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TO KNOW

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Reforms first priority, then trials, polls

Yunus tells event in Tokyo

“There are opinions that let’s get the election done. But it is not all, just one particular party.”

PROF MUHAMMAD YUNUS



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has outlined three priorities for the interim government: reforms, the trial for the July atrocities, and elections.

During a question-answer session at the 30th Nikkei Forum in Tokyo yesterday, he said his government wanted to reform institutions, policies, judiciary, and others.

He added, “We want to design new institutions, new policies. The government doesn’t want to go back to the old system where forces killed people and used the judiciary as a weapon.

“Reform is one agenda for the interim government, the next one is the trial of people who committed crimes during the mass uprising. Number three is the election Finally, the election. So, we have been explaining to people that the election will be held between the end of this year in December and maximum of June next year.”

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A flooded mosque in Rangabali upazila of Patuakhali yesterday. Homes and other structures, not protected by dams, took the brunt of tidal surges caused by a depression over the Bay of Bengal.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Restore democracy

Khaleda urges people on the eve of Zia’s death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday called on party leaders, activists, and the people to move forward to reestablish democracy, which she says is facing obstacles.

On the eve of BNP founder and late president Ziaur Rahman’s 44th death anniversary, Khaleda said, “He [Ziaur Rahman] embraced martyrdom in the fight to establish democracy and safeguard sovereignty. The uninterrupted journey of that very democracy continues to face obstacles at every step.

“Let this be our pledge on the death anniversary of Zia: we will see democracy reestablished in Bangladesh very soon.

“To achieve this goal, I urge BNP leaders and activists at all levels, and the people of the country, to move forward in a disciplined manner.”

The former prime minister’s recorded speech, at a discussion commemorating Zia at the Institution of Engineers auditorium, marked her first public remarks after returning from London



earlier this month. She received treatment in the UK and stayed with her son Tarique Rahman, acting chairman of the party.

To honour Zia, Khaleda said BNP leaders and activists should keep in mind the way Zia solved every problem -- through democracy and development for all.

“Every year, this day in May comes to our family with painful memories. On this day, not only our family but the entire country plunged into grief and [as they have been] left without a guardian.

“The name of martyred President Ziaur Rahman is inseparably linked with the birth of our beloved motherland, Bangladesh,” she said.

Khaleda continued, “He [Zia] sacrificed his life as a successful, honest, visionary and truly patriotic president in Chattogram, where he had proclaimed independence and made his name an inseparable part of the country.

“Martyr Zia is a unique architect of democracy, independence, freedom of the press and judiciary, self reliance, development, and the creation of a distinct

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DEPRESSION IN BAY

Rain, tidal surge flood coastal areas

Thousands stranded in 5 dists; river transport halted nationwide

STAR REPORT

Heavy rain and tidal surges triggered by a depression in the Bay of Bengal flooded low-lying areas across several coastal districts yesterday, leaving at least one person dead and thousands marooned.

Several areas in Patuakhali, Barguna, Noakhali, Chattogram, and Cox’s Bazar have been submerged. Some areas have been cut off.

The depression began crossing the Bangladesh coastline yesterday afternoon, bringing intense rainfall and rough seas. The Bangladesh Meteorological Department issued local cautionary signal No-3 at all maritime ports.

Due to the inclement weather, the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) suspended all water transport services on inland and coastal routes across the country.

Earlier, the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) issued a special bulletin saying the deep depression, combined with the new moon, may cause tidal surges 2 to 4 feet higher than normal and may inundate low-lying areas of coastal districts.

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\$520b economy by next fiscal year

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and WASIM BIN HABIB

Bangladesh’s gross domestic product is projected to surpass the \$500 billion mark for the first time in the upcoming fiscal year contingent upon exchange rate stability.

120.29 per dollar.

If the exchange rate, which has been liberalised this month, remains between Tk 120 and Tk 123 in the next fiscal year, the GDP could reach \$520 billion.

Currently, 45 out of 218 countries have a GDP exceeding \$500 billion. Among

GDP AT CURRENT PRICE

	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25 (provisional)
GDP size (billion \$)	460	452	450	462
Exchange Rate (Taka per \$)	86.30	99.46	111.06	120.29

In fiscal 2025-26, the nominal GDP is expected to reach Tk 62,44,578 crore at current prices, according to the finance ministry’s projections.

As per the provisional estimate by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the nominal GDP this fiscal year would be Tk 55,52,753 crore, which is about \$462 billion using the exchange rate of Tk

them, seven countries have GDPs ranging between \$500 billion and \$600 billion.

“Whether our GDP will hit \$500 billion depends on how much the taka depreciates against the dollar -- the dollar remains strong and our supply of dollar has increased, so it is unlikely that the taka would depreciate further here,” said

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

NSC cancels Faruque’s BCB directorship

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Sports Council (NSC) revoked president Faruque Ahmed’s directorship from the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday, after eight of the nine board of



directors at the BCB sent a no confidence letter against Faruque earlier in the day.

NSC issued a press release late on Thursday, saying it made the decision on the basis of majority of the board directors expressing no confidence in Faruque and after assessing the investigation committee’s report on the controversy-laden last season of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

The end of Faruque’s directorship will also likely spell the end of his presidency at the cricket board, as a non-director cannot be the president of the BCB.

Faruque was one of the two NSC nominated directors in the current BCB board alongside Nazmul Abedeen Fahim and was elected as president of the board on August 21, replacing Nazmul Hassan Papon, who stepped down following the

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Displaced Palestinians carrying bags of relief supplies return from aid distribution centres in Rafah to their tents in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

DHAKA SOUTH MAYOR SC puts ball in EC’s court

Ishraque issues ‘final call’ to government for swearing in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leader Ishraque Hossain yesterday doubled down on his demand for the immediate arrangement of his swearing-in as mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), in line with a High Court verdict that declared him the rightful winner of the 2020 mayoral election.

“Accept the High Court’s ruling and immediately arrange the oath ceremony. This is the final call to the interim government,” Ishraque said in the evening, addressing a day-long sit-in at the DSCC headquarters.

Despite heavy rain, hundreds of his supporters -- alongside employees from various DSCC unions -- converged on Nagar Bhaban from 10:00am, marking the 16th consecutive day of protest under the banner of Dhakabashi. Several DSCC officials also joined the demonstration.

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Another 22 pushed in by BSF

STAR REPORT

At least 22 people were pushed into Bangladesh allegedly by India's Border Security Force (BSF) through various border points in Kurigram and Dinajpur early yesterday.

Nine of them were identified as Bangladeshi nationals, said officials of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB). The identities of the remaining 13 could not be confirmed till the filing of this report around 9:00pm last night.

Lt Col Mehedi Imam, commanding officer of Kurigram's BGB-15 Battalion, said they detained the nine Bangladeshis shortly after they were pushed in by BSF through the Kashipur-Dharmapur border near International Main Pillar No-943 in Phulbari upazila around 3:30am.

"After verifying their identities, we handed them over to police. All of them are residents of Phulbari upazila. They had crossed the border into India in search of work and had been living there," he added.

Phulbari Police Station Officer-in-Charge Abdul Salam said a general diary was filed and the detainees were later handed over to their families

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus presents former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad a copy of "Art of Triumph", a book on July uprising graffiti, at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo yesterday.

PHOTO: PTD

Restore democracy

FROM PAGE 1

nationalism in this country."

Addressing the discussion virtually from London, Tarique came down heavily on the interim administration. The government has created uncertainty in the state and politics as it is yet to announce a specific date for the national election, even after 10 months in office, he said.

This has virtually brought economic activities in the country to a standstill, he added.

Tarique reiterated the demand that the election be held by December. "The people are ready to vote for their preferred candidates and establish an accountable government. But the interim government seems to be failing to understand the aspirations of the people."

He stated that while the government assumed power under exceptional circumstances following a mass uprising and may be deemed legitimate, it remains entirely unaccountable.

"Due to the absence of a stable, elected government with a fixed term, the country is not receiving the desired investments. The media, citing

business organisations, have reported that hundreds of industrial plants have already shut down for various reasons. Many more factories are on the verge of closure," he said.

Tarique said the public has no direct communication with the advisers, resulting in many advisers being unaware of the problems, prospects, and hardships faced by people from different classes and professions.

"Some may be trying to identify and solve people's problems by sitting in offices and reviewing files. But if all problems could be solved solely through administration-dependent file work without direct communication with the people, then surely there would be no need for political parties or politics."

He said every political party in favour of democracy has already submitted written reform proposals to the interim government, and no political party has any major objections to the reforms.

"But, there is certainly an objection to the government's unnecessary delay in implementing the reforms."

Standing Committee members Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Abdul

Moyeen Khan, Salahuddin Ahmed, Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku, and Major (ret'd) Hafiz Uddin Ahmed also spoke at the event, which was virtually presided over by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir.

A documentary featuring a brief biography of Zia was showed at the event.

Fakhru urged party leaders and activists to remain united. "The struggle to achieve democracy must be intensified," he said, alleging "a conspiracy to depoliticise the country".

Salahuddin said that the reforms upon which consensus is reached can be implemented within a week or a month. If the government is unable to do so, and if the responsibility is given to BNP, the party will carry it out, he added.

On the chief adviser, Salahuddin said he speaks less at home but gives more interviews while abroad.

Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin said while the army chief emphasised the need for an election by December, the civilian government does not speak about polls.

Rain, tidal surge flood coastal areas

FROM PAGE 1

During high tide in Cox's Bazar's Maheshkhali, Danu Miah, 42, of Ghotibhanga, drowned around 1:00pm, said Hedayet Ullah, upazila nirbahi officer.

Meanwhile, in Noakhali, waterway communication with the island upazila of Hatiya had to be suspended since the morning due to excessive tidal surges and flooding.

Nearly 15,000 people in Nijhum Dwip and other chars have been stranded, with numerous fish farms, homes, and roads submerged, said Md Alauddin, upazila nirbahi officer of Hatiya.

A 10-metre section of the embankment along the Sangu river in the Juidondi union of Chattogram collapsed in the morning, flooding low-lying areas, while another 150 metres remain at risk.

Barna Haque, sub-divisional engineer at the Bangladesh Water Development Board's (BWDB) Anwara sub-division, said, "We have mobilised teams with geo-bags and necessary equipment. Repair work will commence once the tide recedes."

In Barishal, all internal waterway routes have been suspended since yesterday morning.

"All rivers are flowing above the danger level, and several low-lying areas have been submerged," said Tajul Islam, sub-assistant engineer of BWDB in Barishal.

In Patuakhali, heavy rainfall has submerged low-lying areas, and due to the rough seas, all fishing boats have been ordered to remain close to the coast.

Delwar Hossain, district relief and rehabilitation officer, said that 20 villages

in Rangabali and 10 villages in Kalaopara have been submerged after some parts of the embankments collapsed.

Thousands of residents got stranded in knee-to-waist deep water in the upazilas, with many reportedly going without food or drinking water.

In Bhola, low-lying areas have been inundated due to high tide.

According to administration sources, water breached the embankment at the Dhoroni sluice point in Tajumuddin, flooding surrounding areas. Meanwhile, in Monpura upazila, parts of Kaltali union and areas outside the protection embankments have been submerged.

The tidal surge reached up to seven feet above normal in some places, flooding vast lowlands and char areas in both upazilas.

Tajumuddin Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Shubho Debnath confirmed that a 10-metre stretch of the ring embankment was damaged. However, the BWDB has promptly begun repair works.

"Water levels rose up to seven feet in some areas. Apart from the loss of three cows and some other domestic animals, no major damages have been reported so far," the UNO said.

In Barguna, the gangways at both ends of Bouchokti Ferry Ghat were submerged, causing significant difficulties for commuters. Floodwaters have already stranded over a hundred families in the area.

In Cox's Bazar, several low-lying areas of Maheshkhali and Kutubdia have been flooded, while many areas in Dakkhinpata and Golachipa on Saint

Martin's Island have been submerged under seawater.

"Many sweet water ponds on the island have been flooded by seawater, adding misery to the dwellers," said Joyнал Abedin, a beach guard with the district administration.

Meanwhile, the suspension of inland water transport yesterday caused suffering to passengers who arrived at the river ports braving heavy rain.

BIWTA halted the movement of all small and large water vessels, carrying both passengers and cargo, from 3:00pm.

The forecast bulletin issued by the Bangladesh Meteorological Department warned that the depression is likely to move northward, accompanied by the southwest monsoon.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) has issued a flood warning and stated that the Sari-Gowain River in Sylhet, Jadukata in Sunamganj, Manu and Dhalai in Moulvibazar, Khwai in Habiganj, Someshwari in Netrakona, and Muhuri in Feni may exceed danger levels in the next two days.

Meanwhile, the FFWC has also opened a control room to monitor the flood situation.

Sarder Uday Raihan, executive engineer of the centre, said the current situation is expected to continue for two to three more days. "While some areas may experience temporary flooding, it is unlikely to be long-lasting," he added.

[Our reporters and correspondents from Sylhet, Cox's Bazar, Chattogram, Barishal, Patuakhali, and Noakhali contributed to the report]

Reforms first priority, then trials, polls

FROM PAGE 1

The Tokyo event, titled Future of Asia, was attended by the Asian political and business leaders, think tanks and top officials of regional and multilateral agencies.

Noting that some politicians want elections in December this year, the chief adviser said, "We don't want to leave the country with the old institutions remaining as it is. If we need a good job at the reforms, we have to wait for six months more [for the election]."

"There are opinions that let's get the election done, but it is not all, just one particular party."

The BNP has been demanding the election by December this year while Prof Yunus has said on multiple occasions that polls would be held between December this year and June next year, depending on the extent of reforms.

The National Citizen Party, led by student leaders who spearheaded the mass uprising that led to the fall of the Awami League regime, has been calling for robust reforms and trials of perpetrators before a national election.

Answering another question at the event yesterday, Yunus said he was not a politician and would not run for office.

Addressing a session on "Asian Challenges in a Turbulent World" at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, he said, "The transformational change by a student-led mass uprising in Bangladesh is a chance to correct the wrongs and realise the dream of a fairer society."

The interim government is working hard to ensure justice, equality, freedom, and dignity of people, and prepare for a free and fair general election, he said.

Regarding global challenges, the Nobel laureate said conflicts were erupting in Asia and beyond.

"Wars and man-made conflicts are

destroying the lives and livelihood of thousands in Ukraine, Gaza, and in the countries in south and southeast Asia."

In Myanmar, a civil war has taken a brutal turn, and the recent earthquake has pushed an already deep humanitarian crisis into greater darkness, he said.

"Very recently, our two neighbours have fought a short but expensive war. Regrettably, we are spending billions in fighting wars, leaving millions of our people starving or struggling for basic needs."

He thanked the leaders of the two countries – India and Pakistan – for agreeing to a ceasefire, and hoped for continued peace, stability, and peaceful coexistence in South Asia.

Millions around the world are being displaced by climate change, he said. "The rise of trade restrictions continues to challenge the very foundation of the free trade system."

"Economic inequalities are widening and trust is declining between nations, within societies, and even between citizens and institutions."

"In recent times, we witnessed such divisions, discontent, and instability in Bangladesh, Republic of Korea that led to regime changes."

"...I believe Asia has an opportunity – perhaps even a responsibility – to show a different path. A path of peace, of dialogue, of inclusive growth. Not just growth in numbers, but growth in people's well-being, in trust, in hope."

