and more attractive content, they decided they needed a DSLR camera. But instead of buying one, they plotted to snatch it from a photographer by luring him to a fake wedding.

The victim, Nurul Islam, had no idea he was walking into a trap. He was called to cover the fake event and was stabbed to death before the attackers fled with his two expensive cameras.

The police revealed the details of the incident yesterday, after Hazaribagh police arrested 10 suspects from different parts of Dhaka and Mymensingh.

"They wanted better videos and eye-catching photos for TikTok. Since their phones couldn't deliver the quality they wanted, they became desperate to get a DSLR camera," said Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division Police, at the DMP media centre yesterday. Police recovered the two stolen cameras, he said.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Rab must move beyond past controversies Home adviser tells the force's anniversary event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday called upon Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members to move beyond past controversies and dedicate themselves to their duties with renewed commitment.

"Rab must operate by the law while upholding human rights," he said while addressing the 21st founding anniversary of Rab at its headquarters in the capital's Uttara as the chief guest.

Jahangir said the interim government is committed to establishing good governance, human rights, and justice.

"To ensure the rule of law, the government is working to reassess, reform, and restructure Rab. I hope the people will soon begin to reap the benefits of these efforts," he said.

The adviser acknowledged that the force has long faced allegations of enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and other rights violations,

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

SAGAR-RUNI MURDER PBI wants to quiz accused Tanvir Court extends probe deadline for 119th time

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) yesterday submitted an application before a Dhaka court for interrogating Tanvir Rahman, an accused in the case filed over murders of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi in 2012.

Tanvir, a family friend of the couple, was arrested on October 10, 2012 in connection with the murders and later released on bail.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Shaheen Reza set July 8 to hear the application in presence of Investigation Officer Md Azizul Haque, also an additional superintendent of police at the PBI, said a court police.

The magistrate also extended the deadline for submitting the probe report on the case to the same date. This marks the 119th extension of the deadline, according to case records.

A day before the death of the victims, Runi met Tanvir in front of Square Hospital at Panthapath around 5:15pm on February 10, 2012 and travelled in Tanvir's car to different places in the capital. Later, Tanvir drove Runi to her residence around 7:00pm.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

CCC razes part of hill without approval

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

A portion of a hill in Chattogram's Bayezid Bostami area has been razed by the Chattogram City Corporation without obtaining permission from the relevant authorities.

Around 5,000 cubic feet of soil have already been cleared from the hill to make way for a road, as part of the development of a new dumping zone.

According to CCC data, the state agency is developing a waste dumping zone on a piece of government land located behind the hills. To facilitate access to the site, the CCC began cutting through the hill to construct a road.

As part of the plan, the city authorities are reportedly set to cut through two privately-owned hills and another hill under government ownership.

Under the Bangladesh Environment Preservation Act 1995 (amended in 2000), cutting

punishments of up to ten years' imprisonment, or a fine of Tk 10 lakh, or both.

A team from the DoE intervened and halted the environmental destruction after finding evidence of hill cutting.

"A team from the Department of Environment visited the site on Tuesday (May 20) and found that a section of the hill had already been razed. The team promptly intervened to stop the hill-cutting activities," said Muktadir Hasan,

assistant director of the DoE's Chattogram Metropolitan unit.

When asked whether any legal action would be taken over the illegal hill cutting, Muktadir Hasan said, "According to the law, no hill can be cut without permission. Since the hill has been cut, we will file a case against those involved in the offence."

"We have already issued a notice to the owner of the hill and also summoned the city corporation authorities to hear their explanation," he added.

When asked why the hill was being cut without prior permission, Sheikh Muhammad Touhidul Islam, chief executive officer of the CCC, said, "We need to develop a new dumping zone to manage the waste generated by city residents. For that, we are constructing an access road."

"As the road is being constructed for public-related activities, we sought permission from the owner of the hill to use a portion of it for the project. He has given us written consent," the CEO added.

He said the CCC has already applied to the DoE for approval to build the road through the hill, citing public necessity as the reason.

Hold student union polls before nat'l election

Demands Bangladesh Democratic Student Council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

No national election will be held without holding student union elections first, said Abu Baker Mojumder, convenor of the Bangladesh Democratic Student Council, yesterday.

He also warned of taking to the streets if a clear roadmap for student union elections is not announced, according to a statement of the student organisation.

Abu Baker, former coordinator of Students Against Discrimination, demanded that VCs, proctors, and admin officials of academic institutions -- who he claimed were nominated and influenced by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir through his friend Wahiduddin Mahmud -- resign before Eid-ul-Azha.



assistant director of the DoE's Chattogram Metropolitan unit.

When asked whether any legal action would be taken over the illegal hill cutting, Muktadir Hasan said, "According to the law, no hill can be cut without

Kuet teachers demand VC's resignation Continue sit-in for 3rd day

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Teachers of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet) yesterday demanded the immediate resignation of interim Vice-Chancellor Prof Hazrat Ali, expressing no confidence in him.

They accused Prof Ali of disregarding Kuet's rules and regulations, ignoring the justified demands of students and teachers, and failing to fulfil his responsibilities as the head of the institution.

The teachers continued their sit-in protest yesterday for the third consecutive day. They also announced a human chain on campus today at 11:30am.

Prof Md Faruque Hossain, general secretary of the association, said, "On May 4, during a general meeting, we gave the vice-chancellor an ultimatum of seven working days to ensure the university operates in accordance with its rules and regulations. Concerning the unexpected incident in February, we urged him to complete the necessary procedures -- such as initiating an investigation, and holding disciplinary committee meetings -- to help restore a healthy academic environment and facilitate the prompt return of students and teachers to classes."

"However, even after the deadline had passed, the VC's unilateral decisions continued to hinder the normal functioning of the university," he added.

CCC starts 'health card' for students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chattogram City Corporation has launched Students' Health Card for school goers.

This is for the first time such health cards are introduced for students.

CCC Mayor Shahadat Hossain inaugurated the launching ceremony at Kapasgola Girls' High School yesterday.

The card will store the student cardholder's name, date of birth, school information, parents' or guardian's name and contact information, a total of 14 health examination records between the age of 5-17, and other necessary information including weight, height, eye-ear condition, teeth, skin-hair condition, blood pressure and haemoglobin level.

It will also store the cardholder's vaccination information in a separate section, including important vaccine records such as BCG, Polio, Hepatitis B, MR, Pentavalent, Typhoid, Influenza and Rabies.

Initially, students of five educational institutions -- Patharghata City Corporation Boys' High School, Gul-e-Jar Begum City Corporation High School, Imaratunnesa Kindergarten, Panchlaish Kindergarten and Kapasgola City Corporation Girls' High School -- have been brought under this initiative.



Ispahani Group Director Emaad Ispahani receives the 'National Tea Award 2025' in the category of 'Best Tea Garden Based on Worker Welfare' on behalf of Ispahani's Mirzapore Tea Garden, from Commerce Adviser Sheikh Bashir Uddin yesterday. The programme, held at Osmani Memorial Auditorium, was organised by the Ministry of Commerce and the Bangladesh Tea Board and presided over by Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman. At the event, Jasmine Akhter of Neptune Tea Garden, got the award for 'Highest Tea Leaf Collector'. Among others, Maj Gen Sheikh Md Sarwar Hossain, chairman of the Bangladesh Tea Board; Shah Moinuddin Hasan, chairman of the Tea Traders Association of Bangladesh; and Kamran T Rahman, president of the Bangladesh Tea Parliament, were present.

PHOTO: COURTESY

SC scraps
graft case
against
Mirza Abbas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday scrapped a High Court verdict that cleared the way for running the trial proceedings against former housing and public works minister Mirza Abbas in a corruption case filed on charge of causing Tk 15.52 crore loss to the state by allocating plots to journalists.

A three-member bench headed by Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury gave the order.

ACC filed the case with Shahbagh Police Station in March 2014, against Abbas and four others on charges of allocating Rajuk's land to a journalists' cooperative society, at a lower rate.

PLOT SALE
A plot is for sale in Baridhara Diplomatic Zone. Only interested and genuine buyers should contact: 01973456904

JASHORE'S KESHABPUR UPAZILA 12 villages face flood risk as canal remains silted

MOHSIN MILON, Benapole

Around 12 villages under Jashore's Keshabpur upazila are at risk of flooding during the monsoon as the canal between Byasdanga and Sujapur areas remains silted and unexcavated.

The one-kilometre-long canal, located in the Goralia Beel area, was originally dug in 1980 under a voluntary canal excavation programme.

Since then, it has served as the primary drainage route for water from two local swamps situated between Keshabpur municipality and neighbouring Monirampur upazila.

Every year during the Boro season, water from over a dozen fish enclosures



along the canal's banks is drained into it using shallow pumps.

However, due to prolonged use and lack of maintenance, the canal has become heavily silted, causing drainage problems.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

**Due to
prolonged use
and lack of
maintenance,
the canal
has become
heavily silted,
causing
drainage
problems.**

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

COMPANY MATTER NO 829 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994. **AND**

IN THE MATTER OF: Md. Mizanur Rahman, son of Late Ali Ahmed & Umretunnessa, Shareholder and Managing Director, First Security Real Estate Ltd, of House No. 31, Road No. 4, Block-C, Banasree, Rampura, Dhaka, Bangladesh. **Petitioner**

VERSUS-

First Security Real Estate Ltd. of House No. 31, Road No. 4, Block-C, Banasree, Rampura, Dhaka, Bangladesh and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. **—Respondents**

Take notice that an application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the Petitioner for permission of holding an Annual General Meeting of First Security Real Estate Ltd. for the calendar years 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and to give necessary direction for holding the said meeting within a reasonable time. Upon hearing of the application on 19-05-2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sobel has been pleased to admit the said application. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an advocate on or before the date fixed for hearing. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.

Advocate Md. Anowar Hossain

Room No. 351 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbagh, Dhaka-1000. Mobile: 01913391551

Ivy denied bail in two cases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj



A Narayanganj court yesterday rejected two bail petitions of former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor Selina Hayat Ivy in two cases filed over murder and attempted murder charges.

Senior Judicial Magistrate Haidar Ali passed the order, said Inspector Kaitum Khan, in charge of the court police outpost.

Ivy was arrested at her residence in the city's Deobhog area on May 9 in a case filed over killing of RMG worker Minarul Islam during last year's July uprising.

According to court sources, the bail pleas were filed in two cases lodged with Siddhiganj Police Station -- one over the killing of rickshaw-puller Md Tuhin and the other for the attempted murder of hawker Nadim.

Travel ban on ex-NBR chief, 3 others

COURT CORRESPONDENT

ADhaka court yesterday issued travel bans on former chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR) Abu Hena Md Rahmat Muneem and former NBR First Secretary Emdazul Islam over corruption allegations.

Apart from them, the court also issued travel bans on Abu Hena's wife Laila Jesmin and Emdazul's wife Shorma Mala Ansari.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Md Saiduzzaman, who is leading the inquiry team, submitted an application.

The judge also directed the ACC to send a copy of this order to the additional inspector general of police of the Special Branch, Malibagh in Dhaka for the next course of action. ACC Public Prosecutor Ruhul Islam Khan moved the application on behalf of the anti graft body.

In the application, the ACC official said all the four misappropriated a huge amount of money from the public fund through corruption and illegal means and they deposited that money in their names and the names of their family members.

"The ACC official came to know from credible source that they were attempting to flee the country. If they flee, inquiry into the allegations brought against them might be hampered. So, an order is needed to prevent them from doing so," said the ACC in his application.

