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## Lack of reform priorities led to political chaos

Speakers urge govt to put more focus on labour, agriculture and health sectors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government has failed to set their reform priorities, which led to chaos among the political parties and damaged the national consensus, speakers told an event yesterday.

They said if the government were to prioritise reducing discrimination in the labour, agriculture and health sectors, they would be able to connect all the political groups in the process. Labour sector is one of the most discriminatory sectors in the country where the government has opportunities to reduce discrimination and give labourers a better work environment, they added.

The remarks came at a special lecture on the recommendations made by the Labour Reform Commission, titled

"Discriminatory Society: Debate and Ways", at Dhaka University yesterday.

The speaker of the lecture, Taslima Akhter, also one of the members of the Labour Reform Commission, said around 85 percent of the country's total 8 crore labourers are still out of any legal framework.

"Household workers, agricultural labourers, and those involved in fisheries are still not acknowledged in the labour laws in the country. Their acknowledgement should be the first priority, and then there should be some activities gradually to ensure their wages, working hours and their rights to be involved in organisations," she said.

Mentioning that many government institutions for



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

A boy stands on the rail line, mere seconds after a train just passed, while two school-going children jump up and hop over a fence. All of these dangerous activities could lead to an accident at any time. The photo was taken from the Sayedabad area of the capital yesterday.

## Star wins 2nd place at INMA Media Awards



STAR REPORT

The Daily Star has clinched second place in the "Best Commerce Product or Service" category at the 88th INMA Global Media Awards 2025, a global stage that celebrates the most innovative initiatives in the news media industry.

The award was secured for introducing Keeron, The Daily Star's standalone EdTech business vertical, which has redefined how legacy media can diversify into high-impact digital ventures.

This marks a historic milestone, with The Daily Star being one of just three entries shortlisted from Bangladesh, joining a global lineup of finalists from Africa, Asia/Pacific, Europe, Latin America, North America, and South Asia – including industry giants such as The New York Times (US), News Corp Australia, and Financial Times (UK).

Launched in September 2023, Keeron was recognised for its transformative impact on professional upskilling of youth – having registered 60,000+ learners and 25000+ paid

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## Lightning alerts 20-30 minutes in advance

Govt planning new early warning system to reduce fatalities

HELEMUL ALAM

After failing to implement earlier projects such as planting palm trees and installing lightning arresters in high-risk areas, the interim government is now planning to introduce an early warning system to reduce lightning-related casualties.

Razwanur Rahman, director general of the Department of Disaster Management, said the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) is developing a system that will issue warnings 20 to 30 minutes before lightning strikes in specific areas.

"With early warnings, residents can take precautionary steps to protect themselves," he said. "We are trying to disseminate this information via mobile operators to areas at risk of lightning strikes. We also plan to open a WhatsApp group to quickly communicate alerts to local officials like DCs and UNOs."

Rahman said the initiative is a joint effort between the Department of Disaster Management and the BMD.

According to data from the Department of Disaster Management, 2,328 people were killed by lightning strikes between 2010 and 2020, with the highest annual death toll – 359 – in 2018.

Meanwhile, Save the Society and

Thunderstorm Awareness Forum (SSTAF) reported that 1,536 people have died in the last six years since 2019. Of these, 265 died in 2019, 230 in 2020, 305 in 2021, 277 in 2022, 245 in 2023 and 214 in 2024.

### AT A GLANCE

- Warnings to be issued 20–30 minutes before lightning strikes
- Alerts to be sent via mobile operators using SMS, voice messages
- Warnings will be area-specific, focusing on high-risk zones like haor regions
- WhatsApp groups to inform local officials (DCs, UNOs) quickly
- Data from radars in Dhaka and Rangpur to be used to detect strikes
- Training events planned to teach people how to respond to alerts

Rashim Mollah, secretary of SSTAF, said 75 people were killed in lightning strikes between January and April this year, including 18 on April 28 alone.

Prof Kabirul Bashar, president of SSTAF, identified 10 high-risk areas – Sunamganj, Habiganj, Kishoreganj,

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## Making army controversial will threaten sovereignty

Says Jamaat ameer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman said yesterday that embroiling the army in controversy would put the country's sovereignty at grave risk, adding that the Bangladesh Army has made dignified contributions to the country.

He made these remarks while addressing the central Majlis-e-Shura meeting of Jamaat e-Islami at Al-Falah auditorium in the capital's Moghbazar.

"We don't want to see acts or steps that may drag our

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## Declare roadmaps for trials, reforms and polls: NCP

Claims advisers Mahfuj, Asif have no links to party

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party yesterday demanded the announcement of simultaneous roadmaps for July mass killing trials, political reforms, and the election to restore the people and political parties' trust in the government.

"Just holding an election is not the only responsibility of the interim government. Justice for the July-August massacre and fundamental reforms must be undertaken before any polls are conducted," NCP Convener Nahid Islam said at a press briefing at the party's office in the capital's Bangla Motor.

"A clear roadmap for justice, reforms, and polls is essential. That way, the uncertainties and confusions in the minds of the people and political parties will go away."

"We urge Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus to remain in charge and move towards discussions with all political parties to resolve problems," he added.

Nahid also called on the public and political parties to act responsibly and settle outstanding issues through talks, in the interest of national security and a democratic future.

About the NCP's demand for a July Charter, Nahid said, "Time is passing by, and the deadline for the July Proclamation is approaching. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure its announcement within the stipulated time."

Nahid also said, "There is no connection between the NCP and the two student advisers. We

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These battery-run rickshaws illegally traverse the Buddhijibi Bridge, putting other vehicles and passersby at risk. Despite several warnings, these vehicles continue to use the bridge. The photo was taken in the Bosila area of the capital recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## CID freezes 35 bank accounts linked to Munni Saha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has frozen 35 bank accounts linked to journalist Munni Saha, her husband Kabir Hossain, and several individuals and entities affiliated with them.

The accounts currently hold a total balance of Tk 18.16 crore, according to a press release issued yesterday, signed by Jashim Uddin Khan, special superintendent (media) of the CID.

According to the CID's Financial Crime Unit, the accounts were frozen as part of a money laundering investigation initiated under the Money Laundering Prevention Rules, 2019.

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