"We need to shift our focus from individual profits to collective wellbeing, from short-term gain to long-term vision.... People are not born to suffer but with limitless potential and need to have the right opportunities."

He said despite multiple domestic challenges, Bangladesh was contributing to global peace and

AZHARUL'S ACQUITTAL

'Shibir behind the attacks'

Says leftist student alliance; Shibir refutes allegation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Gonotantrik Chhatra Jote yesterday alleged that Islami Chhatra Shibir activists were behind the recent attacks on its members in Chattogram and Rajshahi.

The Jote, a coalition of left-leaning student organisations, also demanded punishment for the attackers, who assaulted their activists during protests against the acquittal of Jamaat-e-Islami leader ATM Azharul Islam in crimes against humanity cases.

"In recent days, there have been attacks on democracy, the judiciary, and the spirit of the Liberation War. This is deeply worrying and shameful," said Annie Chowdhury, central vice-president of the Gonotantrik Chhatra Council, at a press briefing at the Chattogram Metropolitan Journalists' Union auditorium.

She blamed Shibir and demanded that the perpetrators be brought to justice.

According to media reports, the Jote's leaders and activists were attacked by members of "Anti-Shahbagh Mancha" during a rally in front of the Chattogram Press Club on Wednesday, a day after a similar attack on the group's Rajshahi unit. At least

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NSC cancels Faruque's BCB directorship

FROM PAGE 1

ouster of the Awami League regime. NSC's decision was the climax to day-long drama centered around the BCB presidency.

The day began with former Bangladesh cricketer Aminul Islam Bulbul telling The Daily Star that he has accepted a proposal from the NSC to succeed Faruque as the next BCB president.

This confirmation from Bulbul came a day after Faruque was reportedly asked to no longer continue as the BCB president by sports advisor Asif Mahmud.

Faruque was still determined to carry on as board president, as he demanded a "valid reason" for him to step away.

"I'm not thinking about stepping down for the time being. Nobody has given me a valid reason to do so," Faruque told The Daily Star on Thursday.

"Why should I leave when others continue in their positions? First, I need to know the actual reason. Second, I didn't take this role on my own, I was selected. Since I was brought here, I deserve to know what my crime is and why I should resign," he added.

In the evening, it was learned that eight of the nine board directors – Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, Fahim Sinha, Mohammad Saiful Alam Swapon Chowdhury, Iftekhar Rahman Mithu, Mahbub Anam, Kazi Inam Ahmed, Manjur Alam and Mohammad Salahuddin – have sent a signed letter

of no confidence to NSC.

Akram Khan was the only board director who did not sign it.

The directors urged the NSC to take the necessary legal steps to cancel Faruque's directorship at the board, which would in turn make him ineligible to be the BCB president. Later, Faruque had told media that he was considering legal steps against the letter. Meanwhile, the drama surrounding the presidency is escalating the risk of an ICC suspension. The global cricket governing body has suspended Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka in the recent past citing government interference and it remains to be seen how ICC views what's currently happening in BCB.

SC puts ball in EC's court

FROM PAGE 1

Calling the protest part of a broader movement to "restore democracy," Ishraque warned that if the government fails to act, he would file contempt charges in the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court yesterday observed that the matter of Ishraque's mayoral status falls under the jurisdiction of the Election Commission (EC).

The Appellate Division made the observation while disposing of a petition seeking leave to appeal a High Court ruling that upheld both a Dhaka tribunal's decision and the EC's recognition of Ishraque as the duly elected mayor.

A seven-member bench of the Appellate Division, led by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed, issued the observation after hearing the petition filed by Md Mamunur Rashid, who had previously challenged both the tribunal and EC decisions in the High Court.

Following the observation, the EC held a three-hour meeting at its Agargaon headquarters.

After the meeting, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMMNasir Uddin told the reporters that a decision will

be made after reviewing the copy of the court's verdict.

"We have not yet received any verdict from the Appellate Division. Once we receive the copy of the judgment, we will examine the legal aspects and take the necessary steps accordingly."

Replying to a query, the CEC also said that no decision can be made "based on media headlines".

The current term of the DSCC expires on June 1.

On March 27, Judge Md Nurul Islam of Dhaka's First Joint District Judge and Election Tribunal annulled the 2020 DSCC election results and declared Ishraque the winner, directing the EC to issue a gazette within ten days. The EC complied on April 27, officially announcing Ishraque – son of former Dhaka city mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka – as mayor.

Since then, the matter of Ishraque's oath-taking has been shuffled between the EC, local government division, law ministry, High Court, and, most recently, the Appellate Division.

Meanwhile, in a show of support, DSCC staff at all levels suspended work yesterday, bringing city services to a halt and causing widespread

inconvenience. The gates of Nagar Bhaban remained shut throughout the day as protesters marched inside the compound.

Ishraque, in the evening, visited the protest site to check on the well-being of his supporters.

"Some of the government's advisers have acted in a discriminatory manner toward me," he told the protesters.

"If they don't immediately arrange the oath-taking ceremony, it will be clear that the interim government is acting in contempt of the highest court and the Appellate Division," he warned. "The movement will escalate with public backing if our demand continues to be ignored."

He said the Local Government Division must implement the court order and arrange the oath ceremony immediately.

"Otherwise, we will seek contempt proceedings in the Supreme Court," he said.

Addressing the crowd, Ishraque said, "I am grateful to you all. Please keep your trust in me. This fight is part of the larger struggle to restore democracy and secure the people's right to vote."



LIFE IN RAIN-SOAKED DHAKA

Despite relentless downpours throughout the day yesterday, life in the capital moved on. Dhaka residents braved the rain and the city's waterlogging, undeterred in their daily routines. Raincoats and umbrellas became essential for schoolchildren, commuters, and even protesters. The persistent rainfall was triggered by a deep depression over the Bay of Bengal, affecting several districts.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN, PRABIR DAS, RASHED SHUMON, FIROZ AHMED

Secretariat staff observe 1-hour work abstention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Employees from various ministries at the Secretariat observed a one-hour work abstention yesterday morning, in protest against the newly issued Government Service (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025.

The protest, held from 10:00am to 11:00am, was organised by the Bangladesh Secretariat Officers and Employees Unity Forum.

The forum on Wednesday announced a fresh round of protests, declaring a daily one-hour work stoppage beginning yesterday until the ordinance is withdrawn.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Nazrul Islam, a leader of the unity forum, said, "We believe in peaceful protest. We have observed a one-hour work abstention today [yesterday], demanding the repeal of the controversial ordinance. This programme will continue."

The government issued and enforced the Public Service (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, on Sunday evening. The draft amendment to the Public Service Act, 2018, was approved by the interim government's advisory council on May 22.

Secretariat employees have been staging

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4,813 bodies of migrant workers arrived in 2024

Grief, questions haunt families

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Balram's mother left for Lebanon in search of a better life. Nur Mohammad's sister made the same journey with a lot of hope to Jordan. Both returned in coffins.

Their families still do not know why.

The official medical certificates from the destination countries say the same thing -- suicide.

But their loved ones had left healthy and full of purpose. To the families, the explanation doesn't make sense -- and they are not alone.

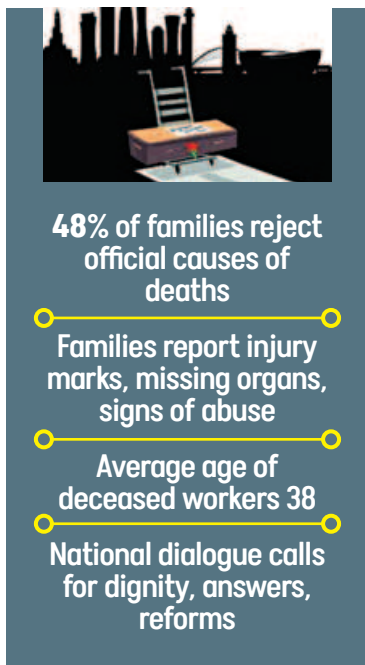
According to a 2022 study by the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), nearly half -- 48 percent -- of the families of deceased migrant workers do not believe the causes of death listed on the certificates.

Their doubts stem from what they saw: injury marks on the bodies, disturbing phone calls describing abuse, and signs of physical and psychological torture.

The study shows that 31 percent of repatriated bodies of migrant workers died due to accidents, suicides, or suspected homicides.

Meanwhile another report said the deaths of Bangladeshi migrant workers abroad reached a record high in 2024, with 4,813 bodies repatriated -- marking a 5.7 percent increase from the previous year. Among them, 94.4% were men and 3.6% were women. The average age of deceased workers was reported to be just 38 years.

The report is based on data compiled by Bureau of Manpower,



Employment and Training and the Wage Earners' Welfare Board.

The findings were shared at a dialogue titled "Dignity and Honour for Deceased Migrant Workers", held at a city hotel yesterday.

The event, which was jointly organised by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and RMMRU, gave bereaved families a rare chance to be heard.

"We are losing our workers in silence. Their deaths deserve answers, as well as dignity," said Prof Tasneem Siddiqui, executive director of RMMRU, who also

shared firsthand testimonies from families.

NHRC Secretary Shebastian Rema called migrant deaths "especially painful," urging that the issues be raised in labour-receiving countries and international forums.

"These deaths are not just statistics. They are stories of dreams being cut short," he said, proposing that death-related protocols be included in future bilateral agreements.

Neyamat Ullah Bhuiyan, senior secretary of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, stressed the need for inter-ministerial coordination to ensure dignified handling of bodies.

"While we cannot control the global context, we can at least act responsibly at home," he said.

Former Secretary Selim Reza acknowledged progress in reducing repatriation delays but stressed the need for more awareness to prevent avoidable deaths -- such as those caused by improper road crossing.

Masud Rana, director at BMET, highlighted the importance of including families of deceased migrants in reintegration programmes like the RAISE project, to help them rebuild their lives.

ATM Abdur Rouf Mondol from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Bangladeshi missions abroad will soon be authorised to use the ministry's own budget for repatriation if

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Prof Anowara sent to jail over attempted murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Professor SM Anowara Begum, a freedom fighter and retired political science teacher at Jagannath University (JnU), was sent to jail yesterday in an attempted murder case after her bail plea was rejected.

The case was filed over an attack on protesters during the anti-discrimination student movement on July 19 last year.

According to the case, she is 69 years old.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mostafizur Rahman passed the order after AKM Mahmudul Kabir, sub-inspector of Sutrapur Police Station and investigation officer in the case, produced her before the court and sought her detention until the investigation is complete.

In the forwarding report, the investigation officer said that Anowara is named in the FIR, and preliminary findings suggest her involvement in the incident. He argued that granting her bail could result in her fleeing.

Defence lawyers, however, appealed for bail citing her age and her role in the Liberation War.

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Japan to recruit one lakh workers from Bangladesh

Two MoUs signed with BMET; Prof Yunus urges Japanese companies to enhance support

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Japanese authorities and businesses have announced plans to recruit at least 1,00,000 skilled workers from Bangladesh over the next five years to address Japan's growing worker shortage.

"In the coming five years, we are prepared to welcome more than 1,00,000 Bangladeshi workers," said Mikio Kesagayama, chairman of Japan's National Business Support Combined Cooperatives (NBCC), a federation of over 65 companies.

He was speaking at the "Bangladesh Seminar on Human Resources" organised by the Bangladesh Embassy in Tokyo.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus also attended the seminar after participating in the Nikkei Asia Forum.

"This is the most exciting and inspiring day for me. This will open the door for Bangladeshis not only to work but also to know Japan," he said.

Prof Yunus witnessed the signing of two MoUs -- one between Bangladesh's Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) and Kaicom Dream Street, a Japan-Bangladesh joint venture; the other between BMET, Japan's NBCC, and the Japan Bangla Bridge Recruiting Agency (JBBRA).

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Decentralise power to prevent authoritarianism

Speakers tell Shujan roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Concentrating power in the hands of a single person has long been a reality in Bangladesh, weakening state institutions through corruption and abuse of power, speakers said at a roundtable yesterday.

They emphasised that one of the key goals of the July uprising was to push for reforms to prevent authoritarian rule, and no reform will be effective unless the spirit of anti-discrimination movements is upheld.

The prime minister is supposed to be the head of the executive branch, while the parliament is the legislative branch. When the same person leads both, it violates the theory of separation of powers.

Badiul Alam Majumdar, Shujan Secretary

The event, titled "Citizen Charter and Civic Expectations", was organised by Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) at the CIRDAP Auditorium in the capital.

At the discussion, Prof Ali Riaz, co-chair of the National Consensus Commission, said any constitutional amendment must reflect public opinion and aspirations, as the constitution is a social contract between the state and its citizens.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

Police issue guidelines ahead of Eid

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Police have issued a set of safety guidelines for citizens to ensure a safe and smooth celebration of the upcoming festival of Eid-ul-Azha.

In a press release issued yesterday, police advised citizens -- especially those traveling home during the holidays -- to plan their journeys with ample time to avoid last-minute rush at train stations, and bus, launch and ferry terminals.

Travelers have been urged to avoid risky travel practices, such as riding on rooftops of buses, trains, launches, steamers or traveling on trucks, pickups or other cargo vehicles.

Use of unsafe vehicles such as Nosimon, Korimon and Bhotbhoti on highways has also been discouraged.

Passengers are advised not to pressure drivers into speeding. To ensure that vehicles are operated by professional, healthy and well-rested drivers

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

FOUR MURDERS IN CITY

Cops say personal grievances led to the killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least four people, including a married couple, were killed in separate incidents in the capital on Wednesday.

Police yesterday found that the motives behind the murders were personal. In Kamalapur, police recovered the body of a woman from a hotel.

The man who allegedly strangled her to death had checked in using the name of the victim's husband, according to the victim's family.

The suspect, identified as Rubel, a fruit seller from Old Dhaka, has been on the run since the incident.

Police are trying to arrest him, Shahriar Ali, deputy commissioner of Motijheel Division, told The Daily Star yesterday.

On Wednesday, police recovered the body of Sumi Rani Roy, 36, a resident of Dinajpur, from a hotel room in Kamalapur. Officers suspect she was suffocated to death.

"Rubel used my name while checking into the hotel," said Manik Chandra Roy, Sumi's husband. He said he was in Dinajpur at the time.

Family members said Sumi met Rubel on TikTok about a year ago. She left for Dhaka last Friday, telling her family she would stay at her sister's home in Keraniganj.

"She called me on Tuesday and said she came to Dhaka

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2



PHOTO: STAR

Signs of a clash visible inside a ward at the National Institute of Ophthalmology and Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. Inset, the facility remained padlocked as the authorities suspended all medical services following 'tripartite clashes' on Wednesday, when a group of injured July protesters receiving treatment attacked staff members, sparking confrontations with other patients and their attendants.



SINHA MURDER HC verdict on death reference, appeals Jun 2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday set June 2 for delivering verdict on the death reference and appeals filed by the convicts in the Major (ret'd) Sinha Md Rashed Khan murder case.

The bench of Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman and Justice Md Sagir Hossain fixed the date after concluding hearing on the matters.

On January 31, 2022, Cox's Bazar District and Sessions Judge Mohammad Ismail sentenced Pradeep Kumar Das, suspended officer-in-charge of Teknaf Police Station, and suspended sub-inspector Liaqat Ali to death and six others to life term imprisonment for killing Major (ret'd) Sinha.

The documents of the case reached the HC on February 8, 2022 for examination of the trial court verdict.