LEGAL NOTICE	
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)	
COMPANY MATTER NO 703 OF 2025	
IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994. AND	
IN THE MATTER OF: Mohammad Manjur Mahmud, son of Abdur Rob Howlader and Rowshan Ara Begum, Shareholder and Chairman, Evezia Limited of 14/2, Mirpur Road (Opp Dhaka College), 3rd Floor, Newmarket, Dhaka. Petitioner	
VERSUS-	
Evezia Limited of 14/2, Mirpur Road (Opp Dhaka College), 3rd Floor, Newmarket, Dhaka, Bangladesh and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. —Respondents	
Take notice that an application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the Petitioner for permission of holding an Annual General Meeting of Evezia Limited for the calendar years 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and to give necessary direction for holding the said meeting within a reasonable time. Upon hearing of the application on 19-05-2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sobel has been pleased to admit the said application. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an advocate on or before the date fixed for hearing. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.	
Advocate Md. Anowar Hossain	
Room No. 351 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbagh, Dhaka-1000. Mobile: 01913391551	

LEGAL NOTICE	
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)	
COMPANY MATTER NO 703 OF 2025	
IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994. AND	
IN THE MATTER OF: Mohammad Manjur Mahmud, son of Abdur Rob Howlader and Rowshan Ara Begum, Shareholder and Chairman, Evezia Limited of 14/2, Mirpur Road (Opp Dhaka College), 3rd Floor, Newmarket, Dhaka. Petitioner	
VERSUS-	
Evezia Limited of 14/2, Mirpur Road (Opp Dhaka College), 3rd Floor, Newmarket, Dhaka, Bangladesh and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. —Respondents	
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Advocate Md. Anowar Hossain	
Room No. 351 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbagh, Dhaka-1000. Mobile: 01913391551	

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Food
Directorate General of Food
Inspection, Development & Technical Services Division
16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka-1000
www.dgfood.gov.bd

Invitation for Tender
Tender No. 03/2024-2025

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH	
1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Food
2. Agency	Directorate General of Food
3. Procuring Entity Name	Director General of Food
4. Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
5. Invitation for	Repair and maintenance of 33 Nos. Digital Weighbridge Scales and 1500 Digital Platform Scale made by Precia Molen, France on quarterly basis for 03 (three) years located at different LSD(s), CSD(s) & Silo(s) under the Directorate General of Food, and supply of required spare parts on demand.
6. Invitation Ref No & Date	Memo No:13.01.0000.111.38.003.25.202; Dated: 21/05/2025
7. Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
8. Budget and Source of Funds	Government of Bangladesh
9. Tender Package No.	Tender No. 03/2024-2025
10. Tender Package Name	Repair and maintenance of 33 Nos. Digital Weighbridge Scales and 1500 Digital Platform Scale made by Precia Molen, France on quarterly basis for 03 (three) years located at different LSD(s), CSD(s) & Silo(s) under the Directorate General of Food, and supply of required spare parts on demand.
11. Tender Publication Last Date	25/05/2025
12. Tender Last Selling Date & Time	17/06/2025 up to office hour
13. Tender Closing Date & Time	Dated: 18/06/2025 Time: 1:00 pm
14. Tender Opening Date & Time	Dated: 18/06/2025 Time: 2:00 pm
15. Name & Address of the office Selling Tender Document Receiving Tender Document	Cashier, Accounts & Finance Division, Directorate General of Food (Room No. 419, 4 th Floor), 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka-1000.
Opening Tender Document	The tender will be received from the date of tender publishing to closing date and time being mentioned in serial no. 13. Tender will be received in the Tender Box to be kept in front of the office of the Director, IDTS, Room No. 531, IDTS Division, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka-1000.
16. Eligibility of Tenderer	The tenderer shall have up-dated trade license, latest income tax clearance certificate, VAT registration certificate. Up-to-date Local Agent/Representative, Distributor/Dealer certificate. Scale Repair Maintenance certificate from BSTI work completion certificate and All other conditions stated in TDS.
17. Brief Description of Works	Repair and maintenance of

S-W PAKISTAN Six killed in school bus bombing

PM accuses rival India of backing the militants

AFP, Quetta

A suspected suicide bomber targeted a schoolbus in southwestern Pakistan killing at least four children and two adults yesterday, in an attack the government accused India of backing.

The bus driver and his assistant were among those killed in the attack in Khuzdar district of Balochistan province, on the way to a school that caters to the children of army personnel and civilians living in the area.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif accused arch-rival India of backing the militants that carried out the attack, coming almost two weeks after the two sides settled a ceasefire to end their most serious conflict in decades.

"Terrorists operating under Indian patronage attacking innocent children on a school bus is clear evidence of their hostility," his statement added. The military also said in a statement that the attack was "planned and orchestrated" by India.

No group has yet claimed responsibility for yesterday's bombing. Sarfraz Bugti, the chief minister of Balochistan province said four children, the bus driver and his assistant were killed.

"A bus carrying children of the APS (Army Public School) was targeted with a bomb, the nature of which is still being determined," Yasir Iqbal Dashti, a senior local government official in Khuzdar district, told AFP.



Mourners carry the bodies of Palestinians, including a newborn, killed in Israeli strikes, according to medics, during their funeral in Deir Al-Balah in central Gaza yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

MISSILE DEFENCE SYSTEM Trump unveils plans for 'Golden Dome'

China says US plan 'undermines global stability'

REUTERS, Washington

President Donald Trump said on Tuesday he had selected a design for the \$175 billion Golden Dome missile defense shield and named a Space Force general to head the ambitious program aimed at blocking threats from China and Russia.

The program, first ordered by Trump in January, aims to create a network of satellites, perhaps numbering in the hundreds, to detect, track and potentially intercept incoming missiles.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning, when

asked about the project at a regular press conference yesterday, said it "undermines global stability" and heightens the risks of the militarisation of outer space and an arms race.

The Kremlin indicated that President Trump's missile shield plans could force the resumption in the foreseeable future of contacts between Moscow and Washington about nuclear arms control.

On Tuesday evening, Trump told a White House press conference that US Space Force General Michael Gutelein would be the lead program manager for an effort widely viewed

as the keystone to Trump's military planning.

Golden Dome will "protect our homeland," Trump said, adding that Canada had said it wanted to be part of it.

In a statement, the office of Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said he and his ministers were discussing a new security and economic relationship with their American counterparts.

"These discussions naturally include strengthening NORAD and related initiatives such as the Golden Dome," it added.

Indian troops kill 27 Maoist rebels
Home minister says insurgent chief among dead

AFP, New Delhi

Indian commandos yesterday killed 27 rebels in central India, including the "topmost leader" of the banned Communist Party of India-Maoist group, commonly known as the Naxalite rebellion, after the village in the foothills of the Himalayas where the Maoist-inspired guerrilla movement began nearly six decades ago.

"Today, in an operation in Narayanpur, Chhattisgarh, our security forces have neutralised 27 dreaded Maoists, including Nambala Keshav Rao, alias Basavaraju, the general secretary of CPI-Maoist, topmost leader, and the backbone of the Naxal movement," Shah said in a statement.

Afghanistan, Pak aim to upgrade diplomatic ties

Says Beijing after hosting meeting between Islamabad and Taliban

REUTERS, Beijing

Pakistan and Afghanistan plan to upgrade their diplomatic ties, China said yesterday after hosting an informal meeting between Islamabad and the Afghan Taliban administration following several outbreaks of violence.

The neighbours agreed in principle to send ambassadors to each other's country as soon as possible, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said after his talks with Afghanistan's acting foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi and Pakistan's FM Ishaq Dar.

The two countries "clearly expressed" willingness to upgrade the level of their diplomatic relations, Wang said according to a Chinese foreign ministry statement. "China welcomes this and is willing to continue providing assistance for the improvement of Afghanistan-Pakistan relations," he said.

In December, the Afghan Taliban said bombardment by Pakistani military aircraft in Afghanistan's eastern Paktika province had killed at least 46 people, most of whom were children and women. Pakistan has not confirmed the strikes but has said that it is carrying out "anti-terrorist operations" against militants it blames for attacks in Pakistan and who it says have safe havens in Afghanistan, a charge that Kabul denies.



বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
 Office of the Executive Engineer
 PC Pole Manufacturing Plant
 BPDB, Saidpur, Nilphamari
 E-mail: xen.pcpole.saidpur@gmail.com

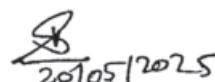
Memo No. 27.11.7385.550.01.018.25.192 Date: 20-05-2025

Invitation for e-Tender (OTM)

Tender ID	Name of work, Ref. No. & date	Tender publication date & time	Tender/ proposal document last selling date & time	Tender/ proposal closing & opening date & time
1115575	Supply of Stone Chips 27.11.7385.550.01.018.25.189 Date: 20-05-2025	20-05-2025 16:00	03-06-2025 16:00	04-06-2025 11:00
1010121	Supply of Spiral wire 27.11.7385.550.01.018.25.191 Date: 20-05-2025	20-05-2025 16:40	03-06-2025 16:00	04-06-2025 11:15

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on e-GP System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

বিদ্যুৎ/জন-১৩১৫(২)/২০/০৫/২৫


 Engr. Md. Shofiqul Islam
 ID No. 1-01923
 Executive Engineer
 PC Pole Manufacturing Plant
 BPDB, Saidpur, Nilphamari



কোল পাওয়ার জেনারেশন কোম্পানি বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড
 Coal Power Generation Company Bangladesh Limited (CPGCL)
 (An Enterprise of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh)
 "আন্তর্জাতিক দেশ, যতে পরিবেশ"

Invitation for e-Tender

e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following works and goods:

Tender ID	Name of Tender and IFT Reference	Tender Document last selling/ downloading Date & Time	Tender Closing and Opening Date & Time
1112179	Maintenance works of JEL Accommodation under Matarbari Power Plant. IFT Ref. No: 27.32.0000.000.008.07.0002.25.0403; Date: 21-05-2025	22-June-2025 17:00	23-June-2025 11:00
1110781	Supply of filter elements and different spiral wound gaskets for Turbine and FGD System of Matarbari Coal Based Power Plant. IFT Ref. No: 27.32.0000.000.008.07.017.25.0405; Date: 21-05-2025	22-June-2025 17:00	23-June-2025 11:00
1114442	Supply of Maintenance Tools and Hardware for Steam Turbine of Matarbari Coal Based Power Plant. IFT Ref. No: 27.32.0000.000.008.07.017.25.0406; Date: 21-05-2025	22-June-2025 17:00	23-June-2025 11:00
1113866	Maintenance Works of Steel Building & Existing old Warehouse of Matarbari Coal Based Power Plant. IFT Ref. No: 27.32.0000.000.031.99.0006.24.0404; Date: 21-05-2025	29-June-2025 17:00	30-June-2025 11:00

These are Online Tenders, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hardcopy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration is required in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd). The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank.

Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Depayan Paul
 (Depayan Paul)
 Superintendent Engineer (Procurement) (Current Charge)
 CPGCL, Dhaka. Phone: 01787-696526

North-West Power Generation Company Ltd.

ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 & ISO 45001:2018 Certified
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Office of the Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
Sirajganj 225 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant (Unit-1)

Soydabad, Sirajganj.

Ref : 27.28.8878.101.07.001.19.14.30

Date : 21/05/2025

e-Tender Notice

The following e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd):

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Brief Description of Tender	Publication Date	Last Selling Date & Time	Opening Date
1	1112034	Spare Parts of Battery and Battery Charger System.	20/05/2025	18/06/2025, 11:00	18/06/2025
2	1115198	Spare Parts for Air Conditioner, Lighting & Electrical System Accessories.	21/05/2025	19/06/2025, 11:00	19/06/2025

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 (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)


 21/05/2025

Engr. Brojendra Kumar Sarker
 Plant Manager (Superintending Engineer)
 Sirajganj 225 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant (Unit-1)
 NWPGL, Soydabad, Sirajganj.

