

Student drowns in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A student drowned while bathing in the Ruposhi Jharna, a waterfall in Mirsarai upazila of Chattogram, yesterday.

Asif Uddin, 24, was a honours final year student of Chattogram's Islamia Degree College under the National University.

Shafayet Hossain, senior station officer of Fire Service and Civil Defence in Mirsarai, said Asif and four of his friends went to bathe in the waterfall around 12:15pm. At one point, he drowned.

Locals and his friends began searching for him before a fire service team went to the scene. Asif's body was recovered at around 1:00pm, the official said.

Bamboo mat weavers

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It is barely enough to feed my children," she added.

Like Mariam, around 100-150 women from Tilagaon, who are engaged in weaving mats for their livelihood, are finding it difficult to stay afloat.

"I have been weaving mats for past 20 years. This is the only source of our income. Despite our daylong hard work, we continue to remain impoverished," said Nasima Begum, another mat weaver.

At present, this traditional craft is at a crossroads. Bamboo, the raw material, has become increasingly scarce. The local varieties that were once abundant -- Ranjil, Parua, and Rupai -- are now harder to find. This shortage, coupled with the exploitative system of borrowing from moneylenders, has made it increasingly difficult for these women to earn a sustainable income.

"In the past, almost every

UN team on enforced disappearance

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Researcher Taskin Fahmina; and Human Rights Support Society Director Ijazul Islam.

They talked about forming a search committee for victims who have not yet returned, withdrawing false cases filed against those who have returned, identifying those who destroyed evidence at the torture facility, addressing gaps in the draft law on enforced disappearances, and ensuring justice for the victims.

The delegation will hold meetings with Law Adviser Asif Nazrul, home ministry officials, law enforcers, families of the victims, and the Commission for Enquiry on Enforced Disappearances.

woman in the village used to weave mats, but many have given up because it doesn't generate enough earning to thrive," said Nasima.

"Even if we could source bamboo more readily, we could continue our work with greater ease and less reliance on loans," she added.

Ayesha Begum, another weaver, said, "With moneylenders controlling everything, we're stuck in a cycle of exploitation."

Ahmed Siraj, a folk researcher and organiser, opined that the key to preserving this cottage industry lies in providing the weavers with easier access to capital and raw materials.

"These women are trapped in a cycle of debt, relying on moneylenders for raw materials. If we could offer them interest-free or low-interest loans, it would empower them to regain control over their craft," he said.

Women MPs should be elected directly

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structure would even work."

He also warned that if the number of reserved women's seats is raised to 100, it may lead to severe nomination trading. "The rotation method proposed by the Election Reform Commission will help produce a new generation of women leaders across the country. If implemented, the need for reserved seats may eventually be phased out," he said.

BNP Organising Secretary Shama Obaid supported the idea of direct elections for reserved seats and agreed with other speakers saying such a transition cannot happen overnight.

"I believe every political party must first have the intention to increase the number of women MPs. This doesn't happen automatically. When it comes to constituencies, it becomes very difficult. No one wants to give up their seat."

Referring to other barriers, she said, "We've talked about muscle power, about money, and many other issues. These are real, practical problems. We face them."

To address these challenges, she said, "Each party must first consciously decide to increase the number of women in its upazila, district, and central-level committees. These are the women who gradually move into leadership."

The BNP leader also opposed the dual representation model,

calling it impractical and unimplementable. "This will only create further conflict in any given constituency."

Instead, she argued for a more effective model -- assigning clear responsibilities to women MPs and ensuring monitoring by both the government and political parties.

"That will help eliminate the sense of political inferiority often experienced by women representatives."

Shirin Parvin Haque, head of the Women's Affairs Reform Commission, pushed for the dual representation model, saying, "Every constituency would have two seats: one open to all, and the other reserved for a woman. Both seats would be filled through direct elections. No one here is even talking about indirect selection."

"This is not an unrealistic proposal. If it is tabled and discussed, people will see its merit. But sadly, we submitted this to the consensus commission, and they didn't even include it in their report."

She strongly opposed the rotational system proposed by the Election Reform Commission, where women and men would alternate holding a seat every two terms.

"This is a ridiculous proposal," she said. "Which man or woman would willingly give up their political career for two terms? This fairy tale that women's leadership will bloom from such a system is

utter nonsense."

At the beginning of the event, Nagorik Coalition, a platform advocating democratic reforms in the state structure, proposed a series of measures to strengthen women's political representation, including the direct election of 100 women to reserved seats in 2026, and a roadmap to achieving fifty percent gender parity in parliament over the next two elections.