Sinha, who served in the Special Security Force, was killed in police firing at Baharchhara police check post on Marine Drive Road in Teknaf on July 31, 2020.



Ivy sent back to jail after remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor Salina Hayat Ivy was sent back to Kashimpur Central Women's Jail yesterday afternoon after completing a two-day police remand in connection with a murder case.

She was produced before the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Shamsur Rahman earlier in the day.

Inspector Kaium Khan of the district court police said Ivy had been placed on remand for interrogation over the killing of garment worker Minarul Islam during last year's student movement in Siddhirganj.

She was formally named an accused in the Minarul murder case on September 3 and was arrested from her residence in Deobhog, Narayanganj, on the morning of May 9.

Illegal hill cutting threatens Bandarban school

MONG SING HAI MARMA,
Bandarban

Illegal hill cutting in the Thoingyapara area of Balaghata union in Bandarban Sadar upazila has been disrupting academic activities at Thoingyapara Government Primary School.

During a recent visit, this correspondent observed that soil from the hill on the eastern side of the school premises was being extracted with an excavator and transported by heavy trucks.

Locals alleged that the hill razing has placed the school at risk of damage from potential landslides during the monsoon, while the constant movement of trucks has severely damaged the school's playground and the adjacent road, putting students in danger of accidents.

They further claimed the illegal activity is causing serious harm to the local environment and disrupting classroom activities.

"During class hours, the loud noise of the excavator distracts the students. The road and playground in front of the school have become unusable due to the daily movement of heavy trucks. We plan to report this to the relevant authorities," said Chandan Kanti Debnath, headteacher of the school.

A local BNP leader named Nazim Uddin is allegedly operating the hill-cutting activities, deploying an excavator and five trucks over the past few days.

"Soil cutting from the hill has been going on from dawn till dusk for the past three days. The



school, as well as our houses, are at risk of damage. The road has become deplorable due to truck movement, making it extremely risky for children to go to school," said Mongkyapru Marma, a local.

Several other locals echoed his concerns.

"Around 50 truckloads of soil are transported daily," said Saiful Islam Rimon, one of the truck drivers.

Contacted, Nazim Uddin, sub-contractor for the project, said the soil was being used to fill the site of a proposed new power sub-station near the Golden Temple area in Balaghata. "We have been working for the past three days," he added.

Asked whether he had

obtained permits from the administration or the Department of Environment, he left the scene without answering.

Masum Ameer, executive engineer of the Bangladesh Power Development Board in Bandarban, said the new sub-station will be connected to Dohazari in Chattogram. The project is being implemented directly by the Power Grid Company of Bangladesh, he added.

Md Fayzul Islam, an assistant engineer of BPDB responsible for the project, said the new sub-station will serve as the primary power distribution centre in Bandarban.

Asked whether administrative or environmental clearance had

been obtained for hill cutting and soil use, Fayzul declined to comment, saying the project director would know about it, and disconnected the phone call.

Nur Uddin, inspector at the DoE in Bandarban, said no permission was granted for cutting the hill.

"Now that we've been informed, steps are being taken to respond swiftly. Legal action will be taken in cooperation with the upazila administration," he said.

Bandarban Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Marufa Sultana Khan Hiramon said legal action will be taken against those responsible following an investigation into the matter.

Road crashes kill five in Sirajganj, Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Pabna

At least five persons were killed in separate road accidents in Sirajganj and Pabna districts on Wednesday night.

The deceased were identified as: Shoyeb Ali, 22, of Teghori village in Tarash upazila; Jahidul Islam, 20 and Abdul Gaffar, 21 of Shengaaati village in Raiganj upazila of Sirajganj; Moon Hossain, 22 of Krishnapur village and Sourov Hossain, 20, of Sonnyash Bandh area in Aminpur Thana under Pabna's Bera upazila of Pabna.

In Sirajganj, three friends – Shoyeb, Jahidul and Abdul Gaffar – were on a motorcycle when a chicken-laden truck hit them in Bhadroghat area under Kamarkhand upazila at around 10:30pm and fled the scene, leaving all of them dead on the spot.

Md Abdul Latif, OC of Kamarkhand Police Station, said police are trying to arrest the truck driver.

In a similar incident in Pabna, Moon and Sourov were on a motorbike when an onion-laden truck hit them on Kashinathpur-Kazirhaat road in Choto Naogaon area under Aminpur Police Station at around 7:30pm and fled the scene, leaving Moon dead on the spot and Sourov critically injured, said OC Golam Mostafa.

Surov died at a local hospital.

Secretariat staff

FROM PAGE 3

demonstrations since last Saturday, calling for the repeal of the ordinance.

Leaders of the Unity Forum also said that if their demands are not met, fresh protest programmes will be announced from May 31.

Sources in the public administration ministry said the government introduced these amendments to streamline disciplinary

action for civil servants, as the current seven or eight-step process creates a broad scope for lobbying.

The protesters, however, argue that the amended law empowers the government to punish any staff member arbitrarily without giving an adequate chance for a defence. They also allege the ordinance will disproportionately affect non-cadre employees.

4,813 bodies

FROM PAGE 3

funding from the Wage Earners' Welfare Board is unavailable.

He also addressed past indignities – such as coffins being treated as cargo and families waiting for hours without a place to seat – and noted that designated spaces have now been established for storing bodies and comforting families.

Still, harrowing

incidents continue to emerge.

In one such case, a family noticed a deep surgical cut on their relative's body during burial. A later post-mortem revealed that the kidneys had been removed.

"When there's doubt about the cause of death, a second autopsy in Bangladesh must be an option," said Prof Kamrul Hasan, a forensic medicine specialist.

The event was part of the SIMS Project, supported by Helvetas Bangladesh and the Swiss Embassy.

Police issue

FROM PAGE 3

and discourage reckless overtaking.

For water transport, vessel owners have been asked to equip boats with buoys tied with 100-150-foot ropes and ensure the availability of life jackets.

Unfit and outdated vehicles must not be operated on highways.

Police warned against sharing rides or vehicles with strangers and cautioned travelers not to accept any food from unknown individuals at bus terminals, railway stations or launch terminals.

Buyers should also be cautious about consuming drinks or snacks from hawkers or street vendors.

For assistance, citizens may contact: Police Headquarters Control Room: 01320001300, 01320001299, Highway Police Headquarters: 01320182598, Railway Police Headquarters: 01320177598, River Police Headquarters: 01320169598, Rapid Action Battalion: 01777720029 or contact the Superintendent of Police or Officer-in-Charge of the local police station.



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Savar Cantonment, Dhaka

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পূৰ্বাচল গ্ৰাহিম লোকেশনে ৭৫ফিট
ৰাস্তাৰ উপৰে ফ্লৰেটৰ সামনে
১০কাটাৰ ১টি প্ৰট বিক্রয়।
ক্ৰেতাগন যোগাযোগ কৰুনঃ
০১৭৭১-৫০৯৯৫৯/০১৮৩৩-৯৮৮৬১০

Notice

I, Achint Bhagat, son of Mr. Navneet Bhagat, intend to marry Ms. Sira Sofia Santorja Chiappello, daughter of Javier Carlos Santorja Olcina.

Any person having any objection to this proposed marriage is here by requested to contact the undersigned within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice. This notice is being published as part of the documentation process for marriage registration.

Achint Bhagat ☎+880 1730-076080

প্ৰট বিক্রয়


ৰাজউকৰ পূৰ্বাচল উপশহৰে ৩ ও
৫ কাটাৰ প্ৰট বিক্রয় কৰা হ'বে।
সন্মানিত প্ৰট ক্ৰেতাগন কথা কলনঃ
01713-575603

বাড়ী বিক্রয়

লালমাটিয়াতে সোৱা দুই কাটাৰ
তিনতলা বিশিষ্ট একটি আধুনিক
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e-GP Tender Notice (Goods)

PKSF invites e-Tender in the National e-GP System Portal ([http:// www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for the procurement of following goods:

Tender ID No	Description	Tender Publication Date & Time	Tender Closing/ Opening Date & Time
1119205	Supply of Photocopiers under SMART Project of PKSF; Package no-PKSF/SMART/G-09	29-05-2025 & 12:00 PM	30-06-2025 & 12:00 PM
1120739	Supply of Conference System under SMART Project of PKSF; Package no-PKSF/SMART/G-10	29-05-2025 & 12:30 PM	30-06-2025 & 12:00 PM

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Ziauddin Iqbal
Senior General Manager (General Services)



ESSENTIAL DRUGS COMPANY LIMITED
395-397, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208

Press Tender notice

Tender Ref. No.: EDCL (Dhaka)/PUR/PT/Plastic pallets /2025/204 Date: 29/05/2025

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the reputed supplier/ Local Manufacturer/ Organization for supply of following item at EDCL, Dhaka Plant on urgent basis:

Name of the Item	Earnest Money	Cost of Tender schedule	Last date of Closing & opening
Plastic Pallets = 300pcs For Store Department at EDCL, Dhaka plant (Details as per Tender Schedule)	Tk. 2.5% quoted Amount	Tk. 750.00/set Non-refundable	Closing : 18/06/2025 at 12.00 PM Opening : 18/06/2025 at 12.30 PM

Tender schedule will be sold from the Accounts Department of Essential Drugs Company Limited (EDCL), Dhaka on payment as stated above during office hours on all working days (except Friday, Saturday and Govt. Holidays). No tender schedule will be sold on the opening date of the tender.

The Tender will be accompanied by an amount of Earnest Money as mentioned above in the form of Bank Draft/Pay order from any schedule Bank of Bangladesh in favour of " Essential Drugs Company Ltd"without which the tender will be considered as non-responsive.

EDCL authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

(5.5 x 4 col.)

General Manager, (cc)
Procurement Deptt.
For: Managing Director.

SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW

China’s most advanced bombers seen on Paracel islands

REUTERS, Hong Kong

Satellite imagery shows China landed two of its most advanced bombers in the disputed Paracel islands in the South China Sea this month - a gesture that some analysts described as Beijing's latest signalling of its growing military capabilities to rivals.

The deployment marks the first time the long-range H-6 bombers have landed on Woody Island in the Paracels since 2020, and the movement of the now upgraded aircraft comes amid tensions with the Philippines, operations near Taiwan and ahead of the region's biggest defence forum this weekend.

"China's long-range bombers don't need to be on the Paracels so it does appear to be omni-directional signalling by Beijing - against the Philippines and against the US



and other things that are going on," said Collin Koh, a defence scholar at Singapore's S Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

French President Emmanuel Macron is due to open the three-day Shangri-La Dialogue forum in Singapore with a speech today while US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth will outline the Trump administration's approach to the region tomorrow. A British aircraft carrier is expected in the South China Sea on a rare deployment next month, diplomats say.

Satellites captured two H-6 planes flying over the hotly disputed Scarborough Shoal, also in the South China Sea, just ahead of Hegseth's visit to the Philippines in late March, when he reaffirmed the United States' "ironclad commitment" to its treaty ally.

Regional diplomats and analysts say deployments of the jet-powered H-6 are closely scrutinised, given the way its Cold War-era airframe has been modernised to carry anti-ship and land attack cruise missiles, while some of the planes are capable of launching nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles. A potential threat to US bases in the region, H-6 bombers were deployed in wargames around Taiwan in October, and in July flew close to the US mainland for the first time.



A destroyed airplane lies on the tarmac at Sanaa International Airport in Yemen yesterday, following an Israeli military strike. PHOTO: AFP

Musk to exit US govt role after break with Trump

AFP, Washington

Elon Musk on Wednesday announced he was leaving his role in government, intended to reduce federal spending, shortly after his first major break with President Trump over his signature spending bill.

"As my scheduled time as a Special Government Employee comes to an end, I would like to thank President Donald Trump for the opportunity to reduce wasteful spending," he wrote on X.

"The DOGE mission will only strengthen over time as it becomes a way of life throughout the government," he added.

Trump warns Israeli PM off Iran strike

Says he believes US close to reaching a new nuclear deal with Tehran

REUTERS, Washington

US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday he warned Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week not to take actions that could disrupt nuclear talks with Iran.

"I told him this would be inappropriate to do right now because we're very close to a solution now," Trump told reporters gathered in the Oval Office. "That could change at any moment."

Israel earlier rejected a report in the New York Times that Netanyahu has been threatening to disrupt talks on a nuclear deal between the United States and Iran by striking Iran's main nuclear enrichment facilities.

Citing officials briefed on the situation, the newspaper said Israeli officials were concerned that Trump was so eager to reach a deal with Iran that he would allow Tehran to keep its nuclear enrichment facilities, a red line for Israel.

Israel was particularly concerned about the possibility of any interim deal that would allow Iran to maintain its nuclear facilities for months or even years while a final agreement was reached, the paper reported.

US officials were concerned Israel could decide to strike Iran with little warning and said US intelligence estimated that Israel could mount an attack on Iran in as little as seven hours, the paper reported.

US to crack down on Chinese visas

Beijing condemns 'discriminatory' US plan

AFP, Beijing

Beijing yesterday reacted in fury at the US government's vow to revoke Chinese students' visas, condemning President Donald Trump's crackdown on international scholars as "political and discriminatory".

Trump's administration on Wednesday said it would "aggressively" remove permissions for Chinese students, one of the largest sources of revenue for American universities, in his latest broadside against US higher education.

The US will also revise visa criteria to tighten checks on all future applications from China and Hong Kong, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said.

Blasting the US for "unreasonably" cancelling Chinese students' visas, foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said Beijing had lodged its opposition with Washington.

Rubio had upped the ante after China criticised his decision a day earlier to suspend visa appointments for students worldwide at least temporarily.

Russia proposes new Ukraine talks in Istanbul

AFP, Moscow

Russia said Wednesday it wanted new talks with Ukraine in Istanbul next Monday to present its plan for a peace settlement, but Kyiv said it needed to see the proposal in advance for the meeting to yield results.

Diplomatic efforts to end the three-year conflict have accelerated in recent months, but Moscow has repeatedly rejected calls for an unconditional ceasefire and shown no signs of scaling back its maximalist demands.

The two sides previously met in Istanbul on May 16, their first direct talks in over three years. That encounter failed to yield a breakthrough.

Kremlin yesterday said it was waiting for Kyiv's response to the proposed talks in Istanbul. Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has called on Russia and Ukraine not to "shut the door".

Meanwhile, Russian army had captured three more villages in eastern Ukraine, with its troops pressing on.

GM Quader’s house in Rangpur attacked

FROM PAGE 12

around half a kilometer away, around 7:00pm.

In protest of his visit, SAD announced a rally and a sit-in around 7:30pm, branding him as an "Awami League ally".

According to eyewitnesses, around 80 to 90 demonstrators -- allegedly affiliated with SAD -- marched through key streets of Rangpur before converging at Grand Hotel Mor. They then moved towards Quader's residence, after which the attack reportedly took place. The group later proceeded towards Rangpur Press Club.

SM Yasir, general secretary of Rangpur city Jatiya Party, said, "We were at the party office when we heard

that protesters, including members of the NCP and another political group, attacked our chairman's house ... We want to practise peaceful politics, but those who lit this fire in Rangpur today [yesterday] will not be able to extinguish it easily."

Meanwhile, Imtiaz Ahmed, convener of SAD's Rangpur city unit, denied the allegations in a Facebook post.

He wrote they had been peacefully marching to demand action against GM Quader, whom they described as a supporter of fascism, when JP activists attacked them. He added that a scuffle broke out, but they did not attack the residence, reports Prothom Alo.