GD-1232

Don't let babies be casualties of war

World must come together to save Gaza's children

The UN's warning on the state of Gaza on Tuesday—that two million people face starvation and 14,000 babies face death within 48 hours if aid doesn't reach them on time—paints a picture that is not just dire; it is the epitome of distress. These people are being subjected to a war they had no part in making. World leadership has failed to put a stop to this blatant disregard for human lives in a largely one-sided war that has violated all international conventions on armed conflict and human rights. The current situation should have a sobering effect on world leaders, and from recent reports, it seems it has, at least on the surface. However, whether they can capitalise on that and come together to restrain Israel from causing further damage remains to be seen.

According to reports, Israel on Monday allowed humanitarian aid to enter the Gaza Strip, which it had blocked for more than two and a half months, letting five aid carrying trucks through. But this happened not because Israeli leadership decided to uphold human rights; its prime minister explained to supporters that preventing a famine in Gaza was necessary for "diplomatic reasons" as "images of mass starvation" could delegitimise their war efforts. Just a few days ago, however, he launched a fresh military offensive in Gaza—a move Israel's war cabinet approved earlier this month, aimed at "taking control" of the entire strip.

The lack of empathy in Israel's leadership for the starving residents of Gaza boggles the mind. Its actions, including blocking aids, have drawn widespread condemnation, including from some of its allies. On Monday, the UK, France, and Canada warned of "concrete actions" against the country if it continued its operations in Gaza. But this is nothing new. Countries and people worldwide have been criticising Israel's genocidal actions in Gaza since the beginning of its military offensive in retaliation to the Hamas attack on October 7, 2023. That has made no difference whatsoever, as their concern has never translated into effective action to stop Israel from indiscriminately killing innocent civilians. The ceasefire deal finalised in January this year fell through in less than two months. Israel continues to do as it pleases, having killed more than 53,000 people in over 20 months now.

Evidently, mere warnings will no longer cut it. The time has come for Israel's friends to force its hand through stern measures. If that means imposing targeted sanctions to make it follow international laws and allow humanitarian efforts in Gaza—without any conditions—then so be it. There is absolutely no time to waste when people, including babies, are starving to death.

Prevent bird strike hazards at HSIA

CAAB must address the issue to enhance flight safety

We are concerned about the rising incidents of bird strikes at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) that have often resulted in flight cancellations, aircraft damage, and even crash landings. On May 20, a Turkish Airlines flight was forced to make an emergency landing after a bird strike ignited its second engine shortly after takeoff. Thankfully, all 11 crew members and 280 passengers aboard the Istanbul-bound flight remained unharmed. Reportedly, the dense bushes in the airport area are good habitats for grasshoppers and butterflies, which attract different types of birds. The presence of waste collection centres and landfills near the airport also attracts birds, particularly black kites, posing significant risks to flight safety.

Unfortunately, while flight safety officials from various airlines have called on the authorities to take proper action to address the threat, the latter have been unable to do so effectively. Bird strikes are a common phenomenon at airports around the world, but HSIA seems particularly prone to it. In 2023, a Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight on the Dhaka-Bangkok route had to abandon takeoff after a bird strike caused one of its tyres to burst. The same year, a Fly Dubai flight aborted takeoff after a bird strike on its left engine damaged three propeller blades.

Such incidents continue to happen. According to a research paper presented at a recent workshop, 10 major bird strike incidents occurred at HSIA between May 2023 and May 2024. International Air Transport Association data shows that from January 2023 to October 2024, HSIA recorded 1.73 bird strikes per 1,000 flights, compared to just 0.5 at other international airports. The situation is clearly concerning, and must be addressed before a major accident occurs.

We urge the authorities to take all necessary measures to deter birds in and around the airport. Airports across the globe use both modern and conventional technologies to drive birds away from key aviation installations. Our airport authorities must learn from their experiences. Reportedly, HSIA has two bird shooters and some equipment—machines that emit certain frequencies to deter birds, as well as gas cannons—which should be properly utilised. Most importantly, the hundreds of open garbage spots surrounding the airport must be removed. Airport authorities must coordinate with relevant agencies to encourage birds to seek alternative nesting and feeding grounds to ensure flight safety.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Hitler, Mussolini sign the Pact of Steel

On this day in 1939, Adolf Hitler of Germany and Benito Mussolini of Italy signed the Pact of Steel, a full military and political alliance between their countries.



How not to describe the Awami League



David Bergman
is a journalist who has written about
Bangladesh for many years. He is on X at
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DAVID BERGMAN

When the Awami League government initiated the prosecution of Jamaat-e-Islami leaders at the International Crimes Tribunal in 2010, it justified the use of an unamended International Crimes (Tribunal) Act, 1973 by arguing that the act was modelled on the legal framework used in the post-World War II Nuremberg Trials. According to the government and its supporters, the act reflected international legal standards because it paralleled the laws under which senior Nazi leaders were prosecuted.

This justification, however, ignored the substantial evolution of international law between 1945 and 2010. While the Awami League may have been correct in saying the 1973 act adhered to the standards of the 1940s, it failed to recognise that international legal standards and definitions had significantly developed over the subsequent six decades. As such, relying solely on the Nuremberg framework in 2010 was highly problematic.

Today, we see a troubling echo of that historical distortion. Some proponents of banning the Awami League draw comparisons between the party and the Nazi Party, citing the Allied powers' postwar dissolution of the latter as justification. Such analogies are frequently accompanied by the claim that the Awami League is comparable to the Nazi Party.

There are profound and fundamental differences between Nazi Germany and the Awami League's governance in Bangladesh. Nazi Germany was a totalitarian dictatorship, enforced through institutions like the Gestapo and SS, that invaded countries across Europe in pursuit of global domination. It implemented the industrial-scale genocide of six million Jews and millions of others, including Roma, disabled individuals, political dissidents, and more, through a system of concentration camps and gas chambers.

To equate this with the Awami League is both to trivialise the enormity of Nazi crimes and distort the reality



FILE PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Burnt remains of the Awami League office at Bangabandhu Avenue in Dhaka on August 6, 2024, a day after the party's ouster from power.

of Bangladeshi politics. While serious criticisms of the Awami League are both valid and necessary, they must be proportionate and grounded in fact.

There were extrajudicial killings during the Awami League rule—deplorable and indefensible—but between 2009 and 2023, according to Odhikar, these numbered below 200 annually, comparable to the average yearly figures of killings recorded during the five years of the previous BNP government: just over 200 killings per year. The Awami League government did suppress media freedom and censor free speech more generally, shutting down *Amar Desh* and *Sangram*, imprisoning at least two editors, closing a couple of TV stations and arresting hundreds under restrictive social media laws. Yet, independent media continued to operate, with plenty of criticism. Under the BNP rule, ETV, a popular independent TV station, was forcibly closed.

200 cases of individuals who either remained missing or were later found dead throughout the 15-plus years of Awami League rule—a tragic and deplorable figure, but far below the scale seen in Argentina or Chile in the 1970s and 1980s, or Sri Lanka, where tens of thousands were disappeared and killed.

Elections in 2014, 2018, and 2024 were deeply flawed, with the 2018 election widely regarded as rigged. Still, elections were held, and opposition parties had the option to participate—unlike in Nazi Germany, where from 1933 onwards, all political parties and opposition of any kind was banned.

Yes, the Awami League promoted a cult of personality and a divisive form of nationalist ideology, but it was neither racist nor supremacist in the way Nazi ideology was. The Awami League's nationalism was rooted in the legacy of the Liberation War, not in theories of ethnic superiority.

So any comparison of the Awami League government with Nazi Germany does not stand up to scrutiny. Nor does trying to justify the ban on its activities on the back of what the Allied powers did in 1945 after the end of a six-year global war and genocide. The ban on the Nazi Party is no "global precedent," nor is it "conceptually similar" as some have argued in seeking to justify the ban.

It is telling, and somewhat troubling, that the current government must reach back 80 years to 1945 to defend its decision—just as the Awami League once did when invoking history to legitimise the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act. Far more recent examples of political party bans offer cautionary tales, even if they are not historically analogous: the banning of the Ba'ath Party in Iraq in 2003, which helped ignite a civil war, or the proscription of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 2013, which led to widespread human rights abuses. These cases highlight the dangers of outlawing major political forces in a polarised society, without being direct historical comparisons to contemporary Bangladesh.

The misuse of Nazi analogies is part of a broader pattern of rhetorical distortion. The Awami League is casually described as "fascist." Key characteristics of a fascist party include the glorification of war and an aggressive belief in the superiority of the nation or an ethnic group. While elements of the Awami League's conduct may well resemble certain authoritarian traits of a fascist party, it is inaccurate to describe it as one.

Apart from all these descriptions being intellectually inaccurate, they are politically reckless and dangerous. Such rhetoric helps to legitimise repressive actions—whether through baseless arrests of party members and supporters, which have been going on in recent months, or in outright party bans, as has just been announced.

For more than 15 years, Bangladesh endured a political climate in which the Awami League frequently distorted public discourse. Critics were branded as "Razakars" (collaborators), and even the main opposition party, the BNP, was routinely labelled "anti-liberation" or a "terrorist" organisation. This rhetoric served to justify a series of repressive actions. Now, with the fall of the Awami League, the question arises: is Bangladesh simply going to mirror the same manipulative rhetoric—only with new vocabulary and different targets?

The price of unchecked protest politics



THE STREET VIEW

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MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Once a symbol of resilience, Dhaka has now become synonymous with relentless street protests and processions with various demands. What was once a means of voicing collective grievances has turned into a spectacle that is chaotic, disruptive, and at times alarmingly close to being anarchist. In today's Dhaka, the fastest way to be heard is not through dialogue or democratic processes, but by blocking roads and disrupting public life. The more disruption one causes, the more likely they will gain attention and concessions.

This shift reflects a deeper crisis: the breakdown of institutional governance. The streets have replaced the parliament and other platforms for voicing demands and shaping national discourse. Negotiation has given way to confrontation. Tragically, public suffering—once something to be avoided—has become a calculated strategy. Disorder is now the norm.

What we are witnessing is more than just a wave of protests, however. Since the July uprising, a troubling new trend has emerged. Under the guise of "mob justice," various groups, including students, have taken the law into their own hands. Empowered by public sympathy and a sense of impunity, they have often engaged in unlawful activities without accountability. What began as a

broad-based movement for democratic renewal is now at risk of being hijacked by those seeking power, recognition, or revenge.

Is this the spirit of July? Did people sacrifice their lives for lawlessness to prevail? The movement was not led by students alone—it was a national awakening that drew strength from people across social, political, and

revenue.

We've seen such patterns before. The Shahbagh movement, too, began with high hopes on the streets. But without structural backing, leadership, and clear goals, it faltered. That history should be a warning: revolutions that remain on the streets are vulnerable to being co-opted, lost, or crushed.

Meanwhile, the interim government, entrusted with steering the nation towards its most critical election in decades, is faltering. Reform was promised. A fresh start was envisioned. But instead, we see delay, dysfunction, and drift. While some argue that the government is overwhelmed, others believe it is using the unrest to justify

prolonging its stay in power. Either way, public trust is eroding, and expectations are fading.

What's most disappointing is that capable individuals are in key positions, yet they appear paralysed by indecision or political caution. The government has either failed to set its priorities right or has chosen to linger in power.

As the days pass, the distance between the people's aspirations and the state's actions only grows.

The Yunus administration's signature stance has been to turn a blind eye till a street campaign begins to disrupt civic life and cause serious public suffering. But by that point, the one immediate and most expedient recourse has been to capitulate and agree to the demands.

The interim government has thus far failed to show a convincing resolve to reject demands from the streets, no matter how unreasonable. Whether it was to increase the age limit for government jobs or the demand for a separate university for certain colleges, the government has not been able to dissuade protesters in most cases. Nor has it been able to foil such campaigns.