The coalition has also called on all political parties to nominate at least 25 percent female candidates for general seats in 2026, with a plan to increase this proportion to 50 percent in future elections.

Its statement, which was read out by Dhaka University Prof Samina Luthfa, also proposed increasing the total number of parliamentary seats to more than 400 to accommodate Bangladesh's growing population, suggesting that electoral areas could be restructured or responsibilities reorganised based on population size, in line with recommendations made by the Women's Reform Commission.

The statement further noted that, according to the Women's Commission's proposal, political parties should nominate an equal number of men and women through a 'zipper system', an alternating placement of male and female candidates on party lists. It also cited the Women's Commission's

recommendations on the representation of various marginalised groups, stating that these measures could be implemented without delay.

Tasnim Jara, senior joint member secretary of the National Citizen Party (NCP), said if a woman is elected through direct voting and they have a constituency, they would feel empowered and remain accountable to the voters.

"In the existing reality, since they are made lawmakers through party nominations or through some party leader, they remain accountable to that party or the leader, not to the people," said the NCP leader.

Echoing her, Umama Fatema, spokesperson of Students Against Discrimination, said, "Whatever the percentage or however many extra seats there are, there must be direct voting so that women feel empowered and get the opportunity to connect with the people."

Among others, Barrister Asaduzzaman Fuad, secretary general of the AB Party; Prof Chowdhury Saima Ferdous of Dhaka University's International Business Department; Aasha Mehreen Amin, joint editor of The Daily Star; Maheen Sultan, senior fellow at the Brac Institute of Governance and Development and member of the Women's Affairs Reform Commission; and Asif M Shaham, associate professor at DU's Development Studies Department, also spoke at the event.

Now in its 21st month, the war in Gaza has caused massive damage to infrastructure including water mains, power lines and roads across the Palestinian territory.

Separately, thousands of demonstrators protested across France on Saturday evening in support of Palestinians and calling for peace in Gaza.

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The Palestine Red Crescent Society said on Thursday that the internet outage hindered its operations by impeding communication with first responders in the field, also blaming Israel for the blackout.

The ministry said that its maintenance and repair

Mostafa Mohsin Montu

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Montu, a prominent figure in Bangladesh's politics, held various key roles throughout his career and was widely respected for his commitment to democratic values and social justice.

He became active in Awami League politics during his student life and later served as president of the Judo League and secretary of the party's Dhaka city unit.

Elected as an MP from Dhaka-3 in 1986, he was expelled from AL in 1992 and subsequently joined

Dr Kamal Hossain's Gonoforum. In 2009, he became its secretary general.

After a falling out with Gonoforum's then General Secretary Reza Kibria, Montu formed a separate faction and served as its president.

In November 2024, the two factions reunited, with Montu as president and Dr Kamal Hossain named emeritus president.

The veteran politician, one of the organisers of the Liberation War, contested the 2018 national election from Dhaka-7 as a Jatiya

Oikya Front candidate.

Montu also played a crucial role in organising political coalitions against the Sheikh Hasina regime.

The first namaz-e-janaza of Montu was held after the Esha prayers yesterday at a mosque on Elephant Road.

The second janaza will be held at 9:00am today in Keraniganj.

Later, after Zohr prayers, people will have the opportunity to pay tributes to him at the Central Shaheed Minar.

He is expected to be laid to rest at Banani Graveyard.

in the abdomen and Manikuzzan in the leg before fleeing the scene. Locals rescued the police personnel and took them to hospital," he also said.

ASI Jahangir Alam's condition is critical. He lost a lot of blood and has required several blood transfusions. He is currently undergoing surgery, said Bagura Sadar OC Hasan Bashir.

Multiple police teams are working to arrest the accused Nishan, OC Bashir added.

Two cops stabbed

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Alam sustained severe injuries, said police.

"We received information that Muradunnabi Nishan, a convicted drug trader with an arrest warrant against him, was at his residence in Shikarpur Purbo Para village. ASI Jahangir Alam, accompanied by Constable Manikuzzaman, went to arrest him," said Jalal Uddin, officer-in-charge of the police outpost.

"While being arrested, Nishan stabbed Jahangir

Probe report to be submitted

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Of the 24 accused, including ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, four have been arrested so far. They are Shariful Islam, former proctor of Begum Rokeya University; Amir Hossain, former assistant sub-inspector of police; Sujan Chandra Roy on June 18, and Shariful Islam and Imran Chowdhury on June 19.

Meanwhile, the prosecution said investigators have yet to locate the body of Muhammad Hridoy, a college student killed in

elder brother, filed the complaint with the ICT's prosecution wing against Hasina and 23 others over his brother's death.

