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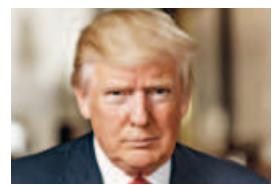
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Dengue cases rising nationwide

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US senator moves to limit Trump's war powers on Iran

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Why we need to hear the women of the hills

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Tigers take on SL in 1st Test today

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A drone photo shows the damage over residential homes at the impact site following missile attacks from Iran on Israel, in Tel Aviv, Israel June 16, 2025.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## BNP switches to election mode

Launches survey in many constituencies

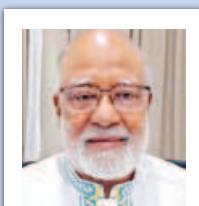
SAJJAD HOSSAIN

As the interim government eyes February for the national election, the BNP has shifted its focus to finalising its candidate selection process and completing local-level groundwork.

Party insiders said that while they earlier demanded polls by December, Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus's recent indication of bringing the timeline forward from April has boosted morale in their grassroots.

**Along with popularity, we'll also consider who remained loyal and faced state repression over the past 14-15 years while nominating candidates.**

BNP leader Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain



BNP leaders said they aim to complete most preparations before the official election schedule is announced. Meanwhile, local-level surveys and assessments are already underway to gauge the popularity and acceptability of potential candidates.

However, political analysts warned that internal rifts during the finalisation of nominations could hurt the party's image. They advised the BNP to give importance to candidate lists prepared at the

EC MOVES FORWARD WITH POLLS PREPARATIONS — P3

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NCP almost ready to seek registration with EC

ASHIK ABDULLAH APU

With just six days left before the Election Commission's registration deadline, the National Citizen Party has nearly completed its preparations for application submission.

To stake its claim at the next general election, the NCP has met key requirements, including district and upazila committees, a central office, a charter, and voter endorsement.

Discussions are now centred on its electoral symbol, another requirement for the registration.

Three senior leaders told this newspaper that the NCP prepared a list of potential symbols, including book, pen, clenched fist, and Shapla (water lily). They said the clenched fist is most likely

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Yunus orders probe into last 3 elections

Expects reforms charter by July

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has ordered an investigation into the roles played by former election commissions in the irregularities surrounding the past three parliamentary elections.

At a meeting of the National Consensus Commission held last night at his official residence, Jamuna, he instructed the relevant authorities to immediately form a committee to conduct the probe.

The committee will investigate the role of former chief election commissioners, election commissioners and secretaries of the EC Secretariat involved in organising the polls.

It was the Electoral Reform Commission, in its report submitted to Yunus in January, that called for the investigation and action against those found complicit.

Badru Alam Majumdar, who was the chief of the Electoral Reform Commission, attended yesterday's meeting as a member of the consensus commission.

He said the political parties have agreed that it is necessary to probe the role of all officials involved in the past

three controversial elections and hold them accountable.

Consensus commission Vice-Chairman Prof Ali Riaz, and members Iftekharuzzaman, Safar Raj Hossain, and Mohammad Ayub Miah also attended the meeting.

Chief Adviser's Principal Secretary Siraz Uddin Mia and CA's Special

**A committee will be formed to probe the role of former CECs, election commissioners and EC secretaries in organising the polls.**

Assistant Monir Haider, among others, were also present.

At the meeting, the commission members informed the chief adviser about the progress on the July Charter.

"Consensus has been reached on several issues. It will be possible to finalise the charter very soon based on

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

## Ishraque crowns himself Dhaka South mayor

Accuses govt of being 'politically motivated' for delaying his oath taking

DIPAN NANDY

BNP leader Ishraque Hossain has begun discharging duties as the "self-declared" mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), despite not having taken an oath of office.

Ishraque yesterday held meetings with DSCC officials and employees under a banner referring to him as the "Honourable Mayor".

On June 3, Ishraque had declared at a rally at Nagar Bhaban that if the government failed to swear him in, he would take the mayoral oath on his own at the Central Shaheed Minar with the support of Dhaka residents, voters, and the general public, and assume the mayor's office accordingly.

Though he has yet to take the oath, he began operating in a "parallel" capacity yesterday, assuming responsibilities typically held by the DSCC mayor.

He has already established a "Mayor's Cell", under which ward-level monitoring committees are being formed and connected to a central control room.