The path forward must begin with restoring law and order, not through repression, but through principled leadership. Parliament, not the streets, must once again become the centre of democratic discourse, which demands an immediate, transparent, and credible election roadmap. Only then can the people's voice return to its rightful place: within the institutions built to serve them.

If this moment is squandered—if the hopes of July dissolve into infighting and opportunism—the consequences will be devastating. Bangladesh has waited too long for democratic rebirth. It cannot afford to be betrayed again.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Hitler, Mussolini sign the Pact of Steel

On this day in 1939, Adolf Hitler of Germany and Benito Mussolini of Italy signed the Pact of Steel, a full military and political alliance between their countries.



What role can Bangladesh play in securing peace in South Asia?



Alauddin Mohammad
is joint member secretary at the National Citizen Party (NCP), and executive director at the Institute of Policy, Governance and Development (IPGAD).

ALAUDDIN MOHAMMAD

The South Asian region has long been a theatre of enduring geopolitical tensions. Central to this is the perpetual rivalry between two nuclear-armed states: India and Pakistan. Their antagonism is cyclical, manifesting in military skirmishes, diplomatic stand-offs, and proxy conflicts. Amid this volatility, Bangladesh, though smaller in size, holds a strategically pivotal position that offers both opportunities and responsibilities in shaping regional peace.

The legacy of Bangladesh's late President Ziaur Rahman remains significant when discussing the regional peace architecture. It was under his leadership that the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was conceived—a bold attempt to facilitate dialogue and cooperation among South Asian nations. At a time when India and Pakistan remained at odds, Zia's vision provided smaller countries with a platform to assert their identities and strategic interests independently.

Over time, this initiative lost its momentum, largely due to growing Indian influence in regional diplomacy. This shift diluted the very balance that once allowed Bangladesh to act as a neutral and independent voice. Recent democratic movements, especially the mass uprising of July, have sparked renewed interest in reviving SAARC and Bangladesh's mediating role—this time led by interim leadership under Professor Muhammad Yunus.

However, Bangladesh's role in regional peace must go beyond ceremonial diplomacy. The country has the potential to become a nucleus of new geopolitical equations, as war today is not confined to just borders; rather, it extends to economic systems, democratic institutions, and national identities. In this context, small states like Bangladesh face four key challenges: preserving political neutrality, ensuring national security, maintaining diplomatic balance, and sustaining economic resilience. These challenges must be tackled holistically, grounded in theory and practical statecraft.

From an international relations



VISUAL: SIFAT AFRIN SHAMS

perspective, the theories of realism, liberalism, and constructivism offer distinct frameworks for understanding how Bangladesh can chart its foreign policy. Realism emphasises power dynamics and survival, seeing the international system as anarchic and inherently prone to conflict, where states prioritise their security and interests. Liberalism, in contrast, advocates cooperation, institutions, and interdependence, suggesting that peace can be achieved through dialogue and mutual understanding, where shared interests guide international relations. Meanwhile, constructivism prioritises national identity, values, and historical memory, emphasising how collective ideas and self-perception influence foreign policy decisions.

In Bangladesh's case, shaped by its Liberation War, democratic aspirations, and the recent student uprising of July 2024, the constructivist approach resonates most strongly. By embracing its identity as a peace-seeking, democratic nation, Bangladesh has the potential to offer both a moral and strategic counterbalance to the power struggles in its region.

defines the subcontinental narrative.

Redefining strategic posture

Realism teaches that in times of regional conflict, smaller nation states typically choose one of three paths: neutrality, balancing, or bandwagoning. Neutrality, as demonstrated by Switzerland and Sweden during World War II, allows smaller countries to preserve their internal stability by avoiding alignment with warring parties. Balancing, adopted by countries such as South Korea and Taiwan, involves seeking security through strategic alliances with more powerful nations. On the other hand, bandwagoning entails aligning with the stronger power for protection, though this strategy risks eroding diplomatic autonomy and independence.

Bangladesh, to maintain its sovereignty and strategic flexibility, must judiciously blend neutrality and balanced alliances without succumbing to dependency. From a liberal standpoint, Bangladesh can use regional institutions and multilateral platforms to mediate, reduce tension, and maintain diplomatic channels with both India and Pakistan. ASEAN-style diplomacy,

as practised by Malaysia and Singapore, offers an effective model. Such a middle-ground strategy enables smaller states to act as peace brokers while expanding their global legitimacy.

Constructivism emphasises moral positioning and national identity. Bhutan, for instance, has maintained neutrality in Sino-Indian conflicts based on its cultural philosophy and non-aligned foreign policy. Similarly, Bangladesh's stance—rooted in the Liberation War, popular uprisings, and its resistance to autocracy—provides a solid foundation for a principled foreign policy that supports peace and justice over partisanship.

Besides, history provides numerous examples of small states effectively navigating conflicts around them. After Yugoslavia's disintegration, countries like Croatia and Slovenia emerged as sovereign states with significant international support. In Lebanon, neutrality during prolonged regional tensions was paired with reliance on UN peacekeeping missions. Latin American nations have also responded to neighbouring conflicts with economic diplomacy rather than militarisation.

Given the volatile nature of South Asian geopolitics, Bangladesh must adopt a multi-layered approach that begins with maintaining diplomatic neutrality by advocating international cooperation in addressing potential refugee crises, economic shocks, and regional insecurity. Alongside this, a recalibration of security is essential. Bangladesh needs to reassess its existing defence agreements and strategic partnerships to strengthen national defence capabilities without compromising its sovereignty or falling under external hegemony. Economic diversification is also crucial; by building resilient trade routes and sustaining balanced bilateral relations with both India and Pakistan, Bangladesh can better insulate itself from regional instability. Lastly, a firm moral commitment is indispensable. Upholding human rights, advancing peace advocacy, and adhering to international law will not only reinforce the country's international credibility but also contribute to durable and principled diplomacy.

As the second largest economy in South Asia, Bangladesh's influence and global acceptance are growing—and with that comes responsibility. As India and Pakistan continue their zero-sum rivalry, Bangladesh must maintain a careful, prudent stance that reflects wisdom rather than warlike

sentiment. Historical experiences show that Bangladesh's most potent political transformations have emerged from democratic mass movements. The July Uprising reinforced the strength of people's unity and resistance to external domination. But such victories must now be translated into stability, not further confrontation.

A worrying trend in recent years has been the rise of digitally manipulated hostility. Social media posts, misinformation campaigns, caricatures, and doctored content—often traced back to obscure or foreign-funded sources—seek to provoke anti-India sentiment or misrepresent Bangladesh on international platforms. Ironically, many of these campaigns serve interests within India itself, aiming to legitimise aggression through manufactured consent. In such an environment, Bangladesh must resist the temptation to react emotionally. Strategic patience, defence without aggression, and cool-headed diplomacy are the most effective tools against provocation.

As regional tensions rise, Bangladesh needs to institutionalise a proactive approach to crisis management. Establishing a strategic crisis management cell to anticipate and respond to potential geopolitical shocks can be vital. This cell would monitor emerging threats, such as border conflicts, refugee crises, or economic disruptions, and ensure a swift and coordinated national response. By streamlining decision-making processes and improving inter-agency cooperation, this entity can strengthen Bangladesh's ability to manage crises effectively. In addition to safeguarding national security, such a cell can bolster international trust by demonstrating Bangladesh's commitment to stability and preparedness in a volatile region. Through strategic planning and crisis foresight, Bangladesh can better navigate complex regional dynamics and assert itself as a reliable partner in international affairs.

Being a small state does not mean being a passive observer. Bangladesh has the potential to become a regional leader in peace-building by drawing on its history, values, and strategic location. With the right policies, moral compass, and institutional frameworks, it can transform its geopolitical vulnerability into a position of influence. As India and Pakistan continue their chess game of conflict, Bangladesh can and must choose the path of construction, dialogue, and peace. That will not only preserve its own sovereignty but serve as a guiding light for a troubled region.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIODIVERSITY

Let's not send our biodiversity to the museum



Naziba Basher
is a journalist at The Daily Star.

NAZIBA BASHER

There was a time when a walk through any rural stretch of Bangladesh meant brushing shoulders with the wild—migratory birds nesting overhead, medicinal herbs underfoot, butterflies flitting across mustard fields, and frogs croaking beside streams. Today, we have to squint to catch glimpses of what once surrounded us in abundance.

Our cities swell, concrete creeps across forests and wetlands, and the silence of disappearing species grows louder than ever. Meanwhile, our rivers, blackened by industrial and urban pollution, have turned into graveyards for aquatic life. Bangladesh has been a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) since 1994, pledging to halt this erosion. Yet, here we are, three decades later, with species vanishing, ecosystems collapsing, and policies reading better on paper than they perform in practice.

According to Bangladesh's Fourth National Report to the CBD in 2010, over 50 species of plants and 100 species of animals were classified as threatened. The IUCN's 2015 Red List for Bangladesh identified 390 threatened species, including 56 mammals, 63 reptiles, and 41 amphibians. This is not just an ecological tragedy; it's a national emergency. When species disappear, they take with them centuries of balance, resilience, and interdependence. And once they're gone, they don't come back.

One would expect this crisis to spark political urgency and societal outrage. But our efforts to conserve biodiversity remain lukewarm at

best. Yes, some steps have been taken, including the enactment of the Biodiversity Act, 2017 and the development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. However, these frameworks are often undermined by weak implementation, overlapping mandates, and a stark absence of public accountability.

Take the CBD's requirement for measurable biodiversity targets: Bangladesh's 2020 goals included halting habitat loss and reducing pollution. But Forest Department records show that forest coverage remains under siege, while urbanisation, illegal logging, and land encroachment continue unabated.

Currently, Bangladesh is grappling with serious challenges in forest conservation, with deforestation occurring at nearly twice the global average, driven largely by land use changes and human activities. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates the country's forest cover at 2.33 million hectares, or 15.78 percent of its land area, while the Forest Department reports a slightly higher figure of 2.57 million hectares, representing 17.31 percent.

Over the last two decades, Bangladesh has lost approximately 8,390 hectares of humid primary forest, constituting 3.5 percent of the total tree cover loss during this period. Overall, the country has experienced an 8.7 percent reduction in the area of humid primary forest. At the same time, our wetlands—once the lungs of the delta—are choking. Encroachment on haors has intensified, despite

these being vital breeding grounds for local fauna.

Meanwhile, pollution in the Buriganga, Turag, Shitalakkhya, and Karnaphuli rivers has collapsed entire aquatic ecosystems. Even the Sundarbans, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is not spared. Mangrove destruction continues even as salinity levels and cyclone frequency climb with climate change.

This isn't just an environmentalist's lament. Biodiversity loss threatens our food security, water supply, and climate resilience. In rural Bangladesh, much of the population depends on nature for medicine, fuel, and nutrition. With pollinators dwindling, fish stocks collapsing, and medicinal plants growing scarce, these communities face existential threats. So, what went wrong?

A large part of the failure, of course, is institutional. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change often lacks the enforcement power to regulate extractive industries or penalise violations of conservation law. And biodiversity conservation is rarely integrated into the relevant sectors such as urban planning, transport, and agriculture. The result? You see brick kilns next to wetlands, highways through elephant corridors, and industrial parks in ecologically critical zones.

Bangladesh's performance under the CBD's three core pillars—conservation, sustainable use, and benefit-sharing—remains patchy. Benefit-sharing with Indigenous communities, who have safeguarded ecosystems for generations, is largely rhetorical. Their voices are ignored in development plans. Yet, their forests and water bodies are often the first to be sacrificed.

That said, not all hope is lost. There are glimmers of progress: community-based conservation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Indigenous forest restoration programmes, and successful co-management of protected areas. But

these remain the exceptions, not the norm.