He was, however, unreachable

Shibir behind the attacks

FROM PAGE 2

15 people were injured in the Chattogram attack.

Annie said the acquittal of Azharul goes against the ideals of the July uprising and urged students and the public to raise their voices against "terrorism".

She also claimed that Wednesday's attack was pre-planned.

"The attackers tore and burned our banners, and verbally and physically assaulted female activists," she said.

Among the injured were Ripa Majumder, president of the Chattogram city unit of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front; Shrikant Biswas, general secretary of the Chattogram district unit of Gonotantrik Chhatra Jote; and Sudipta Guha, its finance secretary.

Annie alleged that Abrar Hossain Riyad, publication secretary of Shibir, and Akash Chowdhury, a Jamaat leader, were among the attackers.

Police have arrested two individuals in connection with the incident.

However, Ripa alleged that none of those seen attacking women in widely circulated photos and videos have been arrested.

Kotwali Police Station Officer-in-Charge Abdul Karim said a case has been filed, and the investigation and arrest drives are ongoing.

Meanwhile, Shibir, in a written statement yesterday, denied involvement in the attack.

Its Chattogram city (north) unit President Tanjir Hossain Jewel

Another 22 pushed in by BSF

FROM PAGE 2

following legal formalities.

Bahadur Islam, one of the returnees, told The Daily Star, "People from border areas often cross into India illegally due to a lack of local employment opportunities. I had been working at a brick kiln in Delhi for the past 15 years."

In Dinajpur, BGB detained 13 individuals -- 11 women and two men -- after they were pushed in through the Enayetpur border.

They were picked up from Karuliapara village, near the border, said Lt Col Abdullah Al Moin Hasan, commanding officer of BGB-42 Battalion of Dinajpur.

"Primary interrogation suggests they had been arrested by Indian police from different locations over the past month. We're verifying their identities, and necessary legal steps will follow," he told The Daily Star.

With this, at least 1,106 people have been pushed into Bangladesh from India through border points in 17 districts and the Sundarbans's Mandarbaria area since May 7, according to a statement from BGB headquarters.

(Our Correspondents from Lalmonirhat and Thakurgaon contributed to the report)

when journalists tried to contact him later for further comments.

Following the incident, Mustafizur and several JP leaders, including SM Yasir, staged a sit-in in front of the house.

Around 9:45pm, both police and army personnel arrived at the scene.

Rangpur Metropolitan Police Commissioner Majid Ali said law enforcers were trying to restrain both sides.

Ataur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Rangpur Kotwali Police Station, said, "We have deployed police to control the situation. The situation is currently under control."

As of filing this report, no arrests had been made in connection with the incident, he added.

and General Secretary Mominul Haque said they learned about the clash through the media and eyewitnesses.

"Several people from both sides, including a female activist, were injured. Such clashes are unacceptable in post-uprising Bangladesh. We strongly condemn the incident," they said in the statement.

About videos that went viral on social media showing a man kicking and assaulting a female protester, they said: "The person seen attacking a woman was previously associated with Chhatra Shibir ... Currently, he holds no position in our organisation. Therefore, blaming Chhatra Shibir for the actions of an individual is unjustified."

Over 10,000 killed in two years in north, central Nigeria: Amnesty

AFP, Lagos

The number of people killed in violence committed by jihadist groups and criminal gangs topped over 10,000 in two years in central and northern Nigeria, Amnesty International said yesterday.

In a report, the global rights group blamed the government of President Bola Tinubu for failure to protect people in swathes of the country hit by raids by jihadists, and criminal gangs known as "bandits" who attack villages, killing and kidnapping residents.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH				
Power Division				
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
Invitation for Tender (OTM)				
1	Ministry/Division	Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources		
2	Procuring Entity Name	Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources		
3	Procuring Entity Code	Not used at present		
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh		
5	Invitation for	Stationery goods, Desktop Computers, printer, Scanner, DLSR Camera, Printer Toner & Zoom Apps.		
6	Invitation Ref No	27.00.0000.043.07.028.24.264		
7	Date	29.05.2025		
KEY INFORMATION				
8	Procurement Method	OTM		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
9	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue/GOB		
10	Development Partners (if applicable)	Not Applicable		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
11	Tender Package No.	03 (2024-2025)		
12	Tender Package Name	Procurement of Stationery Desktop Computers printer, Scanner, DLSR Camera, Printer Toner & Zoom Apps.		
13	Tender Publication Date	30.05.2025		
14	Tender Last Selling Date	17.06.2025 Time: 4.00 PM		
15	Tender Dropping Date and Time	18.06.2025	Time: 3.00 PM	
16	Tender Opening Date and Time	18.06.2025	Time: 3.30 PM	
Name & Address of the office(s)				
Power Division, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
Selling Tender Document (Principal)				
Senior Assistant Secretary (Admin-3), Power Division, Room # 212, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
Selling Tender Document (Others)				
Accounts officer, Power Division, Secretariat Link Road, Biddut Vabon (level-10), Dhaka.				
Receiving Tender Document				
Senior Assistant Secretary (Admin-3) Power Division, Room # 212, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka				
Opening Tender Document				
Deputy Secretary (Dev-1), Power Division, Room # 208, Building # 6, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.				
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
18	Eligibility of Tender	The tenderer should be well experienced with (1) Trade License (2) Income Tax Certificate (IT) (3) Vat Registration Certificate (3) Bank Solvency Certificate (4) Minimum 3 (Three) successful completion Certificate within last 3 (Three) years etc.		
19	Brief Description of Goods	Lot-1 (Stationery goods), Lot-2 (Desktop Computers, printer, Scanner, DLSR Camera) Lot-3 (Printer toner) Lot-4 (Zoom Apps).		
20	Brief Description of Related Services	Not Applicable		
21	Price of Tender Document (Tk.)	Lot (1, 2, 3 & 4) Tk. 1,000/- (Per Lot)		
Lot No				
Identification of Lot				
Location				
Tender Security Amount (Tk.)				
Complementary equipment's				
22	Lot-1 (Stationery goods), (Desktop Computers, printer, Scanner, DLSR Camera) Lot-2 Lot-3 (Printer toner) Lot-4 (Zoom Apps).	Power Division Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.	Lot-01 for Tk. 30,000/- Lot-02 for Tk.12,000/- Lot-03 for Tk. 30,000/- Lot-04 for Tk. 6,000/-	Ready stock or purchase/supply from main dealer/reputed company of Bangladesh within 30 days from the date of issue work order. The Tenderer Must submit sole distributor certificate /distributor authorization letter along with tender document.
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Designation of Official Inviting Tender				
Senior Assistant Secretary (Admin-3)				
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Contact details of Official Inviting Tender				
Tel. 02223390024				
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GD-1319

(Md. Mamun Bhuyan)
Senior Assistant Secretary
Ph: 02223390024

India’s impunity at the border must end

Continued push-ins testing the limits of bilateral relations

We are quite concerned—and frankly, shocked—by the continued push-in operations being carried out by the BSF and other Indian agencies, despite repeated protests from Bangladesh. The persistence of these incidents, even after formal objections raised through flag meetings and diplomatic channels, reflects a blatant disregard for international norms and bilateral agreements. Equally disturbing is India’s denial of these actions, which not only points to an attempt to distort the truth, but also a possible strategy to maintain plausible deniability while continuing such operations under the cover of darkness.

Since May 7, at least 1,053 individuals have been pushed into Bangladesh through different border points, according to a report citing the BGB headquarters. Among them were Selina Begum and her three young daughters, who were allegedly thrown into the Feni River along the Tripura border while being tied with empty plastic bottles to keep them afloat. They floated helplessly all night before being rescued by locals in Khagrachhari’s Ramgarh area on May 22. The mother and also the father, who was also rescued, were working as labourers in India’s Haryana state. But then they were detained by Indian agencies, allegedly robbed of valuables, and pushed in.

Over the last few weeks, there have been multiple accounts of the victims of such push-ins from India. Although the expulsions seemed to primarily target “illegal migrants,” there have been notable exceptions, including Rohingya refugees registered with the UNHCR in India. Most of the victims are Bangla-speaking Muslims, some allegedly with valid Aadhaar cards, voter IDs, and decades-long residence records. In some cases, entire families were apparently picked up in random raids, herded into detention centres, and dispatched to border areas. While talking to *The Daily Star*, the BGB director general confirmed that many of those pushed in are Bangladeshi nationals who lived in India for years. Some of their children were born in India and held Indian documents, he said. Many victims, he added, also reported inhumane treatment including physical abuse and forced starvation prior to being dumped at the border.

These harrowing accounts highlight the utter absurdity and hollowness of India’s actions. At this stage, we cannot help but wonder if India, as the bigger neighbour, feels it can act with complete impunity simply because it expects Bangladesh to remain silent or submissive. Whatever its strategy or expectation may be, it is clearly violating human rights and breaching due process and established diplomatic protocols—a combination that would be seen as a red flag for any bilateral relations.

We urge the Indian authorities to stop these unilateral push-ins immediately. If they refuse to halt these actions and engage in a transparent, acceptable repatriation process, the interim government should seriously consider involving the international community, including the UN and regional multilateral platforms, to draw attention to these morally reprehensible actions. For us, this is not just a border or humanitarian issue; it is also a test of Bangladesh’s sovereignty and dignity. So, we must act accordingly.

Save Sonadia Island’s mangrove forests

Govt must take stern action against the grabbers

We are concerned about the relentless forest grabbing in Sonadia Island. During the AL regime, individuals connected to the government razed vast acres of forest on the island, and alarmingly, the destruction has continued even after the regime’s fall. Since August 5, over 1,000 acres of protected mangrove forest have been reportedly cleared for shrimp and crab farming. This came to light after grabbers recently set fire to piles of felled trees to destroy evidence of their activities.

Over the years, Sonadia’s encroachers have cleared more than 3,000 acres of mangrove forest to establish shrimp enclosures. With the latest 1,000 acres encroached, the total now stands at 4,000. We wonder why the concerned authorities are unable to stop these illegal activities. In October last year, the High Court ordered relevant officials to remove illegal shrimp projects, take legal action against those destroying the mangroves, and submit a compliance report within 90 days. On November 28, the Supreme Court upheld this order, directing the government to stop mangrove destruction immediately. Yet forest grabbing, along with shrimp and crab farming, continues in this ecologically critical area. This is deeply unfortunate.

While the relevant officials have sometimes taken actions, those have been mostly ineffective. For instance, last July, the Department of Environment (DoE) filed a case against 26 individuals, mostly linked to the AL, for seizing 128 acres of forest land, temporarily halting their action. But they soon resumed it in the absence of administrative follow-ups and legal consequences. Again, on May 18 this year, the DoE filed a case against 20 individuals, including a local BNP leader this time. This shows how the encroachment business has continued to enjoy political support regardless of the political transition, for which BNP and other parties must also answer.

We urge the authorities to make lawsuits against forest grabbers effective by ensuring swift case disposal and strict punishment. While the Sonadia administration has reportedly conducted some drives to stop the grabbers, these were insufficient. Such efforts must be increased. Moreover, the DoE must assess the actual scale of forest loss as the figures mentioned in official cases reportedly fall far short of reality. While the interim government’s cancellation of land allocated to the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) for establishing an eco tourism park on the island is reassuring, it must now take comprehensive actions to stop the culture of forest grabbing.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Joan of Arc burnt at the stake

On this day in 1431, having led the French Army in a momentous victory over England at Orléans during the Hundred Years’ War, Joan of Arc was charged with heresy and witchcraft, and was burnt at the stake.

As a nation, we are not focused on education

The reality is the world is leaving us behind

THE THIRD VIEW

Mahfuz Anam
is the editor and publisher at The Daily Star.



MAHFUZ ANAM

On May 22, this daily reported that National University Vice-Chancellor Prof ASM Amanullah had been attacked by a group of students demanding automatic pass in their degree (pass) examination held in 2022—three years ago. The NU had already permitted grace marks to this batch of students, whose studies had been affected by the COVID pandemic and political unrests in the country. Still, they could not procure the pass mark, so poor were their results. The students had also been given the opportunity to apply for the re-evaluation of their answer sheets. Despite these measures, according to an NU press release, a group of students decided to attack the VC so that he would concede to their demand out of fear. As of this writing, we did not hear of any stern action by the authorities against these students. Immediately following the July-August uprising, we saw a similar demand of “auto pass” by students in the vicinity of the secretariat.

On May 16, we reported about the operational stalemate due to protests by students, and in one case by teachers, at four public universities, namely Dhaka University, Jagannath University, Khulna University of Engineering and Technology, and Barishal University. Disruptions in these universities brought classes, tutorials, and examinations to a halt, jeopardising the future of nearly 70,000 students. In these universities, almost all of the top echelons of administration were removed after the uprising last year.

According to our earlier reports, VCs of 47 public universities who had been appointed during the reign of Sheikh Hasina either resigned or were forced to resign after the changeover of August 5. This included VCs of all our prestigious institutions, i.e. Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Rajshahi University, Chittagong University, and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology. Their successors were appointed from the other political spectrum. At least 30 VCs out of the 47 have links with pro-BNP or pro-Jamaat teachers’ bodies. So what we saw was a change of guards and not of the practice.

Why did the VCs of 47 public universities have to run away like our politicians? Were they so devoid of academic credentials and so intellectually bankrupt that they had no legitimacy of being appointed as heads of our highest seats of learning—other than sycophancy? The harsh truth is that most of the VC appointments

at public universities—if not all—stemmed from political consideration, rather than academic. Sheikh Hasina politicised almost all institutions, but perhaps among the most damaging were the universities, especially the posts of VC. Once teachers saw that writing academic papers, doing original research, upholding academic standards, and creating an open academic environment where creative minds could flourish, did not pave the way for career success, things started to change. They saw clear and everyday evidence that toeing the political line was the surest way to getting foreign scholarships, higher positions, and, sadly, vice-chancellorships. It is then that our universities started crumbling. As the competition to seek favour got tougher—because sloganeering was always far easier than academic rigour—teachers started aligning themselves with student politics, whose support, in the last days of the Hasina regime, they needed to

Why did the VCs of 47 public universities have to run away like our politicians? Were they so devoid of academic credentials and so intellectually bankrupt that they had no legitimacy of being appointed as heads of our highest seats of learning—other than sycophancy?

get elected to the Dhaka University Teachers’ Association—which was a stepping stone for the VC post. This led to a deep moral bankruptcy. However, there were exceptions, too; we saw many teachers hold their head high, defy power, jeopardise their career, and uphold academic dignity.

One can easily imagine the quality of the administration of VCs who came to occupy their chairs as a part of political rewards. This got reflected in recruitment, appointments, promotions, office holdings, and foreign travels. Research grants, which were always meagre, got awarded on the same lines. Thus, university teachers—again, not all of them—became a part of the culture of partisan politics that engulfed each and every institution in the country. The corruption of the academic world that followed dragged

the quality of each of our famous universities to the bottom, which was epitomised by former DU VC Prof Md Akhtaruzzaman (2017-2023), whose famous comment that DU was the only university where “you could buy a chop and somucha only for Tk 10.” It said it all about his notion of the academic standard of a university.

We have focused only on the situation of our universities,

see, they must return to their studies.

When we talk about the success of countries like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and most recently Vietnam and China, we mostly focus on their economic success. Never, if ever, do we talk about the contribution of their education systems that provided the crucial backbone to their economic strength. All these countries have spent a huge part of their resources



The photo shows students of Barishal University staging a protest demanding the removal of their VC earlier this month. Four public universities including Barishal University recently saw an academic stalemate due to protests, some of which ran for several weeks.