The tribunal also allowed investigators to interrogate Amir Hossain and Sujan Chandra Roy on June 18, and Shariful Islam and Imran Chowdhury on June 19.

Meanwhile, the prosecution said investigators have yet to locate the body of Muhammad Hridoy, a college student killed in

Gazipur during the mass uprising on August 5.

The tribunal earlier granted a two-month extension, until August 17, to submit the investigation report on Hridoy's killing in Konabari, Gazipur, alongside a related case.

In another development, the tribunal cancelled the bail of Daud Sheikh, an accused in a 1971 war crimes case, for failing to appear on three consecutive dates. A warrant has been issued for his arrest.

Those who filed the appeals with the SC against the HC verdict are Russel, Zion, Shokal, Rafat, Mizan, Monir, Apu, Tanvir, Amartya and Akash, according to lawyers Porag and Dulu.

DSCC shifts

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Defence lawyer Md Masud Hasan Chowdhury Porag, who represents nine convicts, told The Daily Star that the trial court has sentenced 20 persons to death and five persons, who are also Buet students and meritorious, to life imprisonment and the High Court has upheld the lower court judgement although many of them even did not touch Abrar during the incident of his torture.

Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh was elected DSCC mayor on February 1, 2020. Ishraque challenged the results, alleging widespread vote rigging.

Following the July uprising, the Dhaka Election Tribunal nullified the election on March 27, 2025, and declared Ishraque the validly elected mayor.

Legal steps will be taken once a written complaint is filed in connection with the murder, he added.

mayorship. A writ petition by Supreme Court lawyer Md Mamunur Rashid seeking suspension of the verdict and gazette was dismissed by the High Court on May 22. An appeal is currently pending.

On May 26, Mamunur Rashid filed a petition with the Appellate Division to review the HC ruling. On May 29, the Appellate Division observed that questions regarding Ishraque's mayoral post fall under the Election Commission's jurisdiction.

In response, the EC said it had fulfilled its responsibilities by issuing the gazette, and no further action was needed.

The EC officials have been instructed not to serve partisan interests.

The CEC did not comment on a recent meeting in which Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman agreed that the election could be held in February.

"I can't comment on that. I don't know what was discussed behind closed doors."

EC waiting for formal talks with govt

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Finalisation of the updated voter roll -- a crucial step towards ensuring transparency -- is almost done, he said.

In addition, the EC is working on registering political parties and redrawing boundaries of constituencies in order to ensure equitable representation, Nasir said.

"In the existing reality, since they are made lawmakers through party nominations or through some party leader, they remain accountable to that party or the leader, not to the people," said the NCP leader.

Echoing her, Umama Fatema, spokesperson of Students Against Discrimination, said, "Whatever the percentage or however many extra seats there are, there must be direct voting so that women feel empowered and get the opportunity to connect with the people."

Preparations for the upcoming national election have made significant progress, he said, urging

all the EC officials to work collectively.

The CEC said, "Some people might still be hoping to win by capturing all votes from certain polling centres. That option no longer exists. They should wake up. They are daydreaming."

He said, "There's bad news for vote terrorists: no one will be spared if they resort to violence or irregularities. There will be zero tolerance..."

on with the autorickshaw before crashing into a microbus.

In Brahmanbaria, a driver of a Dhaka-bound microbus died on the spot after it hit a parked truck in the Islampur area of Bijoynagar upazila on noon.

There were no other passengers in the vehicles at the time, said Rajib Ahmed, in charge of the Islampur police outpost.

The truck has been seized and handed over to the highway police," he added.

In Faridpur, a 29-year-old motorcyclist was killed when a bus hit the motorcycle from behind on the Dhaka-Barishal regional highway around noon.

The victim, Trisha Akhter, was a passenger on the autorickshaw.

Imran Sheikh, of Modhukhali upazila, was riding towards Faridpur on the rickshaw van, said Nilphamari Sadar Police OC Abdur Rouf.

In Nilphamari, a young man was killed when a motorcycle collided head-on with a battery-run autorickshaw van in the Chakkanu Bazar area of Haripur in Nilphamari upazila in Sadar upazila in the afternoon, reports BSS.

Deceased Azizul Islam, 25, a resident of Baroghati in Jhenaidah, died on the spot, said Nilphamari Police Station OC Shahinuzzaman.

[Our correspondents from Pabna, Mymensingh, Narsingdi, Brahmanbaria, and Faridpur contributed to this report.]

Road crashes claim 10 lives

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Following the incident, locals