If Bangladesh is to truly live up to its CBD commitments, cosmetic measures will no longer suffice.

What's needed now is radical political will and grounded, localised action. This means enforcing the Biodiversity Act without fear or favour. It means funding research into native species, empowering

marginalised communities with legal rights to defend ecosystems, and equipping institutions to effectively fight ecological crime.

We must now rewrite the story

we tell ourselves about development.

Concrete is not the only measure of

progress, and GDP means nothing if

our children grow up never hearing

the call of the kook (Asian koel) or

seeing a freshwater turtle. Economic

growth cannot come at the cost of ecological suicide.

Biodiversity is the foundation of

our survival, and it is disappearing.

As a nation, we are failing our

convention commitments, failing our people, and, most unforgivably, failing our future. The clock is ticking.

Let us not wait to act until the forests are lost and the rivers run dry.

Chittagong University of Engineering & Technology

Chattogram-4349, Bangladesh

Ph. D./M.Phil./M.Sc. Engg./M. Engg./MURP/M.Sc./PG. Dip. (EQE)/PG. Dip. (ICT) Program

Admission Notice

Applications are hereby invited through 'Online' from eligible candidates via www.cuet.ac.bd/admission for admission into following Departments/Institutes as per schedule in the session 2024-25 (July 2025) at Chittagong University of Engineering & Technology (CUET):

Name of the Department/Institute	Program
Department of Civil Engineering	Ph.D./M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering	Ph.D./M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
Department of Mechanical Engineering	Ph.D./M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
Department of Computer Science & Engineering	Ph.D./M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
Department of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering	Ph.D./M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
Department of Disaster Engineering and Management	MURP
Department of Urban & Regional Planning	M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
Department of Nuclear Engineering	M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
Department of Physics	Ph.D./M. Phil./M.Sc.
Department of Chemistry	Ph.D./M. Phil./M.Sc.
Department of Mathematics	Ph.D./M. Phil./M.Sc.
Institute of Energy Technology	M.Phil./M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg.
Institute of Earthquake Engineering Research	M. Sc. Engg./M. Engg./PG. Dip. (EQE)
Institute of Information & Communication Technology (IICT)	PG. Dip. (ICT)

Qualification and condition for admission (as full time/part time) can be downloaded from the website: www.cuet.ac.bd/admission. Interested applicants are requested to submit the Online form in due time described below. Applicants have to pay the application fee Tk. 500.00 (Five Hundred) according to the instructions given in the page of application form.

Important Deadlines:

SI	Descriptions	Date
1.	Start date of application (Online)	29/05/2025 (9:00 AM)
2.	Last date of application submission (Online)	07/07/2025 (5:00 PM)
3.	Publication of the list of eligible candidates	13/07/2025
4.	Date of admission test	20/07/2025
5.	Publication of the list of selected candidates	27/07/2025
6.	Date of admission & registration	30/07/2025 & 31/07/2025
7.	Start date of class	31/07/2025

MOSHARRAF KARIM'S 'Chokkor 302' to release in Australia

The Mosharraf Karim starrer film *Chokkor 302*, directed by Saraf Ahmed Zibon, was released last Eid-ul-Fitr. The film is now slated for release in Australia.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the director shared, "Our film releases in Australia on May 25. It's not just good news for Bangladeshi cinema—it's a deeply meaningful moment for me as a filmmaker, because it is my directorial debut."

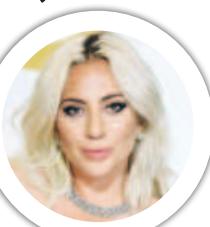
"*Chokkor 302* is a film made with immense love. An international release means it will now reach a much wider audience across the globe," he added.

Chokkor 302 is a murder mystery, with Mosharraf Karim portraying an investigation officer. The ensemble cast includes Intekhab Dinar, Sumon Anowar, Tareen Jahan, Mousomi Nag, Rawnak Hasan, Shashwita Datta, and Reekita Nondine Shimu, among others.



Lady Gaga wins Emmy, one step away from EGOT glory

Lady Gaga has won a Sports Emmy for Outstanding Music Direction, marking another major milestone in her career and placing her one step away from EGOT status.



The singer received the award for her moving performance of *Hold My Hand* during the NFL tribute on Bourbon Street, New Orleans. The emotional segment featured a live band, choir, first responders, and a guest appearance by Tom Brady.

With this win, Gaga adds an Emmy to her existing Grammy and Academy Awards. Only a Tony remains for her to join the elite group of 18 EGOT winners, including Audrey Hepburn and Elton John. Other close contenders include Helen Mirren, Hugh Jackman, and Kate Winslet.

NEWS

CAAB, Biman propose fee cuts

FROM PAGE 12

The suspension, announced on April 8, has posed significant challenges for Bangladesh's garment exporters, who are now struggling to send urgent international shipments without the Indian route.

The route via Kolkata and Delhi airports allowed Bangladeshi exporters to move goods overland to India through the Benapole-Petrapole border and then air ship them worldwide.

Air transhipment through India became popular during the Covid pandemic, offering faster service and lower costs than the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA).

According to Industry estimates, in a lean season, about 18 percent of Bangladesh's garment air cargo goes through Indian airports.

Bangladesh exported roughly 3,400 tonnes of garments by air in a week, with 600 tonnes flown through Indian airports before the transhipment ban, according to data from the Bangladesh Freight Forwarders Association.

One of the main attractions of Indian air transhipment was the cost.

While sending a kilogram of apparel from HSIA to Europe typically costs \$2.90-\$3.20 during off-peak periods (and up to \$4.50 in peak season),

shipping through India costs about \$2.60 per kg, even after accounting for overland transport to Indian airports, said sources.

Asked about reducing this cost, a top official of Biman said, in the recommendations sent to the ministry, they have proposed reducing the existing cost of sending per kilogram of goods by freighter.

He, however, declined to elaborate.

According to industry insiders, major international buyers like Inditex (Zara's parent company), which maintains a distribution hub in Delhi, prefer the route for speed and efficiency.

Local suppliers relied on it to shorten lead times and optimise delivery schedules.

By contrast, exporters have long complained about bottlenecks at HSIA.

Ground handling inefficiencies and mismanagement have plagued the Dhaka airport for years. Often, shipments are left exposed to the elements.

Another sticking point is the ground handling fees.

Dhaka charges 29 cents per kilogram compared with just five cents at Delhi airport.

Asked, CAAB chairman said ground handling fees will be reduced.

"Different charges imposed by the CAAB for carrying per kg of goods will

be reduced a bit," he said.

He added, "We have also proposed reducing the charge for those who will operate freighter services."

"Those who will operate cargo services from Sylhet Osmani Airport will pay less compared to Dhaka as we want to make the airport more lucrative. It will also be applicable for those who will operate freighters from Chattogram airport when it goes into cargo operation within two months," he added.

Sylhet's Osmani International Airport launched full-scale cargo operations on April 27.

Currently, Biman's passenger aircraft carry about 16 to 17 percent of HSIA's annual cargo load, which totals approximately 175,000 tonnes.

In addition to serving its own fleet, Biman provides ground handling services for several international airlines, including Emirates, Cathay Pacific, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines, and Ethiopian Airlines, all of which operate dedicated cargo flights from Dhaka.

However, exporters have long expressed frustration over logistical inefficiencies.

Limited infrastructure, inadequate storage space, and runway constraints restrict the operation of larger freighter aircraft.

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In addition to serving its own fleet, Biman provides ground handling services for several international airlines, including Emirates, Cathay Pacific, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines, and Ethiopian Airlines, all of which operate dedicated cargo flights from Dhaka.

However, exporters have long expressed frustration over logistical inefficiencies.

Limited infrastructure, inadequate storage space, and runway constraints restrict the operation of larger freighter aircraft.

Asked, CAAB chairman said ground handling fees will be reduced.

"Different charges imposed by the CAAB for carrying per kg of goods will

be reduced a bit," he said.

He added, "We have also proposed reducing the charge for those who will operate freighter services."

"Those who will operate cargo services from Sylhet Osmani Airport will pay less compared to Dhaka as we want to make the airport more lucrative. It will also be applicable for those who will operate freighters from Chattogram airport when it goes into cargo operation within two months," he added.

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NEWS

Rab must move

FROM PAGE 3
particularly when it was allegedly used as a political tool.

"Such misuse reached its peak during the tenure of the previous fascist regime," he said. "Rab must never again be allowed to serve political interests."

However, he noted that in recent times, Rab has played a proactive role in maintaining law and order, apprehending criminals, recovering illegal firearms, and conducting anti-narcotics drives.

Rab Director General (Grade I) AKM Shahidur Rahman delivered the welcome address at the event. Army Chief General Waker Uz Zaman and Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam also attended the event, alongside senior officials from the military and civil administration.

A documentary on Rab's activities was screened at the ceremony. The adviser also cut a cake to mark the anniversary.

The Rab has long been accused of violating human rights. In 2021, the US imposed sanctions on the Rab and six former top officials of the agency

over reports of gross rights violations.

Earlier, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in its fact-finding report on the July uprising, recommended disbanding the force, citing serious human rights violations and abuses.

According to Rab officials, a draft of the Rab Law-2024 is being prepared to ensure accountability within the force.

On May 12, during a meeting of the Advisory Council Committee on Law and Order at the home ministry, a committee was formed under the leadership of Lt Gen (retd) Abdul Hafiz, special assistant to the chief adviser, with several force chiefs as members to oversee the restructuring of the Rab.

The committee has also been authorised to co-opt other members if needed.

PRAYER TIMING

MAY 22

Fazr Zhor Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-05 12-45 5-00 6-40 8-00

JAMAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-45 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

12 villages

FROM PAGE 4

As a result, nearby villages -- including Brahmakathi, Baladanga, Byasdanga, Ramchandrapur, Sujapur, Maguradanga, Khatiakhali, Rajan Garbarkeri, Panchabakababarsi, Kornodarpur, Barena and Magurkuli -- are flooded every monsoon.

"Since the Boro harvest has been completed, it is now an ideal time to excavate the canal before the monsoon begins in full swing. If the Bangladesh Water Development Board does not act now, we will face flooding yet again, like every year," said Rafiqul Islam, a resident of Byasdanga village.

Master Saifullah of Maguradanga village echoed him. According to BWDB sources, excavation work on the canal is expected to begin shortly.

Contacted, Suman Shikder, sub-divisional engineer of BWDB in Keshabpur upazila, said re-excavating the canal is of high priority.

"We will begin the work very soon. Additionally, we plan to excavate another 1.35-kilometre stretch of the old canal in the Goralia Beel area," he added.

Reform commissions

FROM PAGE 3

other recent commissions were also formed in the same top down manner, with individuals favoured by those in charge.

Referring to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, he said, "He needs to understand that this country is not just made up of a few elite inside Dhaka. Society here is much bigger."

Addressing the debate surrounding the commission's proposal to recognise sex workers, Farhad said the issue remains highly contested within feminist circles.

Some view sex work as inherently violent and want it abolished. Others argue that without legal recognition, these women remain marginalised and without protection.

Quoting Islamic principles, he said, "If a woman takes up sex work out of economic necessity, the blame is not on her. It is on those in the community -- especially religious leaders -- who failed to support her."

He called for respectful and constructive discussions. "Let us not use

language that contradicts Islamic values. We must negotiate, debate, and build the understanding, not take the issue in a harmful direction."

Child psychologist Sultana Razia said discrimination against women begins in the family and continues throughout life. "Even in childhood, girls face restrictions on clothing, food, play, and freedom of expression. This affects their confidence and self-worth."

"If we don't understand our own dignity and rights, and change our mindset, we cannot claim or protect them," she said, adding that real change must begin with self-awareness, education, and cultural reform.