FILE PHOTO: TITU DAS

controlling which should have been easy as student leadership is part of this government. The situation of other institutions is the same, if not worse. Here is a story from a well-regarded girls’ school. Two girls were caught using their smartphones to copy answers from. When a teacher took away the phones and cancelled their answer sheets, a few of the students got together and started agitating and the school authorities decided to overlook the matter. It is the same in many institutions. Teachers come to class, utter the bare minimum, and leave immediately. The customary chatter and personal conversations between teachers and students have all but disappeared for fear as to who will interpret what and then upload on social media, taken mostly out of context.

It is now nearly 10 months since students left their classes and took to the streets to remove a dictatorial government. That government has been replaced, but the students have not fully returned to their classes. Has anybody asked them to? No adviser, no political leader, and no student leader have told the students that what they have achieved is incomparable and the whole nation is grateful to them, but their future and that of the nation are tied to knowledge and our ability to use them in every aspect of our nation-building through innovation, enterprise, and energy. Where is that message? The chief adviser urged them to return to their classes back in September. For the changes we want to

in preparing their youth to face the future and succeed. In the latest and most advanced field of artificial intelligence, the world got surprised by a young Chinese scholar inventing the DeepSeek and upstaging the US. Did it happen by chance? Will it ever happen here? Of course it can. But for that, we have to set our priorities and invest in them. It may sound like a fairytale that in the late 60s, South Korean business teams would visit East Pakistan to learn about textile and steel industries, especially from the Kobe steel complex that the Japanese had set up in Chattogram at that time.

After 54 years of independence, where does our education stand today? We have had several education commissions, several revisions of our curricula, and spent billions, yet we have miserably failed to give the nation an education system that will prepare us for the future. Presently, we have had so many reform commissions, but none on education, reflecting our own sense of priority. In the 21st century world, there is no future without education—not of the old variety, but one that will lead us to the world of AI, quantum computers, blending of technology and all the sciences. A whole new world awaits us. Will we be a part of it or remain an onlooker?

The changes can come not from rhetorics, but from real, concrete, and well-thought-out actions. We remain enamoured with slogans and confined to self-serving narratives. This will not open us up to the possibilities of the new world.

Food safety in public hospitals is a basic right, not luxury

Sabrina Pervin Shanta
is an LL.M student at North South University.



SABRINA PERVIN SHANTA

Food safety in public hospitals is not merely an operational issue but a legal right for patients. It goes without saying that hospital-prepared food should be tailored to a patient’s medical condition. Furthermore, the hygiene, safety, and nutritional value of the food must be ensured. Reports from hospital food vendors, unfortunately, point to unhygienic food preparation and vending environments, with a lack of adequate food safety measures. There is also insufficient data on hygienic food practices, availability of food safety facilities, and perspectives of hospital food vendors. This creates a knowledge gap that can be quite impactful.

In a country where more than 654 public hospitals serve millions of people—particularly low-income patients—access to safe, nutritious, and medically appropriate food is a crucial issue. Most patients seek care at public hospitals due to their affordability,

especially for those without insurance or the means to access private care. These hospitals are often the only available option in underserved or rural areas. Despite this, patients’ rights to proper treatment are being violated through unhygienic and poor-quality food.

Earlier, the food budget per patient was Tk 125, which increased to Tk 175 after the COVID pandemic. For patients in the intensive care unit (ICU) and high dependency unit (HDU) at the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, the allocation is Tk 300 per patient. Despite these increases, complaints about food quality persist. Common issues include coarse, foul-smelling rice; watery lentils; and flavourless curries. There is no system to customise meals based on caloric needs, age, weight, or medical condition. Dietitians are often only nominally involved, with little influence on meal planning or

monitoring. Oversight of food quality and nutritional care remains weak. This state of affairs can have severe consequences for patients.

The Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA), established under the Food Safety Act, 2013, is responsible for regulating food safety, including in public hospitals. The BFSA oversees various aspects of the food supply chain, including import, production, storage, and distribution. However, enforcement in public healthcare settings has been weak and inconsistent. This gap between policy and practice further endangers patient health.

Over the years, there has been a surge in the number of public hospitals and health facilities. However, a substantial portion of the population still faces significant barriers to healthcare access. Over 60 percent of people lack access to basic healthcare, and fewer than 40 percent receive essential medical care. These figures highlight broader structural problems including underuse of government hospitals, cost-effectiveness concerns, and sustainability challenges. They also reflect the urgent need to improve the quality of care—starting with something as fundamental as safe food.

To identify gaps in hospital nutrition care, we should consider

issues such as a lack of proper staff training, inconsistent implementation of guidelines, poor teamwork, failure to focus on individual patient needs, limited screening for malnutrition, and challenges related to technology. Additionally, we must evaluate food quality, follow up on patient outcomes, assess resource limitations, and measure how well nutrition is integrated into overall care. Evidence-based research is essential to addressing these gaps effectively.

But first, we must acknowledge that food safety is a basic patient right—not a luxury—and that poor hygiene, low food quality, and weak enforcement of food safety laws in public hospitals are endangering patients. Simply increasing food budgets is not enough without proper management, monitoring, and trained personnel.

To resolve this problem, the government should strictly enforce the Food Safety Act of 2013, hire trained dietitians, ensure regular hygiene training for food handlers, and customise meals according to patient needs. Collecting data from hospitals and vendors is also crucial to closing existing knowledge gaps. Safe food in hospitals can lead to better recovery outcomes, reinforce patient dignity, and strengthen the healthcare system overall.

The interim government’s silence over misogyny is tragic



NO STRINGS ATTACHED
Aasha Mehreen Amin
is joint editor at The Daily Star.

AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

To say we are like Alice hurtling down the rabbit hole with no clue where we are headed would be a euphemism. We are actually in freefall into an abyss with quiet acquiescence, taking the hits with silent resignation. There is chaos and dissent in every corner and no one seems to have a grip on anything.

What has been most crushing and baffling is the silence of the interim government regarding the blatant misogyny publicly displayed—in rallies, mob violence, and online propaganda. Certain sections have decided that the current sense of freedom granted to them due to political expediency or fear—or both—has given them the licence to vent all their venom on women who dare to even speak of their rights as equal citizens.

It’s not like we didn’t know about these groups. Over the past decade or so, we have seen how emboldened these groups have

become, how they have multiplied, and how easily they spew hatred against women and use religion to justify their hatred. Now, under the guise of freedom of expression and emboldened by a tacit indulgence from the government, they are amplifying the voices of hate and drowning out the voices of reason.

This is tragic considering the mandate with which this government came to power: to lead the country to democracy and freedom. The enthusiasm with which the chief adviser accepted the final report of the Women’s Affairs Reform Commission was unquestionable. One could not mistake the obvious delight on the faces in that photo-op with the commission members that included prominent rights activists. The chief adviser even instructed all relevant ministries and divisions to act swiftly on the commission’s recommendations aimed at ending gender

discrimination. He said, “This is not merely a women’s issue; it is a matter of national significance. The report will be printed, widely distributed, and published in book form, like a textbook, to ensure accessibility.” All this pointed to real change, and nothing could have been more refreshing.

So, when the commission was viciously reviled at a rally called by Hefazat-e-Islam, which demanded its total demolition because

commission and its recommendations to be scrapped. This wholesale dismissal of the work of a commission, which has painstakingly chalked out possible ways to remove various kinds of discrimination that impedes women’s fundamental rights, demonstrates a political agenda: to create a narrative that religion is being attacked. Apart from the fact that one of the most contentious recommendations, which was to do with

unwarranted and created an unsafe, hostile environment for women.

The silence continued when Nadira Yeasmin, assistant professor of Bangla at Narsingdi Government College, was made officer on special duty (OSD) because she had advocated equal inheritance rights for men and women through an online magazine she edits and publishes. Groups including Hefazat demonstrated on the college campus demanding her dismissal, claiming that her views contradict Islamic inheritance laws. And shockingly, she was made OSD and transferred to Satkhira.

So why didn’t the interim government, or more importantly its chief, who has always stood up for women’s rights, intervene and stop this injustice? How much influence do these groups have that they get the administration to professionally punish a teacher merely for her expressing an opinion?

If this is freedom of expression, we would like to know why this freedom is the privilege of only those who hide their hate in religious rhetoric. It seems if you can invoke religion, you can say the vilest, most undemocratic words in human language. But that is not all. It looks like groups that have politicised religion have the power to trash a women’s affairs reform commission, transfer teachers, change vice-chancellors, and even change the history of this nation.

Our constitution, the one born out of a bloody, hard-won independence, states explicitly in Article 28 (2), “Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State and of public life.” If it is democracy that this interim government is working towards, they must ardently uphold this principle and loudly object when it is being violated. It is the least we can expect from a leader as progressive as Prof Yunus.



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRVAR

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Budget must reflect a rights-based approach to disability



Albert Mollah
is Ashoka fellow and co-founder and executive director at Access Bangladesh Foundation.

ALBERT MOLLAH

The national budget is expected to reflect a country’s vision for inclusive development. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Bangladesh, as here the budget allocation for persons with disabilities continues to be insufficient for ensuring their rights, inclusion, and equal opportunities. One of the most pressing challenges in this regard remains the lack of accurate and comprehensive data on persons with disabilities in the country, which significantly hampers appropriate planning and budgetary allocation. According to the World Health Organization’s 2022 report, about 16 percent of the world’s population (130 crore) live with some form of disability. However, data within Bangladesh varies widely. The 2022 Population and Housing Census reports the number of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh to be 23.6 lakh, which is only 1.43 percent of the population. Meanwhile, an ongoing disability detection survey by the Department of Social Services under the Ministry of Social Welfare, which started in 2013, identified over 36 lakh persons with disabilities as of May 24, 2025. The Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2022 suggests that the figure is 5.71 percent of the population, while the National Survey of Persons with Disabilities 2021 puts it at 2.8 percent. This inconsistency in data not only raises questions about the reliability of national statistics, but also leaves millions of persons with disabilities invisible in

development planning.

In the FY2024-25 budget, Tk 3,812.13 crore was allocated for disability-related programmes. This represents just 2.8 percent of the total social safety net budget and a mere 0.48 percent of the national budget, an amount grossly inadequate when considering the needs and rights of lakhs of persons with disabilities. Although the number of recipients under the disability allowance programme has increased, the monthly allowance of Tk 850 remains unchanged in the current fiscal year, despite rising costs of living and inflation. Similarly, the number of stipends available to students with disabilities has not increased over the past five years, stagnating at just 100,000 beneficiaries.

Another major concern is the lack of effective participation of persons with disabilities in the national budget formulation process. Their voices and experiences are not reflected in planning, and allocations are mostly concentrated within the social welfare ministry. Of the 140 social safety net programmes, only eight are targeted at persons with disabilities, seven of which fall under the social welfare ministry and just one under the education ministry. To ensure inclusive development, disability inclusion must be mainstreamed across all ministries.

The national budget fails to address the implementation needs of existing laws and

policies, including the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013 and the Neuro-Developmental Disability Protection Trust Act, 2013. As a result, persons with disabilities remain excluded from basic services such as education, healthcare, employment, training, and transportation primarily due to barriers, discrimination, and lack of awareness.

To address these gaps, several actions can

be introduced, recognising that caregivers often cannot engage in income-generating activities.

The government should also initiate targeted projects to promote entrepreneurs with disabilities. Budget allocations should support skills development and job placement. The private sector should be incentivised to employ persons with disabilities through various benefits and tax rebates.

Supportive devices tailored to the specific needs of persons with disabilities such as wheelchairs, tricycles, specialised scooters, walkers, white canes, hearing aids, portable ramps, magnifying glasses, prosthetic-orthotic, speech-to-text and text-to-speech screen reading software, Braille printer, keyboard, head pointer and joystick should be duty-free or have minimal import duty. It is necessary to allocate adequate budget to provide these products free of cost or at subsidised rate to poor individuals with disabilities. Additionally, all VAT and tax on the interest from savings instruments, including fixed deposits and deposit pension schemes held by persons with disabilities, should be withdrawn to support their financial security.

In the education sector, all students with disabilities should be brought under the stipend programme. Technical education institutions should receive special allocations to support learners with disabilities. Inclusive education requires accessible infrastructure, reasonable accommodation and learning materials, such as Braille books, accessible e-books, and sign language services. Teacher training curricula must address the needs of learners with disabilities, and funds should be allocated to adapt teaching and assessment methods to diverse learning needs.

We need special projects in the budget to ensure the higher education needs of persons with disabilities. Besides, there are currently few accredited sign language

interpreters in the country. The government should take the initiative in the next budget to prepare at least 100 skilled interpreters across the country.

To foster inclusive public infrastructure, the budget must support the import and manufacturing of ramp-equipped public transport, accessible shelters, and barrier-free infrastructure at railway stations, bus terminals, and government offices. All digital government services, including union digital centres and ministry websites, must be made fully accessible.

Healthcare is another crucial area where persons with disabilities face systemic exclusion. Accessible and specialised health services must be ensured through targeted budgetary allocations.

To encourage education, employment, and the prevention of violence against persons with disabilities, funding support should be given to organisations of persons with disabilities to carry out community-based campaigns and programmes.

There must be ministry-wise budget allocation for the inclusive development of persons with disabilities. Beyond the traditional reliance on the social welfare ministry, ministries such as education, health, youth and sports, labour and employment, women and children affairs, local government, rural development, housing and public works, food, disaster management and relief, all must play a role in ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities.

Despite some incremental progress, the national budget still treats disability from a welfare perspective, rather than as a rights-based development agenda. To uphold the dignity, rights, and potential of persons with disabilities, bold and inclusive financial planning is essential. It is time for the government to prioritise disability inclusion as a core component of national development.



SOURCE: ACCESS BANGLADESH FOUNDATION

For persons with severe disabilities who require full-time caregivers, a caregiver allowance programme should be introduced.

be taken. The allowance for persons with disabilities should be increased to reflect actual living costs. For persons with severe disabilities who require full-time caregivers, a caregiver allowance programme should

CROSSWORD
BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Highway divider

7 Frosh’s elder

11 Right now

12 Skilled

13 Gently jabbed

14 Bike part

15 Periphery

16 Bulldog

17 Course needs

18 Bow treatments

19 Captured

21 Crafty

22 Swell

25 Upper limit

26 Watch reading

27 Be attentive

29 Bit of rind

32 Diner patron

34 Singer Frankie

35 Shepard in space

36 Plane’s place

37 Bakery buy

38 Deep-seated

39 Plops down

DOWN

40 Gazed

1 “Olympia” painter

2 Piano piece

3 Avoid

4 Takes in

5 Good pair

6 Homer’s neighbour

7 Long tales

8 Cleopatra’s Needle, e.g.

9 Without doubt

10 Galileo’s crime

16 Abner’s surname

18 “The Kiss” sculptor

20 Mink’s cousin

22 Fronton sport

23 Parvenu

24 “Joueurs de Cartes” painter

25 Traction aids

28 Circus sights

30 “Enigma Variations” composer

31 List of candidates

32 Worn out

34 Wind pointer

36 Not square

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11 12

13 14

15 16

17 18 19 20 21

22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32

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6-17

YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS

S	P	I	N	S		S	W	I	S	S
P	I	N	O	T		T	E	N	T	H
I	N	T	R	O		A	S	T	R	O
R	A	H		P	S	I		H	O	W
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S	C	O	W		T	H	O	N	G	S
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A	N	T		A	S	P		T	O	T
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E	D	U	C	E		S	E	R	G	E
D	A	N	E	S		T	I	M	E	R

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO
dsopinion@gmail.com.