As part of his previously announced programme, Ishraque was scheduled to address a press conference yesterday afternoon. Before that, at around 10:00am,

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BNP leader Ishraque Hossain speaks at a meeting organised by employees and officials from the Waste Management Department of the Dhaka South City Corporation at the Nagar Bhaban yesterday. The screen at the back describes him as the 'mayor'. Ishraque has, however, not been able to take the oath of office.

PHOTO: STAR

Tigers take on SL in 1st Test today

P11

Iran threatens to leave anti-nuke treaty

REUTERS, Dubai

Iranian parliamentarians are preparing a bill that could push Tehran toward exiting the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the foreign ministry said yesterday, while reiterating Tehran's official stance against developing nuclear weapons.

"In light of recent developments, we will take an appropriate decision. Government has to enforce parliament bills but such a proposal is just being prepared and we will coordinate in the later stages with parliament," the ministry's spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said, when asked at a press conference about Tehran potentially leaving the NPT.

The NPT, which Iran ratified in 1970, guarantees countries the right to pursue civilian nuclear power in return

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ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES  
Govt to form commission, enact law

UN working group hails move, meets chief adviser, law adviser

STAR REPORT

The government has decided to form a permanent commission and enact a law within a month to prevent incidents of enforced disappearance in the future.

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul disclosed the matter to journalists after a meeting with a delegation from the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances at the Secretariat yesterday.

"One of the interim government's commitments was to investigate and prosecute cases of enforced disappearances. We met the UN working group today. They praised some of our activities. They also hailed the initiative to enact the law."

The delegation from the UN working group, comprising its Vice-Chairperson Grazyna Baranowska, and member Ana Lorena Delgadillo Perez, began a four-day visit to Bangladesh on Sunday.

On the first day of the visit, the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Türk criticises legal changes to 'ban entity, activities'  
Stresses fair, inclusive polls

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk has expressed concern over recent legal amendments that allow "banning political parties, organisations and their activities" in Bangladesh.

"This unduly restricts the freedoms of association, expression, and assembly," he said in his address at the 59th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Türk also noted that dialogue between Bangladesh's interim government and political parties was encouraging. "I urge meaningful advances on reforms, to create the environment for free and inclusive elections."

On May 12, the interim government -- formed after the ouster of the Awami League-led regime on August 5 -- banned all activities of the AL, including its digital operations, under the Anti-Terrorism Act. The ban will remain in

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# UN scales back global aid plan

Blames 'deepest funding cuts ever'

AFP, Geneva

The United Nations said yesterday it was drastically scaling back its global humanitarian aid plans because of the "deepest funding cuts ever" – leaving tens of millions of people facing dire straits.

The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said it was seeking \$29 billion in funding for 2025 compared to the \$44 billion originally requested in December, in a "hyper prioritised" appeal.

Since US President Donald Trump returned to office in January, the United States – the world's top donor – has heavily slashed foreign aid, causing havoc in the humanitarian sector across the globe.

Drastic US funding cuts have had dramatic consequences for emergency aid, vaccination campaigns and the distribution of drugs to fight AIDS.

Other major donor countries have also cut back their contributions in the face of an uncertain economic outlook.

"Brutal funding cuts leave us with

brutal choices," OCHA chief Tom Fletcher said in a statement.

"All we ask is one percent of what you choose to spend last year on war. But this isn't just an appeal for money – it's a call for global responsibility, for human solidarity, for a commitment to end the suffering."

In late April, while visiting a hospital in Kandahar in Afghanistan, Fletcher warned: "Cutting funding for those in greatest need is not something to boast about... The impact of aid cuts is that millions die."

With 2025 nearly halfway through, the UN has received only \$5.6 billion out of the \$44 billion originally sought for this year – a mere 13 percent.

In total, the original plan covered more than 70 countries and aimed to assist nearly 190 million vulnerable people.

Even so, that plan acknowledged there were 115 million people the UN would not be able to reach.

"We have been forced into a triage of human survival," Fletcher said yesterday.

The mathematics "is cruel, and the

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Donning masks, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and other members of National Consensus Commission meet at the Jamuna yesterday. The government has issued health guidelines following a recent spike in coronavirus cases.

PHOTO: CA'S PRESS WING

## NCP almost ready to seek registration

FROM PAGE 1  
to be selected.