Jamaat-e-Islami Central Executive Committee member Nurul Islam Bulbul called for the formation of a new commission that includes representation from all groups.

Primeasia University Assistant Professor AR Khan, Dhaka Union of Journalists President Shahidul Islam, and rights activist Sharmin Sultana Chaity also spoke at the programme.

DHAKA THURSDAY MAY 22, 2025
JAISHTHA 8, 1432 BS
The Daily Star

9

Skills, not certificates

FROM PAGE 3

universities to take on research roles. "Let the intellectuals do the research. You can't do both a job and proper research at the same time."

Government and private universities can take part in research. How to utilise the youth -- that itself is a topic for research."

Presiding over the event, CPD Executive Director Fahmida Khatun said the current education system is failing to meet labour market demands.

"Higher education and university-level learning have little practical use, and the market has no real demand for them. This is leading to a rise in educated unemployment. The more educated someone is, the more likely they are to be unemployed -- mainly because many don't want to accept just any job," she said.

Mashroor called for skilled migration and overseas graduate employment to be treated as national priorities, backed by financing and

training.

Sadia Haque, CEO and co-founder of ShareTrip Limited, said informal job sectors like freelancing must be formalised to properly reflect youth engagement and job creation in national policies.

Syed Nasim Manzoor, managing director of Apex Footwear Limited, said the youth must be willing to step out of their comfort zones and consider careers in manufacturing and applied skills instead of only white-collar jobs.

"We're sending low-skilled workers abroad while failing to export surplus graduates who could take on higher value roles in caregiving, hospitality, and communications-based sectors," he added.

Alif Rudaba, additional secretary of the National Skills Development Authority, and Shahir Chowdhury, founder and CEO of Shikho, also spoke at the event.

Dhaka in touch with Delhi

FROM PAGE 3

"Our position is clear; we will verify each case individually, and we will only receive those who are proven Bangladeshi citizens," he said. "If any individual is found to be an Indian national, we will send them back."

On the issue of land

port restrictions, Hossain said the commerce adviser is reviewing India's recent move to halt imports of readymade garments and several listed goods from Bangladesh through land ports.

"We are looking into the matter carefully," he said.

Earlier this month,

India reportedly imposed a ban on the import of all kinds of RMG products and selected processed foods from Bangladesh through its land borders, citing administrative reasons.

The move has raised concerns among exporters

and trade bodies in Dhaka.

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Local e-Tenders					
Local e-Tenders are invited in The Security Printing Corporation (Bangladesh) Ltd. (SPCBL)'s e-Tender site (https://spcbltender.bb.org.bd) for procurement of the following items for SPCBL as per e-Tender schedule. Necessary information is given below:					
SL. No.	e-Tender Nos.	Name of Items.	Date of Publish	Last Date & time for submission of e-Tender	Date & time for Opening of e-tender
01.	28/04/2025	11,993 kgs Toluene	22/05/2025	04/06/2025 upto 11.00 AM	04/06/2025 at 11.15 AM
02.	29/04/2025	1,362 packets Green Card board, 990 packets Blue Card board, and 87 packets White Card board.	22/05/2025	23/06/2025 upto 11.00 AM	23/06/2025 at 11.15 AM
03.	30/04/2025	15,000 kgs. Polythene Sheet	22/05/2025	25/06/2025 upto 11.00 AM	25/06/2025 at 11.15 AM
For more details, Please visit/Contact the following:					
Website	www.spcbl.org.bd	Call	88-01952-665970	Telephone	02-2233755560-67(Ext: 168)
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(Nahid Rahman) General Manager (Local Purchase & Sales) Phone: 02-223375556					

GD-1230

PBI wants to quiz

FROM PAGE 3

On that night, the couple were killed at their rented apartment in Dhaka's West Rajabazar. After the death, Tajvir did not take part in their janaza even though he was informed. Moreover, he did not communicate with the victims' family members for a single day. So, he needs to be interrogated for gathering vital clues about the murders, said the IO in his application.

Meanwhile, investigators have so far spoken to over 70 people, said a PBI official, requesting anonymity.

The agency also interrogated six individuals -- sacked army official Ziaul Ahsan, former police officer Mashirul Rahman, ex-justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik, former navy officer Mohammad Sohail, and accused Humayun Kabir and Palash Rudra Paul.

Osman Gani, brother of the victim, said they heard the police had arrested the accused. "We demand fair trial and justice," he added.

Around 8:00pm, as they

reached a house named "Kshanikaly" in Rishipara, a group of youths suddenly blocked the rickshaw.

Frightened, Emon

managed to flee. As the

attackers tried to grab

Nurul's camera bag,

he resisted. When he

refused to hand it over,

they attacked him with

sharp weapons, leaving

him critically injured. The

attackers then fled with

the cameras and the bag.

They searched Facebook

pages and contacted

Nurul Islam,

an event

photographer. Claiming to

be organising a wedding,

they hired him and paid

him Tk 500 in advance.

On the evening of May

16, Nurul, a resident of

Motijheel AGB Colony,

and his assistant Emon

arrived at Sankar bus stand

in West Dhanmondi, where

Nayem received them.

Pretending to take them

to the wedding venue, he

led them onto a battery-

run rickshaw and headed

toward the Jafraabazar area.

Around 8:00pm, as they

were killed at their rented

apartment in Dhaka's West

Rajabazar. After the death,

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BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

Betwixt and between: Tales from a Nepali-Indian girlhood

Review of 'The Woman Who Climbed Trees: A Novel' (HarperCollins India, 2023) by Smriti Ravindra

Ravindra's prose is brisk, smooth, and detailed, with numerous stories from traditional Nepali and Hindu folklore chipped in, adding layers as the story unfolds. Stories of Rama and Sita are evoked to showcase the eternal bond between the twin cities of Janakpur and Darbhanga, with Ram viewed as the groom who moved over to Janakpur to woo his bride, Sita.

ISRAR HASAN

Images of Nepal, lingering in the annals of social media and casual conversations with friends, often evoke conversations about natural beauty, spectacular architecture dotting its numerous hills, and intimate hospitality. Sandwiched between the behemoths, India and China, Nepal's history is a striking case of contradictions slaloming many structural challenges such as religious fundamentalism and ultranationalism engulfing the region today.

Nepal, very much like the fictional Shangri-La, remains mired in mystery with its deeply engorged stories, myths, folklore, and its storied lived experience—from the world's only Hindu Kingdom to South Asia's most vibrant democracy—largely unknown even to its most ardent supporters. It is in the last couple of years that Nepalese literature has grown, exposing us to the multifaceted complexities in the country itself.

First-time author, Smriti Ravindra weaves a tale in her novel, *The Woman Who Climbed Trees*, of striking clarity on the lives of the Indo-Nepal border focussing on the contested region of Madhesh, whose people have straddled along the border for the generations and have been seen as "outsiders" to the ruling Pahadi class in Kathmandu. Ravindra's story revolves around three women in the same family, with the first two women's destinies leading to them having respective families across the border. The story starts off with 14-year-old Meena, an Indian with a Nepali mother, Kaveri, as she is placed in an arranged marriage with the 21-year-old Mammojan, a Nepali undergraduate student and underground political activist based in India. "Eleven hours. Another town. Another country." This sets up the narrative for numerous entanglements, resilience, and resistance, with women's agency put front and center.

The first half of the book showcases the inner psychological battle Meena faces to turn up as a dutiful wife and daughter-in-law to an increasingly absent husband and an overbearing



ILLUSTRATION: AMREETA LETHE

mother-in-law. Struggling with her duties as a young bride, Meena finds solace in her sister-in-law, Kumud, trespassing and bringing to the surface the volatile yet budding notions of female desire, sisterhood, and the transgressions of relationships between women. It is in the second half of the novel that the reader is drawn into the beguiling intersectional complexities and divergence of class, power, gender, and citizenship, with the focus shifting to the capital, Kathmandu, as Meena goes through multiple miscarriages that test her status as a woman in society. With Mammojan climbing up the civil service ladder, he is increasingly

taunted for being Madheshi (*marsiya*) and "Indian looking". The narrator of the story later on becomes the couple's daughter, Preeti. Preeti traverses the delicate terrain of generational trauma, narrating the story in first person and acting alternatively as a cynic and a cheerleader when it comes to understanding her family's numerous problems buffeted by the changing dynamics of Nepal's political system. Preeti acts as an additional commentator to her mother's feminine rage and anguish at a system that fails women, their desires, and forms of solidarity. The matriarch of the family, Kaveri, has her story lurk in

the background, providing an anchor to understanding the multifaceted and silenced lives of Madheshi women across borders.

Ravindra's prose is brisk, smooth, and detailed, with numerous stories from traditional Nepali and Hindu folklore chipped in, adding layers as the story unfolds. Stories of Rama and Sita are evoked to showcase the eternal bond between the twin cities of Janakpur and Darbhanga, with Ram viewed as the groom who moved over to Janakpur to woo his bride, Sita. In the same vein, many facets of Nepali folklore are dissected, such as the story of Rani Pokhari, a large pond in

Kathmandu, whose backstory lies in the tragic outcome of a royal family losing their one child.

Putting female characters at the center of the story, the novel brings to life with vivid audacity what it means to be a Nepali-Indian woman in a changing subcontinent where, till today, the battles of citizenship and gender rage on. A tale of belonging, attachment, displacement—the novel unpacks and lingers on the important question: "What is mother and motherland to a woman?"

Israr Hasan is currently working as researcher in a public health institute.

INTERVIEW

'Human translation will continue, despite machines': An interview with V. Ramaswamy

SHAHRIAR SHAAMS

V. Ramaswamy is a translator and writer based in Kolkata, India. I had first heard of him in early 2022, when a new book of translations of Shahidul Zahir was being written about in newspapers here in Bangladesh and in India. Yet it would be his work on Shahidul Zahir where I first experienced his craft. A translator of writers such as Subimal Misra, Manoranjan Byapari, and Adhir Biswas, I found his translations to be effortless forays into the bleak world of these writers.

Speaking with Ramaswamy on behalf of *The Daily Star* about his life as a translator, he also shared insights on his upcoming projects and, among other things, thoughts on whether AI could ever be a serious translator.

Tell us how your journey as a translator began.

It began almost by accident in 2005. During a casual encounter with my friend Dr Mrinal Bose, I asked him if there was one contemporary Bangla writer who he thought was worth reading; he thought for a moment, and said, "Yes. His name is Subimal Misra." And thus, with Dr Mrinal's prodding and pushing, I began translating Subimal Misra's short fiction. But after that initial start, I persisted with translating Misra because his writing resonated with my own background as a grassroots and community organiser and activist, working with the labouring poor of my city for two decades. I was selected for the Sangam House residency in 2011—and it was the Sangam House residency that made me a translator. After completing three volumes of Misra, I saw myself as a translator of voices from the margins. That was when I learnt

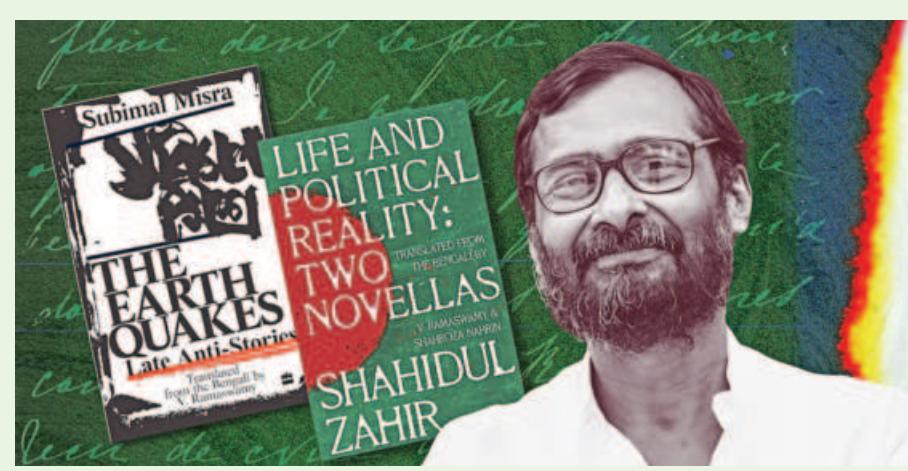


ILLUSTRATION: AMREETA LETHE

about the autodidact writer Manoranjan Byapari, and received the novel *Chandal Jibon* from him. A three month fellowship in Wales in 2016 enabled me to work on this. For me, that was an apprenticeship in working on a long novel.