Hrithik Roshan teams with ‘KGF’ producer for Pan-India project

Hrithik Roshan has teamed up with Hombale Films, the production house behind hits like *KGF*, *Kantara*, and *Salaar*, for a major pan-India project. While details about the film remain under wraps, both parties have confirmed the collaboration, promising a cinematic experience that blends scale, imagination, and intensity.

Hombale Films founder Vijay Kiragandur expressed excitement over working with Hrithik Roshan, calling it a step toward telling boundary-breaking stories. Hrithik, too, shared his enthusiasm, stating that they are “dreaming big” for audiences nationwide.

The project adds to the actor's packed slate, including *War 2* and *Krrish 4*. For Hombale, the partnership marks continued expansion into mainstream Bollywood and pan-Indian storytelling.



Gems of Nazrul to honour national poet’s legacy with musical tribute

Gems of Nazrul, a cultural initiative led by Nazrul Sangeet exponent and Nazrul Award recipient Sadya Afreen Mallick, will host a commemorative event titled *Ontorey Tumi Acho Chirodin* to mark the 126th birth anniversary of Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Since its inception in 2016, the platform has been dedicated to preserving and promoting the musical and philosophical legacy of Bangladesh’s national poet. To date, it has produced over 35 artistic music videos, presenting Nazrul's extensive repertoire of more than 3,500 songs—including 17 original ragas—through national television broadcasts and online platforms.



Gems of Nazrul's productions often coincide with major national observances, aiming to engage younger generations with Nazrul's revolutionary, romantic, and devotional compositions.

The upcoming event, organised in collaboration with The Daily Star, will be held on May 31 at 6pm and will feature select performances celebrating the enduring relevance of Nazrul's work.

A win for ‘Mastul’ in Russia



Bangladeshi film *Mastul* has won the Best Artistic Contribution Award at the 18th Cheboksary International Film Festival in Russia, following its earlier Special Mention (Jury) at the Moscow International Film Festival.

Directed by Mohammad Nuruzzaman, the film was part of the main competition segment and is centred around the lives of sailors. Though both the director and lead actor Aminur Rahman Mukul were set to attend, they had to cancel their plans at the last minute.

The film stars Fazlur Rahman Babu, Deepak Suman, and others, with Tong Ghor Talkies handling distribution. *Mastul* has also been nominated in the Best Humanitarian Film category at Spain's upcoming ImagineIndia International Film Festival, and a local screening is being planned ahead of its international showing.

LINKIN PARK breaks record with latest chart-topping single

Linkin Park has made chart history with their latest single, *Up From the Bottom*, from the upcoming deluxe edition of *From Zero*. The track has climbed to No 1 on Billboard's Alternative Airplay chart, surpassing Jonah Kagen's *God Needs the Devil*.

This marks the band's 14th No 1 on the chart, breaking their tie with Cage the Elephant and Green Day. Only Red Hot Chili Peppers have more No 1s, leading by one.

The song reached the top in just eight weeks and adds to a strong run that includes *The Emptiness Machine* and *Heavy Is the Crown*. With 22 top 10 entries, Linkin Park continues to dominate, building on iconic hits like *What I've Done* and *Numb*.



WHAT’S THE HAPS?

‘Shekor Utsab’

Shekor, a folk festival celebrating Bangladesh's rich cultural heritage with the traditional beats of the *dhak*, leading into a cockfighting demonstration. Attendees will experience *Puthi Path* (traditional storytelling), live folk music, and conclude the evening with a performance of *Palagaan* (folk theatre).

Date: Today | May 30, 2025

Time: 3-9:30pm

Venue: TSC Swimming Pool



Jaya Ahsan raises concern over filming in wildlife habitats



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Following a wild elephant attack on the set of *Shapla Shaluk* in Sherpur's forested border area, actress Jaya Ahsan has voiced concern over shooting in ecologically sensitive zones.

Sharing the news on Facebook, she questioned the Forest Department's oversight, writing, “Can one just start ‘lights, camera, action’ whenever they please?” Highlighting the disruption caused by loud noises, waste,

and music in protected areas, she stressed that such activities could be harmful to wildlife.

Her post has sparked online debate, with netizens criticising the film crew for invading the animals' natural habitat. The incident has reignited discussions on ethical filming practices in environmentally vulnerable locations.

NEWS

They took my money

FROM PAGE 12

When one travels abroad from Dhaka airport, they have to go to the immigration desk where officials review travel history and documents. A no-objection certificate is required to get clearance.

But the deportees said they did not have to present such documents to obtain immigration clearance in Dhaka.

Asked about this, Enamul Haque Sagor, assistant inspector general at the Police Headquarters, said, “We only let people go when they have all required documents, including return tickets. No one gets through without proper checks.”

CARTEL IN MALAYSIA

According to Malaysian news portal New Straits Times, the Malaysian Border Control and Protection Agency (MCBA) found that the 40 Bangladeshis loitered in specific areas of the airport to avoid detection.

The syndicates would then guide them through a “safe route” past immigration, a tactic known as “counter-setting”.

The migrants violated the terms by overstaying in the airport. Some stayed up to two days, pretending to be tourists and lingering near seating areas, charging stations, and toilets,

read the report, citing the MCBA.

Investigators found many had return tickets, but had deliberately cancelled them.

MCBA Commander Ibrahim Mohd Yusof said, “These attempts to bring in foreigners without legal entry clearance continue. Syndicates exploit loopholes and even collude with corrupt officers.

“They gather in specific locations to avoid inspection and wait for agents to facilitate their illegal entry. Some come under the pretext of training, sports events, or tourist packages arranged by third parties.”

From January to April this year, 8,796 individuals were denied entry at Kuala Lumpur airport — with Bangladeshis topping the list at 3,673, according to the news report.

A source said migrants from Bangladesh were often received by a man named Altaf Khan of Alia Overseas, who allegedly bribed Malaysian immigration officers to free detained workers. Altaf was arrested last year in Malaysia on human trafficking charges.

A senior leader of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies, requesting anonymity, said, “Illegal migration is tarnishing Bangladesh's image in

Malaysia and beyond, jeopardising future access to labour markets.”

BAIRA Secretary General Ali Haider Chowdhury said, “Migrant workers will find a way to go abroad, legal or not. If the government doesn't open legal channels, illegal migration will persist. Strict action must be taken against those sending workers on tourist visas.”

LABOUR MARKET

On May 14, a Bangladesh delegation led by Asif Nazrul, adviser to the expatriates welfare ministry, met with Malaysia's home and human resources ministers in Putrajaya.

The delegation included Senior Secretary Neamat Ullah Bhuiyan, Deputy Secretary Sarwoer Alam, and Lutfe Siddiqi, special envoy of the chief adviser on international affairs.

In a Facebook video following the meeting, Prof Asif said Malaysia had plans to hire over 1 lakh foreign workers and that he urged Malaysian Human Resources Minister V Sivakumar to prioritise Bangladeshis.

According to data from Malaysia authorities, around 9 lakh Bangladeshis currently work in Malaysia, including nearly five lakh recruited through 101 agencies approved since late 2022.

China launches

FROM PAGE 12

into its space programme in recent years in an effort to achieve what President Xi Jinping describes as the country's “space dream”.

A Long March 3B rocket carrying the Tianwen-2 probe was sent into a transfer orbit from Earth to the asteroid 2016HO3, the China National Space Administration (CNSA) said, according to Xinhua.

“The spacecraft unfolded its solar panels smoothly, and the CNSA declared the launch a success,” the news agency wrote.

Despite the mission's long duration and significant risks, Shan “expressed his expectation of yielding groundbreaking discoveries and expanding humanity's knowledge of the cosmos,” according to Xinhua.

No service at national eye hospital

FROM PAGE 12

arrived and brought the situation under control. But the hospital staffers, including doctors and nurses, began a work stoppage citing security concerns.

All services remain halted as per instructions from higher authorities and a meeting was held to resolve the crisis. Acting Director Zane Alam also told The Daily Star at 1:45pm yesterday.

“The situation remains unchanged,” Khair told The Daily Star at 6:30pm yesterday.

A conducive environment for providing healthcare has not returned, so no staffers, including doctors, have reported to duty.

As a result, all services remain suspended, said Khair, who is currently on a seven-day leave.

Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the chief adviser for the health ministry, said they are working to resolve the matter.

But doctors, nurses and other staffers have not joined their work citing security concerns, he added.

Currently, only the injured from the July uprising remain at the hospital, he said.

“We are trying to reach out to the July injured persons and hope the problem will be resolved from tomorrow [today] morning,” he told The Daily Star at 7:30pm.

Around 70 injured persons in the July uprising are being treated at the hospital. They alleged that the hospital

authorities are not providing them with proper treatment and indulging in many malpractices.

But doctors and staffers alleged that the injured person often behaved rudely with them and two untoward incidents at the hospital on Monday and Tuesday left them with security concerns.

However, Akhter Hossain, a July victim, denied attacking hospital staff and said they were protesting irregularities at the hospital and the authorities' negligence in their treatment.

He said eight of their fellows were injured when police charged batons on them.

On Monday, four victims injured in the July uprising attempted suicide by consuming poison during a meeting at the hospital.

They were later treated at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital.

On Tuesday, the hospital director was confined to his office for about an hour and a half due to alleged infighting between two groups of July victims.

A police team has been deployed at the hospital to avoid any untoward incident, said Imaul Haque, the officer-in-charge of Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station.

The hospital treated around 6.45 lakh outpatients and 10,647 emergency patients in 2023, according to the Health Bulletin 2023, published earlier this year by the Directorate General of Health Services.

Ziaur Rahman’s 44th death anniv

FROM PAGE 12

officers at Chittagong Circuit House.

Born on January 19, 1936, in Bogra's Bagbari, Zia was a sector commander during the Liberation War. He was awarded Bir Uttam, the highest gallantry award for a living officer, for his wartime role.

After independence, he also became chief of army staff.

He became chief martial law administrator in November 1976 when Justice ASM Sayem relinquished the position, and ultimately the president of Bangladesh in April 1977 when President Sayem resigned.

Ziaur Rahman opened up multi-party democracy in Bangladesh.

On September 1, 1978, Ziaur Rahman floated the BNP, with himself as its chairman. He introduced ‘Bangladeshi Nationalism’ as a new national identity of the Bangladeshi people.

Today and tomorrow, the party flag will be hoisted at half-mast and black flags to be hoisted at its Nayapalton central office, chairperson office in Gulshan, and all other party offices across the country at 6:00am.

The BNP and its affiliated and

associate organisations have published posters about Ziaur Rahman, and special supplements will be published in newspapers to mark the day.

BNP leaders will distribute rice, lentils, and clothing among the destitute at different parts of the city under the arrangement of Dhaka north and south units of the party.

All the district, city and thana units of the BNP will also observe the day.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in a statement marking the day said that an environment must be ensured where free and fair elections, accountability to the people, transparency, and the fearless exercise of all citizen rights can take place.

“In all crises, struggles, and nation-building efforts of national life, we must move forward by embracing the path and ideals shown by Shaheed Zia. And we must build an unbreakable national unity to protect national interests, pluralistic democracy, and the rights of the people.”

The ideals, patriotism, honesty, and dedication of Zia continue to inspire the nationalist forces of today, Fakhrul added.

Bangladesh committed

FROM PAGE 12

of personnel currently serving in missions across the world.

“As Bangladesh's senior most peacekeeper, I feel proud and honoured to be here today... Let me begin by solemnly remembering our 168 brave soldiers and police personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice in various peacekeeping missions. Their sacrifice will forever be honoured by the nation.”

General Waker highlighted Bangladesh's long-standing commitment to global peace, noting that the country has participated in UN peacekeeping operations since 1988.

At present, 5,018 Bangladeshi peacekeepers are deployed across nine UN missions, including 4,880 from the army, 343 from the navy, 396 from the air force, and 199 from the police.

“Our peacekeepers are always ready to face any challenge with advanced training, strong moral values, professionalism, and neutrality — even at the risk of their own lives,” he said.

44 killed in Israeli strikes across Gaza

FROM PAGE 12

strain on relations with the international community.

“This is a blatant defiance of the international will and a grave violation of international law and United Nations resolutions,” Hamas said a statement.

In the Gaza Strip, a United Nations warehouse was broken into by “hordes of hungry people” on Wednesday as aid trickles into the Palestinian enclave on the brink of famine and the United States readies new terms for a possible truce between Israel and Hamas.

The World Food Programme said initial reports were that two people had died and several more were injured at the central Gaza warehouse. The UN agency appealed for an immediate scale-up of food aid “to reassure people that they will not starve.”

Eyewitness video independently verified by Reuters shows large crowds of people pushing into the warehouse and removing bags and boxes as gunfire can be heard. It was not immediately clear how the people may have been killed or injured in the incident.

Under growing international pressure, Israel ended an 11-week long aid blockade on Gaza 10 days ago. It has allowed a limited amount of relief to be delivered via two avenues — the United Nations or the US-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

Prof Anowara

FROM PAGE 3

“She fought for our independence in 1971. She was not involved in the incident and has been falsely implicated. Bail should be granted on humanitarian grounds,” said her lawyer Sohrab Hossain Sohel.

After hearing both sides, the magistrate denied her bail and ordered her transfer to Kashimpur Women’s Central Jail in Gazipur.

Prof Anowara was first apprehended by a group of students in front of the JnU campus yesterday afternoon. Then around 7:30pm, she was arrested after the students handed her over to police, said Md Saiful Islam, officer-in-charge of Sutrapur Police Station.

She has been charged with the attempted murder of Sujon Molla, former general secretary of the university unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, who was shot in the eye while protesting near Star Hotel on July 19 last year.

On February 16 this year, Molla filed a case with a Dhaka court against 192 individuals, including several former government officials, JnU teachers, administrative personnel, and 94 Chhatra League activists. Following a hearing, the magistrate directed Sutrapur Police Station to register the complaint as a formal case, which was recorded by police on February 25.

Prof Anowara previously served as chairperson of the political science department and dean of the social sciences faculty at JnU.

Many current and former students of the university have meanwhile expressed concerns on social media about the arrest of an elderly individual, who was also a freedom fighter.



Craftsmen busy making brooms using midribs of coconut leaves in the Kuniyari village of Pirojpur. Their business makes around Tk 15,000-20,000 per month by selling these brooms, which traders then sell for Tk 25-80 per piece depending on the size. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Cops say personal grievances led

FROM PAGE 3

to meet Rubel. She also asked me to book a train ticket to Dinajpur for Wednesday,” said her sister, Chaina Das.

Chaina said she couldn’t reach Sumi the next day.

Sumi had checked into the hotel with a man, identifying themselves as husband and wife. The family suspects the man was Rubel, who fled before hotel staff discovered Sumi’s body.

Chaina later filed a murder case at Motijheel Police Station, naming Rubel as the lone accused.

Officer-in-Charge of

the police station, Mesbah Uddin, said police have identified the suspect and are working to arrest him.

In a separate case, Gaus Miya, a Bangladeshi expatriate in Saudi Arabia, yesterday confessed before a Dhaka court to killing a married couple at their Pallabi home. He was later sent to jail.

The victims, Pappu, 34, and his wife Dola, 29, a private university student, were stabbed to death.

Quoting neighbours, Pallabi Police Station Officer-in-Charge Shafiul Islam said Gaus entered the couple’s home around

1:00pm on Wednesday with a knife and stabbed them.

Locals, alerted by screams, caught him and handed him over to police.

Saleh Mohammad Zakaria, additional deputy commissioner of Pallabi Zone, said Dola was living in the Mirpur-II flat as a sublet, while her husband lived in Barguna for work and visited occasionally.

Gaus Miya confessed to the crime, said ADC Zakaria.

Based on the detainee’s confession, police said the murder happened over an extramarital affair.

Police are verifying his

claim and investigating the murders.

Meanwhile, Sima Akter, 39, was stabbed to death by her husband in the Ashkona area of Dakkhinkhan on Wednesday.

Her husband, Dolon Miya, a vegetable vendor, attacked her on the street, and later consumed poison.

After treatment, Dolon was produced before a Dhaka court yesterday, where he confessed to the killing.

He was later sent to jail, Nasim A-Gulshan, assistant commissioner of Dakkhinkhan Zone, told The Daily Star.

Decentralise power to prevent

FROM PAGE 3

He said, “The commission is working to build consensus on key reforms. While agreement has been reached on several issues, more dialogue is needed with political parties. We aim to finalise a Citizen Charter by July.”

“The goal of the charter is to safeguard citizens’ rights, ensure a balance of power, and strengthen state institutions. Through this charter, we are trying to establish a formal understanding between citizens and political parties – so that parties can be held accountable,” he added.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said the concentration of power in one individual has repeatedly led to one-person rule in Bangladesh.

“When the same person becomes prime minister, head of parliament, and party leader, it can be a serious problem. The prime minister is supposed to be the head of the executive branch, while the parliament is the legislative branch. When the same person leads both, it violates the theory of separation of powers,” he said.

Such centralisation is a key factor behind the country’s slide toward authoritarianism, he added.

Shujan Acting President Justice MA Matin said peaceful transition of

power through elections is important but not enough to ensure democracy.

“Even authoritarian rulers in Germany and Czechoslovakia were elected. One of the core aspirations of the July Uprising was to bring reforms that would prevent authoritarianism from returning,” he said.

He urged civil society and other stakeholders to remain vocal in pushing for the implementation of the reform commission’s recommendations.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), said the points of consensus must be turned into a national charter.

“This will serve as a kind of agreement between political parties and the people. It may not be a formally signed document, but the public will place trust in it,” he said.

He warned that political resistance and an uncooperative bureaucracy pose major risks to reform efforts.

“If political parties fail to embrace the core spirit of anti-discrimination, reforms will not succeed. Authoritarianism may slow down, but the power imbalance will persist. Also, if political parties cannot ensure accountability to the people, we will continue to face failure,” he said.

He added that bureaucrats, although not signatories to the charter, might become major obstacles in implementing reforms.

“As long as the bureaucracy does not undergo positive change and continues to interpret recommendations to suit its own interests – reforms will not be possible,” he said, adding, “We must think about how to overcome these barriers.”

Salar Raj Hossain, chairman of Police Reform Commission, said the state must now make genuine efforts to uphold fundamental rights, which have been curtailed by past laws.

Prof Robayet Ferdous of Dhaka University, a Shujan executive member, said, “Without a shift in political culture, structural reforms alone won’t ensure a balance of power.”

Monir Haider, special assistant to the chief adviser, and eminent photographer Shahidul Alam also spoke at the event.

PRAYER TIMING MAY 30					
Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4-05	12-30	5-00	6-40	8-00	
JAMAAT 4-40	1-15	5-15	6-45	8-30	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF HEALTH SERVICES
CENTRAL MEDICAL STORES DEPOT
TEJGAON DHAKA-1208
www.cmsd.gov.bd

Corrigendum-3

IFT: CMSD/GR-2418/ICT/2024-25/Proc. D-3/10, Date: 25/03/2025
Procurement of "Linac 6MV (Single Energy) Machine

The relevant portion of the Tender Documents under above mentioned IFT no. is hereby amended as per observation raised by the prospective tenderers. Please read as under:-

Reference	Existing Entries	Amended Entries.
TD's Section 2. Tender Data Sheet (TDS): ITT 36.1, ITT 42.2, & IFT Row no. 09, 10 & 11.		
Tender Last Selling Date:	01/06/2025 (During Office hours)	15/06/2025 (During Office hours)
Tender Submission Date & Time:	Date: 02/06/2025 and Time: 11.00 AM [11: 00 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST+GMT+ 6 hrs.)]	Date: 16/06/2025 and Time: 11.00 AM [11: 00 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST+GMT+ 6 hrs.)]
Tender Opening Date & Time:	Date: 02/06/2025 and Time 11.30 AM [11: 30 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST+GMT+6 hrs.)]	Date: 16/06/2025 and Time 11.30 AM [11: 30 Hours Bangladesh Standard Time (BST+GMT+6 hrs.)]

Sd/-
Md. Huzar Ali
Director (Additional Secretary)
Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD)
Directorate General of Health Services
Health Services Division
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Telephone: +8802222244087
e-mail : cmsd@cmsd.gov.bd

GD-1320

Bangladesh Sugar & Food Industries Corporation
Chinishilpa Bhaban, 3, Dilkusha Commercial Area
Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh
Phone: +8802223384890 Email: bsficpurchase@yahoo.com
www.bsfic.gov.bd

Invitation for International Open Tender (ICT)

1.	Source of fund	Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation (BSFIC)'s own source.
2.	Eligibility of tenderers	Bonafide Suppliers/Manufacturers and as detailed in the tender document.
3.	Name & address of the officers for selling tender document	General Manager (Cash), Chinishilpa Bhaban (7th Floor), 3, Dilkusha Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000.
4.	Name and address of the offices for receiving of tenders	Secretariat Section (5th Floor), BSFIC, Chinishilpa Bhaban, 3, Dilkusha Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000
5.	Last date & time for selling tender document	Upto 14-07-2025 during office hours on all working days.
6.	Last date & time for submission of tender	On 15-07-2025 by 12.00pm
7.	Place, date & time for opening of tenders	Secretariat Section (5th Floor), BSFIC, Chinishilpa Bhaban, 3, Dilkusha, Dhaka at 12.15pm on 15-07-2025.
8.	Special instructions	(a) The Corporation reserves the right to accept/reject any or all tenders at any stage without assigning any reason thereof. (b) Terms & conditions as detailed in tender documents and PPR-2008 (c) If there is govt. holiday or unavoidable situation arises on the date fixed for Tender dropping & opening, in those cases, the next normal working day will be considered as valid date for dropping & opening of the tender at the same time (d) Tender(s) may be hand delivered, posted by registered mail or sent by courier and ensure the receiving of the tender by the office mentioned at above SL No. 4 on or before the closing time for submission. (e) Each of materials mentioned below shall be treated as separate tender.
9.	Brief description of goods & tender security:	
	Name of material	Tender No. & date
		Amount of tender security (refundable)
		Cost of tender documents (non-refundable)
a	Nickel screen	36.04.0000.035.07.163.25 Date: 29-05-2025
		Tk 66,000 (sixty-six thousand) or USD 540 (five hundred forty) only
		Tk 3000.00 (Three thousand) only
b	Perforated brass liner and Perforated stainless steel screen	36.04.0000.035.07.180.25 Date: 29-05-2025
		Tk 32,000 (thirty-two thousand) or USD 270 (Two hundred seventy) only
		Tk 2000.00 (Two thousand) only

SF-295
7"x3=21

GD-1314

29.05.25

Mohammad Saidur Rahman
Chief (Purchase)

Bangladesh Sugar & Food Industries Corporation
Chinishilpa Bhaban, 3, Dilkusha Commercial Area
Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh
Phone: +8802223384890 Email: bsficpurchase@yahoo.com
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SF-295
7"x3=21

GD-1314

29.05.25

Mohammad Saidur Rahman
Chief (Purchase)



Sarmin Shahariath and Rezaul Bahar, married since 2005, are avid travellers. So far, they have travelled more than 118 countries across seven continents.



Want to share your travel experiences with us? Please send your stories to holiday@thedailystar.net



REZAUL BAHAR

Would you go somewhere today, far, far away? A place so remote and isolated, so vast that the only thing left to focus on is the wilderness and its untouched beauty. A place where time feels irrelevant, and the horizon stretches forever. That place, for us, is Alaska.

Sarmin and I have been travelling around the globe for over 17 years. We've explored 118 countries across all continents, experiencing the diversity and wonder of this incredible world. Yet, a question always stumps us: which place do we love the most? The answer is elusive because every corner of the earth holds its own magic. But when it comes to a destination we could return to without tiring, it would be Alaska. We both

orange and pink. There is a certain magic in the air here, a rawness that pulls you in and demands that you appreciate it in its purest form. It's a place where the modern world feels like a distant memory, and nature commands all attention. The world doesn't often venture

skies. A small aircraft took us soaring over the towering peaks of Denali, the tallest mountain in North America. The landscape below – snow-capped mountains, vast glaciers, and frozen rivers – was simply breathtaking. As we looked around from the 4,000 feet high glacier, where we landed, the world around

would become a deeply personal one. Eight thousand miles away, in Bangladesh, I had just lost my Ma, my mother. She had been fighting a terminal illness, and though I knew her time was near, nothing prepared me for the pain of losing her. Then I lost her. Bangladesh then closed its doors for all international travel due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Unable to return to her, I set

inexplicably. The quiet of the land, the towering mountains, the icy rivers – it all seemed to remind me of her love. My mother, in her unconditional grace, had always shown me the path forward, teaching me to be strong, to love, and to never stop exploring. She was the one who taught me that life was about the journey, not the destination. So, as I drove through the vast landscapes of Alaska, I felt her strength within me, propelling me forward.

The memories and the landscape became a part of the journey. Every mile I drove was a tribute to her, to the love that had shaped me and guided me through the darkest of times.

In Alaska, I found a sense of peace. Amidst that sheer isolation, I could feel a connection with my soul, where two of my most precious gems – love for nature and the memories of my mother – reside. I felt the nature itself had wrapped its arms around me, offering solace.

Alaska, for me, is not just a place; it's a part of nature that heals me, leaves me feeling whole in a way no other place can.

In Alaska, nature generously gives you the courage to embrace the unknown, freeing you, if only briefly, from the world's expectations.

Its purity reflects your own imperfections. It offers peace and reconnects you with something greater than yourself.

I'll keep driving – maybe that's all life is: the ride, not the destination. The people we meet are the bumps – moments that jolt, lift, or slow us.

People say Alaska is the last frontier. To me, it's the land where my soul reconnects with the supreme. Alaska remains my destination, my sanctuary.



agreed on that.

Our first journey to this paradise close to the North Pole was nothing short of awe-inspiring. Alaska is so detached from the mainland United States that it feels like stepping onto another planet. Its vastness is unparalleled: the landmass is over one-fifth of the US mainland, has more than 3,000 rivers, three million lakes, and a hundred thousand glaciers. Sounds absurd, but true. Its wilderness is equally unmatched. Pristine and untouched, mountains, glaciers, and forests seem to stretch endlessly, making Alaska truly special.

Alaska's isolation makes it even more resounding. Parts of the state experience the sun hovering on the horizon for months, painting the sky with hues of

this far, and that's precisely what makes Alaska so alluring.

It's said that twenty times more bears live in Alaska than humans.

Our first trip to Alaska was an exploration of its grandeur from the ground up, driving through the state's expansive roads and marvelling at the land's immensity. But the best part was when we took to the

us looked like a picture, unruffled and pure. At that moment, I realised I hadn't seen anything more beautiful than this. For me, time stopped there.

Yes, for this, everything can wait. It is the kind of place that stays with you forever, etched into your soul.

Our second trip to Alaska was unplanned, an unexpected journey that

off on a road trip to Alaska – unsure what I was seeking, only that I needed solitude to feel her presence and honour her memory. I guess, somewhere deep, I needed solitude.

As I drove through Alaska's wilderness, I felt a connection with my mother



Hazlewood leads RCB into IPL final

AFP, Chandigarh

Australia's Josh Hazlewood returned figures of 3 21 to help Royal Challengers Bengaluru storm into the Indian Premier League final with an eight-wicket thrashing of Punjab Kings on Thursday.

Bengaluru bundled out Punjab for 101, and overhauled that target with 10 overs to spare in the first qualifier at Mullanpur in New Chandigarh.

Punjab will have another shot at making the final on June 3 when they face the winner of the Eliminator between Gujarat Titans and Mumbai Indians.

Opener Phil Salt made an unbeaten 56 not out as Bengaluru made their fourth IPL final in the hunt for a first title.

Star batter Virat Kohli fell caught behind for 12 off New Zealand quick Kyle Jamieson, who took a wicket without giving a run in the over.

Salt put on 54 runs with Mayank Agarwal (19). Skipper Rajat Patidar made 15 and hit the winning six.

Bowlers set up victory after Bengaluru elected to field and got a Hazlewood boost as the fast bowler returned after a shoulder injury.

Hazlewood struck two key blows, including skipper Shreyas Iyer, to rattle Punjab's batting.

Left-arm seamer Yash Dayal drew first blood to send back Priyansh Arya caught out for seven in the second over and soon fellow opener Prabhsimran Singh fell for 18.

Hazlewood then struck twice to get Iyer caught behind in his first over and then Punjab's previous match hero Josh Inglis, for seven, in his next.

Wickets kept tumbling and Punjab lost half their side in 6.3 overs when Dayal bowled the left-handed Nehal Wadhwa.

Australia's Marcus Stoinis attempted to hit back as wickets fell at the other end as he made 26 off 17 balls with the two fours and two sixes.

Leg spinner Suyash Sharma took two wickets in one over and when he dismissed Stoinis as his third victim, the Punjab crowd fell silent. He was named man of the match.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Cumilla Modern High School cricket team celebrate as luck smiled on them and handed them the title of the Prime Bank National School Cricket Tournament 2024–2025. The final between Cumilla Modern and Police Lines School & College Bogura was scheduled to be held at the Bashundhara Sports City Cricket Ground yesterday but persistent rain forced the outcome to be decided by a coin toss after the minimum required 20 overs and a Super Over decider got ruled out. The champions were awarded a cash prize of Tk 1.5 lakhs, while the runners-up received Tk 1 lakh.

Cracks apparent, what can Tigers do about it?

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

If Bangladesh's recent T20I showings suggest anything, it is that the Tigers are far from meeting the demands of the shortest format – particularly the ability to seize the initiative and shift momentum in their favor.

Litton Das and Co suffered a 37-run defeat in the first T20I of their three-match series against hosts Pakistan at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Wednesday – a result that added to the misery of a side that had endured a humiliating 2-1 defeat to an ICC associate nation, UAE, just a few days earlier.

Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium is known for producing run-fests, the type seen during the recently concluded Pakistan Super League (PSL). The 10th edition of the tournament featured several high-scoring contests at this venue, including the final in which the Lahore Qalandars chased down a 202-run target against the Quetta Gladiators to clinch their third league title.

The venue lived up to its reputation in the first innings when Pakistan batted, as the hosts posted 201 for seven.

However, Bangladesh fell flat in the very aspect where Pakistan thrived – getting bundled out for 164 runs, largely due to a lack of intent shown by the Tigers.