You are currently translating *Prodoshe Prakrito Jon*, what drew you toward the works of Shawkat Ali?

It was my translation assistant, Srishti Dutta Chowdhury, who told me in 2020 about Shawkat Ali's novels, *Prodoshe Prakrito Jon* (The United Press Limited, 1984) and *Narai* (Bidyapokash, 2012). She wanted to translate these, and asked me if I would join her. But it was the way she described these two novels that had a mantric effect on me. As it happened, Srishti was unable to devote time to this; also, following the experience of a collaborative translation of Shahidul Zahir with Shahriza Nahrin from Bangladesh, I thought I ought to induct a Bangladeshi co-translator for Shawkat Ali

as well.

I had the consent from the late Shawkat Ali's family in a matter of hours. That was only because of my network and circle of friends in Bangladesh. Similarly, my eventual co-translator on the Shawkat Ali project, Mohiuddin Jahangir, was introduced to me by Asif Showkat, the author's son, now a good friend. Mohiuddin's PhD thesis was on Shawkat Ali. We completed the novel, *Narai*, titled *We Must Fight!* in English.

You have been part of multiple translation projects as a co-translator. How different is the process of translating in collaboration?

I had no plan as such to collaborate; it was just a sudden thought, and so I invited Shahriza to join me as a co-translator of the novella, "Life and Political Reality", by Shahidul Zahir. I had become acquainted with Shahriza Nahrin via Facebook. I arrived in Dhaka in early 2020 and sat with her for a few days; she read out, and I

translated.

This first experience was a happy one, and it convinced me that when it comes to important texts, two is definitely better than one. Two people can share the ownership, responsibility, and labour of translation.

I would like to think that this was also a good mentorship experience for my co-translator. Bangla needs a Mukti Bahini of translators, and so this collaboration-mentorship process can also be a means towards building more translators.

What do you think of machine translations in the sphere of literature? Should it ever be taken seriously?

I guess machines will gradually get better and better, but until then we, humans,

It began almost by accident in 2005. During a casual encounter with my friend Dr Mrinal Bose, I asked him if there was one contemporary Bangla writer who he thought was worth reading; he thought for a moment, and said, "Yes. His name is Subimal Misra."

will carry on translating. Like literature, translation is a human act, a human choice, and the translator brings his humanity to play in his or her work. And so what we get is a creative, human, artistic work. AI can write a short story or a novel. Will it ever be as good as anything humans have ever written? I don't know. But I don't think I would be interested in reading any literary work produced by AI. AI can generate

images in a fraction of a second. But we will still look with awe at the works of the great masters. Will people stop expressing themselves in drawing and painting? Will people stop writing? So human translation will also continue, despite machines.

How do you deal with cultural nuances when translating from Bangla to English? I guess one has to be embedded in the culture in order to perceive and sense the nuances. The translator must then bring this to the fore creatively. For instance, if someone addresses an older person as "tui" rather than "apni", that conveys something about sociology—about classism being ingrained in the culture. A particular word or term may be very significant, from the perspective of history, or politics, like Ponchasher Monontor, or Mir Jafar, or Dandakaranya. The translator has to be ever alert. Readers of a translated work thus also learn about the history, politics, culture, etc. of a people.

There is something else I'd like to share in this context. When one translates, say, proverbs, there would be equivalent expressions in English. Like, "as you sow, so you reap". But there is an expression in Bangla, "katth khele angra hagbe" (if you eat wood, you'll excrete charcoal). Rather than translate that into a tame expression like "as you sow, so you reap", I would like to give the reader a peek into the psyche of the speakers of Bangla, the pungency of the speech, etc. So I would translate the original expression itself.

This is an excerpt from the interview. Read the full article on *The Daily Star* and Star Books and Literature's websites.

Shahriar Shaams is a journalist at *The Daily Star*. Instagram: @shahriar.shaams.

Electronic timers prove faulty again

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Swimming Federation's (BSF) expectation to make a long-awaited debut of the electronic timer was shattered at the National Swimming Complex when the US-made Daktronics device again failed to produce timing of all lanes at a time on the opening day of the 37th National Age group Swimming Championships in Mirpur yesterday.

Despite the technical glitch of the electronic timer, the 24 events of the four-day championships continued by recording the timing with stopwatches, with BKSP 10-grade student Maisha Akhtar Mim bagging three golds by setting a new record (1:07.54 minutes) in the 100m freestyle of the Girls' 15-17 age group.

BSF general secretary Mahabubur Rahman Shahin on Tuesday said they were going to record the time in the electronic timer, as they found the device, which was installed in late 2019, functioning during the talent hunt programme in the second week of this month. But unfortunately, the electronic timer worth Tk four crore did not work on the opening day.

"The electronic timer did not work properly. We trialled the electronic timer by holding the boys' and girls' 200m butterfly events of U-18-20 groups, but Lane 4 and 5 could not produce timings, while another lane produced timing despite having no swimmer in that lane," said judge Saleh Ahmed, adding that they recorded the timing of all events on the stopwatches.

The local game's governing body also held the day's last two events under the electronic timer, and it was seen that the electronic board failed to show the timings of a couple of lanes on the board.

However, this reporter collected the timing sheet from the operator, and it was seen that the electronic timer produced timings of all lanes the swimmers competed in during the day's last event of the U-13-14 Boys' 200m freestyle event.

"The electronic timers of Lane 1 and 2 did not show readings because both swimmers quit the race before completing the distance. They also touched the steel handle of the starting point instead of touching the pad," said Engineer Ipli Shikdar of MI Tech International, which is providing the service to the BSF during the competitions.

Shikdar also claimed that the electronic timer produced the timing of all lanes properly during the trials, but the problem arises when the junior swimmers are competing.

"The budding swimmers don't have proper training of how to touch the touching pad, which is a sensor, so all lanes can't produce the timing at a time," said Shikdar.



Swimmer M Rabbi Rahman of Bogura Swimming Center clinched the gold medal in the 200m Butterfly event of the Boys' U-18-19 Group on the opening day of the 37th National Age-Group Swimming Championships at the National Swimming Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Rabbi took 2:23.93 seconds to finish ahead of Meherpur Swimming Club's Ramjan Ahmed, who bagged the bronze medal, clocking 2:31.48 seconds.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite pacer Nahid Rana's withdrawal from the upcoming Pakistan tour, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) decided not to include any replacement for him in their squad for the three-match T20I series, scheduled to start on May 28 in Lahore.

Meanwhile, Soumya Sarkar, who is also part of the team for the Pakistan tour, was not available for selection for the third consecutive match in the Tigers' ongoing UAE series yesterday due to persistent back pain. With Soumya said to be recovering slowly and needing additional time to gain full fitness, the left-hander may be a doubt for the Pakistan tour.

Nahid and two coaching staff – fielding coach James Pamment and trainer Nathan Keily – have withdrawn their names from the tour, BCB's cricket operations chairman Nazmul Abedeen Fahim confirmed during a press conference in Mirpur yesterday.

Asked whether they would pick someone as Nahid's replacement, Fahim informed that the management does not see it as a necessity, as there are four more pacers in the 15-member squad, including left-arm paceman Mustafizur Rahman. Mustafizur will join the team in Pakistan soon after completing his Indian Premier League (IPL) stint with Delhi Capitals.

BCB had granted Mustafizur a NOC (no objection certificate) to play for Delhi Capitals in the ongoing Indian Premier

SCHEDULE

First T20I

Wednesday, May 28 - Gaddafi Stadium

Second T20I

Friday, May 30 - Gaddafi Stadium

Third T20I

Sunday, June 1 - Gaddafi Stadium

Pakistan Squad

Salman Ali Agha (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abrar Ahmed, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Hassan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Muhammad Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub

League for the period of May 18-24.

"Mustafizur will join the team. The squad was initially made up of 16 members in anticipation of a longer series, with additional pacers included. But now the management doesn't feel that many are necessary," said Fahim, adding that they have no issues with Nahid's withdrawal, as it's his personal choice.

Nahid recently travelled to Pakistan to

feature for Peshawar Zalmi in the ongoing Pakistan Super League (PSL), but after the tournament saw an abrupt postponement due to the conflicts between Pakistan and India, he returned home with another Bangladeshi cricketer, Rishad Hossain.

However, Rishad has agreed to tour Pakistan for the T20I series, which has been reduced by two games from its original schedule of a five-match series.

"In the cases of Nahid Rana or Rishad Hossain, it's understandable that such incidents can leave someone traumatised. There's nothing to blame...perhaps that's why Nahid has chosen to withdraw," said Fahim.

"Rishad also considered opting out, but after discussions, and with the head coach deciding to travel, it helped change his perspective. That might have influenced others as well," he concluded.

The PCB announced a revised itinerary of the three-match series yesterday, after having named a 16-member squad for the series earlier on the same day.

The series will begin with the first T20I on May 28, followed by the second fixture on May 30. The third and final T20I is set to take place on June 1.

All three matches of the series, all of which will be day-night affairs, will take place at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium. Bangladesh are scheduled to reach Lahore on May 25.

TICKET PRICES

Hospitality & Corporate Box: Tk. 5,000

VIP-1: Tk. 4,000

Sky View: Tk. 3,000

VIP-2 & VIP-3: Tk. 2,500

Club House-1: Tk. 2,500

Club House-2: Tk. 2,000

General Gallery: Tk. 400

Tickets for Hamza's home debut available from May 24

International football is set to return to the National Stadium in Dhaka after nearly four years, with Bangladesh hosting Singapore in an AFC Asian Cup qualifier on June 10. Tickets for the fixture will be available online from May 24, starting at 12:00pm, and fans can purchase tickets through the website tickify.live using their national ID cards. The return of international matches to the capital marks a significant moment for local football fans, who are expected to fill the stands for a game that is supposed to see Hamza Choudhury make his home debut and Shamit Shome play his first game for Bangladesh.

TIGERS SUFFER A HUMILIATING SERIES DEFEAT AGAINST UAE



PHOTO: EMIRATES CRICKET

Bangladesh endured a shock 2-1 T20I series loss to UAE, capped by a crushing seven-wicket defeat in the third match at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium yesterday. Despite Jaker Ali Anik's gritty 41 off 34 balls and a 44-run ninth-wicket stand with Hasan Mahmud, the Tigers managed just 162-9 after being 84-8. UAE chased the target with ease, reaching 166-3 in 19.1 overs to seal their first-ever T20I series win over a Test-playing nation. This historic triumph marks a huge milestone for UAE and a painful low for Bangladesh cricket.



CITY'S TRIBUTE TO KDB

Manchester City ensured Kevin De Bruyne left with a victory in his final appearance at the Etihad Stadium, as Omar Marmoush scored a stunner in a 3-1 Premier League win over Bournemouth on Tuesday. The result saw the club climb to third in the table and stay in pole position for a Champions League spot. Even after a dominating win, the night was all about De Bruyne, who will be leaving the club at the end of the season after an illustrious 10-year stay. "It's a sad day. He will be missed," City coach Pep Guardiola said. "On the other side, I think it was a lovely day for him to make again a contribution to achieve that victory that is of massive importance."