The Tigers faltered early, managing only 45 for two in the Powerplay, before the situation worsened as the innings progressed. The visitors scraped together just 81 runs for four wickets in the next 10 overs, effectively handing Pakistan the upper hand.

"Intent in T20Is has to be there. When you are chasing 200 runs, you can't let the required run rate go over 13. If you take the average to 13, it will be tough for you. If you lose one wicket, then there will be a new batter, and it will be tough for him," Bangladesh's spin coach Mushtaq Ahmed said after the opening match.

The lack of intent was clearly visible in the

mindset with which some batters approached the big run chase. Tawhid Hridoy managed only 17 runs from 22 deliveries, despite coming in during the fifth over of the innings – a contrast to how Pakistan skipper Salman Agha, Mohammad Haris, Hasan Nawaz, and Shadab Khan regained momentum with quickfire knocks in the middle after early setbacks.

Not only Hridoy, but even Litton and Tanzid Tamim threw their wickets away after settling at the crease. All of these point to one thing – the deficiency lies more in the Tigers' execution and ability than anywhere else.

"Tactically, we were less smart today," Mushtaq also admitted.

"The way Litton started, it seemed the game would be on our side. But [having to score] 13-14 runs per over is too much. So, as coaches, we need to speak to them and hopefully help them show better intent in the middle overs," he added.

It's probably unrealistic to assume that Bangladesh can bring changes in these areas overnight, but if they are to turn their fortunes around in this format and stay alive in this series with a win in the second T20I today, Mushtaq's words must get through to the Tigers.



Sinner thrashes retiring Gasquet at French Open

World number one Jannik Sinner sent Frenchman Richard Gasquet into retirement with a 6-3 6-0 6-4 hammering in the battle of generations at the French Open on Thursday to ease into the third round.

It was the second time in as many years in Paris that the 23-year-old beat local hero Gasquet, who said he would end his career that started over two decades ago and yielded 16 tour-level singles titles after his home Grand Slam.

"I'd like to thank Jannik for his kindness and the player that he is and I know he'll have a great career."

"I have great memories with all of you. You all supported me in defeat and victory. I'd like to thank the federation. Tennis finishes for me today."

GASQUET



Cole Palmer showed his quality, changing the complexion of the game with two assists, as Chelsea roared back after conceding first to beat Real Betis 4-1 to win the UEFA Conference League in Wroclaw on Wednesday. After a dismal first-half in which an early goal from Abde Ezzalzouli gave Betis the advantage, Chelsea turned things around in the second-half, with goals from Enzo Fernandez, Nicolas Jackson, Jadon Sancho, and Moises Caicedo. Chelsea are now the first club to win the full set of five UEFA club tournaments -- the Champions League, Europa League, Conference League, Super Cup and the now-defunct Cup Winners' Cup.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Nat'l Junior Athletics begins today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Athletics Federation (BAF) is mulling over selecting athletes for the 3rd Asian Youth Games from the 39th National Junior (Age-Group) Athletics Championships, set to get underway at the National Stadium today.

Athletics is one of 13 disciplines in which Bangladesh will participate at the upcoming Asian Youth Games from October 22-31 in Bahrain, and BAF has decided to pick the athletes from the U-16 group, as the junior athletics championships will also feature another category – U-18.

"We have decided to pick the best performers of the championships for the upcoming Youth Asian Games and then train them with the help of the Bangladesh Olympic Association," BAF general secretary Shah Alam told reporters at a press conference yesterday.

Some 500 athletes from different districts, divisions, educational boards and BKSP are expected to vie for 42 events – 14 events for U-16 boys and girls, and 28 events for U-18 boys and girls.

However, the throwing events of the championship will take place at the outer stadium in a bid to preserve the newly laid grass ground of the National Stadium ahead of Bangladesh's Asian Cup Qualifiers tie against Singapore on June 10.

BAF also decided to provide cash awards to the gold, silver and bronze winners – Tk 3,000, Tk 2,000 and Tk 1,000, respectively – while each athlete will also receive an additional Tk 10,000 for setting a national record under the electronic timer.



Mirra Andreieva showcased her claycourt prowess once again at Roland Garros, battling past Ashlyn Krueger 6-3, 6-4. The 18-year-old Russian, a semifinalist last year, overcame an early deficit with smart shot selection and composure. Avenging a US Open loss, she said, "I suffered, but stayed calm. I pushed myself to fight until the end."

PHOTO: REUTERS

PSTC

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Population Services and Training Center

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from 1 June 2025

NEW ADDRESS

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House # 5, Main Road

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Badda, Dhaka-1212

Old Address:

House # 93/3, Level 4 & 6

Road # 8, Block C

Niketon, Gulshan-1,

Dhaka-1212



Ziaur Rahman’s 44th death anniv today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is 44th death anniversary of Ziaur Rahman, founder of Bangladesh Nationalist Party and former president of Bangladesh.

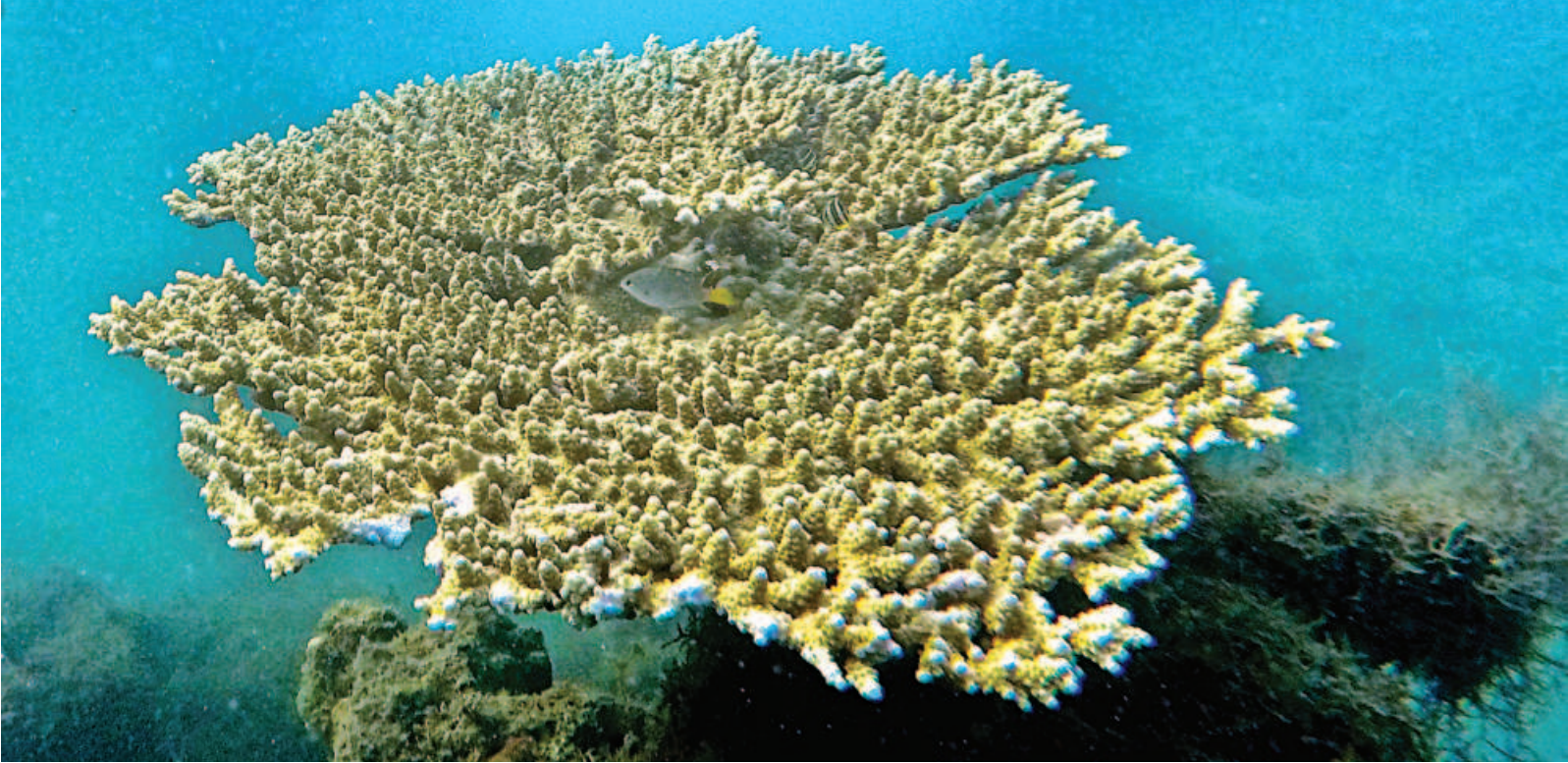
The party and its various associate bodies have organised programmes over eight days across the country to observe the anniversary. The programmes began on May 25.

As part of the observance, the party arranged a discussion yesterday at the Institution of Engineers in the capital.

The party’s top leaders will pay tribute at Ziaur Rahman’s grave in the capital at 10:30am today.

On May 30, 1981, he was assassinated by a cabal of army

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GUARDIANS OF THE BLUE

A coral in the Bay of Bengal off Saint Martin’s Island shows early signs of bleaching -- a phenomenon where coral loses its vibrant colour and turns white due to stress from rising sea temperatures or other environmental changes. Coral reefs, often called the rainforests of the sea, are in serious decline worldwide. Since 2009, 14 percent of the world’s coral has been lost, according to the 2025 Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network. This threatens an ecosystem that supports nearly a quarter of all marine life, protects coastlines, feeds millions, and helps regulate the climate. World Reef Awareness Day on June 1 is a stark reminder of the crisis and our responsibility to ensure their conservation. Because saving them isn’t just about protecting marine biodiversity; it’s about defending the planet’s health, and with it, our own future.

PHOTO: SHARIF SARWAR

44 killed in Israeli strikes across Gaza

Says civil defence agency; Israel announces creation of 22 settlements in West Bank

AGENCIES

Gaza’s civil defence agency said Israeli attacks killed 44 people yesterday, including 23 in an attack on a home in the centre of the Palestinian territory.

“Forty-four people have been killed in Israeli raids on the Gaza Strip,” civil defence official Mohammad Al-Mughayyir told AFP.

“Twenty-three people were killed, others injured and several (are) missing following an Israeli strike on the Qreinawi family’s home east of Al-Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza.”

Mughayyir also reported “two people killed and several injured by Israeli forces’ gunfire this morning near the American aid centre in the Morag axis, southern Gaza Strip.”

When asked by AFP about the strike in Al-Bureij and the gunfire near the aid centre, the Israeli military said it was looking into them.

Meanwhile, Israel announced the creation of 22 new settlements in the occupied West Bank, risking further

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

GM Quader’s house in Rangpur attacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The residence of Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader in Rangpur city’s Senpara area was attacked last night.

The attackers smashed windows and set fire to a motorcycle parked on the premises, JP has claimed. The incident occurred around 8:45pm, reports Prothom Alo.

Jatiya Party Co-chairman and former Rangpur City Corporation mayor Mustafizur Rahman alleged that activists of the National Citizen Party (NCP) and Students Against Discrimination (SAD) were behind the attack.

“There is no rule of law in the country ... if there were, such an attack wouldn’t have taken place. We’ll observe the situation closely and make a decision soon.”

Quader went to Rangpur from Dhaka in the afternoon and spoke to journalists at his residence. He left for the party office,

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‘They took my money, deserted me at the airport’

Promising jobs in Malaysia, racket swindles the poor

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Helena Begum, a widow and mother of two from Munshiganj, returned home from Malaysia after spending three harrowing days at a Malaysian airport.

“I borrowed Tk 3.5 lakh at a high interest rate to go there for work, but I ended up being locked,” she said.

Helena was among 40 Bangladeshis deported from Kuala Lumpur on May 19 after Malaysian immigration officials caught them attempting to enter the country on tourist visas.

Each individual gave scammers Tk 3-5 lakh, believing they would be offered jobs upon arrival in the Southeast Asian country. As their visas were meant for tourism, the authorities detained them on suspicion and deported them.

In the first four months of this year, over 3,500 Bangladeshis were denied entry and sent back from Kuala Lumpur International Airport, reports a Malaysian news portal, quoting Malaysia authorities.

THE FLIGHT BACK HOME

On the flight back home, Helena told this correspondent that she flew to Malaysia on May 16.

“I was issued a 22-day visa. They told us

employers were waiting for us,” she said.

The 35-year-old woman from Munshiganj lost her husband two years ago and had been struggling to raise her two children. “That’s why I borrowed Tk 3.5 lakh from a village cooperative and risked everything.”

Ilias Hossain from Shariatpur, who was on the same flight, recounted a similar ordeal.

“I reached Kuala Lumpur on May 16. Someone, introducing himself as a recruitment agent, took Tk 1 lakh from me at the airport, promising that he would help me get out of the airport, but then disappeared.

“Two days passed, but no one showed up. Some of us who had no money could not even buy water to drink,” he said.

On May 18, the scammers told them to go to the immigration.

“The immigration authorities arrested us and held us for a day. Each of us was fined RM 120 and then sent back.”

Both Helena and Ilias say they think they saw hundreds of Bangladeshis stranded at Kuala Lumpur airport.

AIRPORT MANAGEMENT

Overseas recruitment agents say that the scammers operate at both Bangladeshi and Malaysian airports.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Bangladesh committed to global peace

Army Chief General Waker tells Int’l Day of UN Peacekeepers event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Army Staff General Waker yesterday said Bangladesh has earned global recognition for its contributions to peacekeeping and remains firmly committed to upholding international peace through continued participation in UN missions.

He made the remarks at an event marking the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers 2025, held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka.

Paying tribute to the 168 Bangladeshi peacekeepers who lost their lives in the line of duty, the army chief commended the dedication



SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

No service at national eye hospital for second day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All forms of medical services at the National Institute of Ophthalmology and Hospital in Dhaka remained suspended for the second consecutive day yesterday, leaving many patients without care.

Around 150 inpatients have already left the 250-bed facility, while many outpatients were turned away without receiving treatment, according to hospital staff.

The hospital, popularly known as the National Eye Hospital, served around 1,800 outpatients and emergency patients daily, while approximately 40 patients were admitted each day, according to government data from 2023. The number is likely to be higher now.

All services came to a halt after a group of injured July victims who were receiving treatment at the hospital attacked staff members at around 11:00 am on Wednesday. This led to a tripartite clash involving other patients and their attendants.

Some doctors and nurses were injured, and their residences also came under attack, said the hospital’s director Khair Ahmed Choudhury.

Police and army personnel later

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Three new bank notes ahead of Eid-ul-Azha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank will release redesigned Tk 20, Tk 50, and Tk 1,000 banknotes into circulation from June 1, ahead of Eid-ul-Azha.

Notably, the new notes do not feature the image of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman -- a move that has already stirred significant public interest.

According to central bank officials, the new notes will initially be available only at Bangladesh Bank’s Motijheel office. Select branches of several commercial banks in Dhaka will begin distributing them shortly after.

Signed by Governor Ahsan H Mansur, the banknotes are printed on 100 percent cotton paper and feature a Royal Bengal Tiger watermark, denomination markings, and the central bank’s monogram.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

China launches space probe seeking asteroid samples



AFP, Beijing

China yesterday launched a space probe on the country’s first mission to retrieve samples from an asteroid and bring them home for research, the Xinhua state news agency reported.

Beijing has ploughed billions of dollars

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