PHOTO: MANCHESTER CITY

Questions linger as Sabina and four rebels stay sidelined

KHALID HOSSAIN

Bangladesh squad announcement is imminent ahead of their fast-approaching tri-nation series in Jordan, where two formidable oppositions beyond the South Asian region await.

However, it is apparent that the women's team would be missing their talisman Sabina Khatoon and four other SAFF winners: Sanjida Akhter, Masura Parvin, Krishna Rani Sarkar, and Matsushima Sumaya.

Sabina is among the 10 Bangladesh players who have been taking part in the Bhutan Women's League, which began recently. This bunch also happens to be of the 18 seniors who had refused to play under head coach Peter Butler earlier in January this year.

Ahead of Jordan tour, calling up five of 10 rebels -- Rituporna Chakma, Shamsunnahar, Rupna Chakma, Maria Manda, and Monika Chakma -- playing in Bhutan to the national training camp may seem, on the surface, a step towards reintegration, but it also leaves more questions than answers.

In particular, Sabina's omission stands out like a sore thumb. She is Bangladesh's all-time leading goalscorer, the captain who lifted two SAFF trophies on the trot. At 31, the right-footed forward is far from

having left her prime.

For Sabina, however, this experience is neither new nor a distant memory, as she, alongside 18 rebels, did not make the cut in last February-March's fixtures in the UAE.

Last year, around midway between Butler's appointment as permanent head coach and the 2024 SAFF Championship, she was benched in the second friendly against Chinese Taipei, and the decision was attributed to fitness by the English coach.

Interestingly, when interviewed a few months into Butler's tenure, she offered a measured assessment to The Daily Star:

"Every coach has a different philosophy, which we all accept and respect. Every player also wants to present themselves the way the coach desires. I think the coach should talk to the girls to discuss which system they prefer and how they can do better."

This is hardly the rhetoric of a disruptive presence.

Tactically, Butler has brought a different blueprint -- high-line defence, quick offensive

transitions, more width. But such shifts shouldn't necessarily mean total abandonment of what had worked -- as demonstrated in the 2022 SAFF Championship under Golam Rabbani Choton, where team chemistry and the ability to dictate game's tempo had caught attention.

The 2024 SAFF opener against Pakistan showed the cost of transition without planning. Bangladesh looked out of sorts.

A 1-1 draw raised early questions. Soon after, the rumours of the rift surfaced. However, the independent group recalibrated to stay on course, nevertheless, bringing home the silverware again.

Following the rebellion, coach Butler had labelled the protesters a toxic influence, even referring to some as "ringleaders".

So why are only some back now? Is Butler slowly separating the so-called "ringleaders" from those he can comfortably work with? Or is he adamant on giving more exposure to the stars in the making?

At the heart of the current issue lies a broader question: What kind

of culture does BFF want to foster?

Ignoring indiscipline or keeping veterans based on sentiment alone is short-sighted, but so is excluding them without a path to redemption or reconciliation.

Besides, young players need role models, but more than that, they need a healthy and competitive environment to flourish. Replacing senior players abruptly is certainly counterproductive in this regard.

What is also evident is that the reaction to this saga has been muted. One wonders whether the public and media response would have been different had it involved the men's team or a male captain with an enviable track record like Sabina's.

The women's football team, with two major trophies, stands apart as Bangladesh's most successful sporting outfit -- given the only SAFF title for Bangladesh men's team coming over two decades ago and, and the 2018 Asia Cup triumph being the one major trophy in the country's most popular sport, cricket; and that too, was brought by the women.

There is still time. There is still opportunity. If Bangladesh football wants to build on what has been achieved, it must prioritise unity over divisions -- reach an "amicable" solution as the board president Tabithi Awal had hoped.



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CAAB, Biman propose fee cuts to boost air cargo

Send recommendations to ministry

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) and Biman have proposed reducing landing, parking, and ground handling charges at the country's airports to make air cargo services cost-effective and resilient amid global disruptions.

The recommendations, among others, were made to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism after a meeting between CAAB and Biman, said CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal Md Monjur Kabir Bhuiyan.

"As per directives from the highest level, we've proposed adjustments to make cargo operations smoother and cheaper. The final decision now rests with the ministry," the CAAB chairman said.

CAAB and Biman came up with the much-anticipated move after India abruptly suspended third-country transshipment.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Pabna's Edward College renames Suchitra Sen Hall

Locals slam decision

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Government Edward College in Pabna has dropped Suchitra Sen's name from the title of a residential hall, drawing criticism from residents of the district where the legendary film actress was born.

The college authorities recently renamed three residential halls, including the Suchitra Sen Student Hall for female students, which has now been changed to "July 36 Student Hall".

Additionally, Sheikh Russel Student Hall was renamed Bijoy 24 Student Hall, and Begum Fazilatunnesa Hall was renamed Aysa Siddika (R) Student Hall.

Edward College Principal Md Abdul Awal Miah inaugurated the newly installed nameplates yesterday.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Awal said the academic council of the college decided to rename the halls following students' demand in keeping with the spirit of the July uprising.

However, the removal of Suchitra Sen's name has drawn sharp reactions from the local community and cultural figures.

"Suchitra Sen was not a politician and should not be treated as one. A hall was named after her to honour her legacy in her home district. Now her name has been removed, just like the names of political figures. This is

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

US trade bodies reiterate call for better labour rights

Say its tied to tariff talks

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), the US's largest trade body in the apparel and footwear sector, and the Fair Labour Association (FLA) tied Bangladesh's efforts to improve labour rights to ensure successful tariff negotiation with the Trump administration.

On May 20, the AAFA and FLA wrote to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus requesting for improvement of labour rights, which is vital for a long-term business relationship with the US.

The AAFA represents more than 1,100 prominent brands that employ more than 3.5 million American workers and contribute more than \$509 billion in annual US retail sales.

"We believe improving worker rights goes hand in hand with promoting a successful Bangladesh garment, footwear and travel goods industry now and in the years to come," said Steve Lamar, AAFA president and chief executive officer, and Jeff Vockrodt, FLA president, in the joint statement.

The two American trade bodies had brought up the issues in a letter to Yunus in September last year and brand delegation visits to Bangladesh in November last year and January.

Resolving the issues will help move negotiations towards a successful conclusion on President Trump's



Veiled in summer rain, a lone man with an umbrella strides across glistening railway tracks in Dhaka -- a fleeting silhouette against the rain-washed hush of the city.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'Our children are dying slowly'

Says a Palestinian father searching for food in Gaza; 82 more killed in Israeli strikes

AGENCIES

Father of four Mahmoud al-Haw and other Palestinians crowd around a soup kitchen in war-torn Gaza, surging forward and frantically waving pots.

Small children, squashed at the front, are in tears. One of them holds up a plastic basin hoping for some ladles of soup. Haw pushes forward in the scrum until he receives his share.

Haw does this every day because he fears his children are starving. He sets out through the ruins of Jabalia in northern Gaza in search of food, waiting in panicked crowds for up to six hours to get barely enough to feed his family.

Some days he gets lucky and can find lentil soup. Other days he returns empty-handed, reports Reuters.

"I have a sick daughter. I can't provide her with anything. There is no bread, there is nothing," said Haw, 39. "I'm here since eight in the morning, just to get one plate for six people while it is not enough for one person."

"I wish everyone would stand by us. Our children are dying slowly," he said.

With air strikes and tank fire continuing to

bound the enclave, killing 82 people yesterday, local bakers and transport operators said they had yet to see fresh supplies of flour and other essentials.

Fewer than 100 aid trucks were allowed to enter Gaza on Monday, after Israel agreed to allow limited humanitarian deliveries to resume following mounting international pressure. But, the United Nations said no aid had been distributed.

The amount of aid Israel has started to allow into the enclave is not nearly enough and is "a smokescreen to pretend the siege is over," the MSF aid group said yesterday.

"The Israeli authorities' decision to allow a ridiculously inadequate amount of aid into Gaza after months of an airtight siege signals their intention to avoid the accusation of starving

people in Gaza, while in fact keeping them barely surviving," said Pascale Coissard, Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) emergency coordinator in Gaza's Khan Yunis.

In a separate development, Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani yesterday slammed the firing of shots on diplomats visiting the flashpoint West Bank city of Jenin and called on Israel to "immediately clarify", reports AFP.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

- **UN says no aid distributed in enclave**
- **Israel allowing 'ridiculously inadequate' aid into Gaza: MSF**
- **Israeli troops open fire during diplomats' tour in West Bank**



The ongoing capital dredging of the Karnaphuli is being repeatedly hampered by polythene and waste clogging the machine, forcing frequent shutdowns and slowing progress. On International Day for Biological Diversity today, the river's condition stands as a stark reminder of how pollution endangers both development and biodiversity. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Ambassador to US Siam likely to be new foreign secy

Secy Jashim quit of his own accord, says Touhid

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States Asad Alam Siam is likely to be appointed the new foreign secretary, as Jashim Uddin is to step down from the post within a day or two.

Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain has clarified that Jashim leaving the post has no government involvement and the decision was his own.

A ministry official confirmed that Siam was instructed to return to the country and assume his new position by June 20.

Asad Alam Siam was appointed ambassador to the US on December 5, 2024.

Earlier, Siam served as the ambassador to Austria and was also the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the International Organizations in Vienna.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

NU VC attacked over auto pass demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National University Vice-Chancellor Professor ASM Amanullah was attacked yesterday allegedly by a group of students demanding automatic passes in their 2022 Degree (Pass) examinations.

The incident took place around noon in front of the university's administrative building in Gazipur, as the VC was getting out of his car, said Md Mostafizur Rahman, acting director of the NU Public Relations Department.

Protesters surrounded the VC and began shouting slogans demanding auto passes. Amid the chaos, some "criminals posing as students" attempted to assault him, he said in a press release, adding that he sustained minor injuries.

According to the statement, the university had already granted grace marks to this batch of students, taking into account the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and ongoing political unrest. Students were also given the opportunity

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

Mob action won't be tolerated anymore

Ramna DC warns after Dhamondi incident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The armed forces are more united than ever, and this inter-services harmony will be the foundation for building a stronger, modern military, said Chief of Naval Staff Admiral M Nazmul Hassan yesterday.

"I am pleased and proud to say that the spirit of unity and the bond between the army, navy, and air forces is stronger than ever. We are firmly committed to transforming the forces into a more capable and future-ready institution," he said while addressing the President Parade (Summer) 2025 at the Bangladesh Air Force Academy in Jashore.

The event marked the commissioning of No 86 BAFA Course.



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police will take strong action against any form of mob violence, regardless of who is involved, said Ramna Division Deputy Commissioner Masud Alam yesterday.

Speaking at a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre, he warned that vigilante actions risk anarchy and stern actions will be taken against those who engage in such activities.

His comments followed a Monday night incident in which three young men, including a former leader of Students Against Discrimination, tried to break into a publisher's home in Dhamondi, accusing him of being a "fascist agent."

They were detained after engaging in an altercation with police but were later released

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Banu Mushtaq wins Int'l Booker Prize for Heart Lamp

AFP, London

Indian writer, lawyer, and activist Banu Mushtaq on Tuesday won the International Booker Prize for her short story collection "Heart Lamp".

The 77-year-old is the first author of Kannada language literature to receive the prestigious literary award for translated fiction.

"This moment feels like a thousand fireflies lighting a single sky -- brief, brilliant and utterly collective," Mushtaq said at a ceremony at the Tate Modern gallery in London.

"I accept this great honour not as an individuals but as a voice raised in chorus with so many others."

Mushtaq will share the £50,000 (\$67,000) prize with her translator Deepa Bhasthi, who also helped choose the stories.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4