"We will submit our application to the Election Commission before the deadline. Our draft constitution has already been approved in general meeting. Another meeting will be held this week to resolve some technical issues and finalise it," said NCP Joint Convenor Sarwar Tushar.

The EC will carry out field verification and make a decision based on its regulations once the application is submitted.

As per the EC registration criteria, a party must have a committee in at least 22 districts and 100 upazilas to apply for registration.

The NCP office cell said the party has so far formed committees in 30 districts, 120 upazilas, and two metropolises, along with 13 cells and 10 wings.

In early June, the party began announcing regional committees, starting with Dhaka's two city units.

Prior to Eid, it announced upazila-level committees in Panchagarh Sadar, Tetulia, Debiganj, Boda, Kotalipara in Gopalganj, Lohagara and Kalia in Narail, Bancharmpur and Sarail in Brahmanbaria, and Kachua in Bagerhat.

District-level committees have also been announced in Shoronghola,

Tangail, Kurigram, Narayanganj, Jhalakathi, Meherpur, Barishal, Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Lalmonirhat, Narail, Chuadanga, and Munshiganj. After Eid, committees were declared in several upazilas in Bandarban, Bogura, Jamalpur, and Tangail.

To qualify for registration under existing laws, a new political party must have a functional central office and effective committees in at least one-third of the country's administrative districts.

It must also provide written endorsement by at least 200 registered voters from each of 100 upazilas or metropolitan police precincts.

The NCP is using the 15th floor of Rupayan Tower in the capital's Banglamotor as its temporary central office. Leaders said the party will mention this address as its central office in the EC application, but it is actively searching for a new permanent headquarters in or near Katabon, Shahbagh, Segunbagicha, or Banglamotor areas.

For registration with the EC, a party must submit 10 documents, including the party's constitution, electoral manifesto (if available), internal regulations (if available), party logo and flag, and names of all central committee

members.

The other necessary documents are bank account details and current balance, funding sources, a letter of authorisation for the applicant, a non-refundable treasury receipt for Tk 5,000 as the registration fee, and proof of meeting one of the three EC set criteria.

While the first two EC set criteria are for old parties that participated in polls before, the third is that the party has a central office, a central committee, offices in at least one-third of the administrative districts and 100 upazilas or metropolitan areas, and a minimum of 200 voters as its members in each upazila.

On March 10, the EC issued a public notice inviting applications for registration of new political parties, setting the initial deadline for April 20. The deadline was later extended to June 22 following appeals from several aspiring parties, including the NCP.

Emerging from student leaders who spearheaded the 2024 uprising and their platform for citizens, the NCP was launched on February 28. More than a dozen new political parties have surfaced since the July uprising that toppled the Awami League government on August 5 last year.

resumption of emergency civic services – including birth and death registration, inheritance certificates, and citizenship documentation – at ward offices.

Meanwhile, he accused the government of delaying his assumption of office as DSCC mayor, saying it is a politically motivated attempt to obstruct his legitimate authority.

Ishraque claimed the ruling government is intentionally preventing a BNP candidate from taking charge, instead installing its own administrator for political gain.

In response to a journalist's question, Ishraque said that following the Appellate Division's dismissal of a writ challenging his mayoral Gazette, the existing DSCC administrator has "no legal standing".

"A parallel administration has been operating illegally. I was elected by the people, and my position has been reaffirmed through the courts."

"The government's imposition of an administrator is not only unlawful but has also led to corruption within the city corporation."

the Israel-Iran conflict expected to be a top priority.

Before leaving for the summit on Sunday, Trump was asked what he was doing to de-escalate the situation. "I hope there's going to be a deal. I think it's time for a deal," he told reporters. "Sometimes they have to fight it out."

In Washington, two US officials told Reuters that Trump had vetoed an Israeli plan in recent days to kill Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

When asked about the Reuters report, Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu told Fox News on Sunday: "There's so many false reports of conversations that never happened, and I'm not going to get into that."

China urged Iran and Israel to "immediately" take steps to reduce tensions.

Pakistani authorities have closed all major border crossings with Iran for pedestrian traffic amid escalating cross-border strikes between Iran and Israel.

The Kremlin said Russia remains ready to act as a mediator in the conflict, and Moscow's previous proposal to store Iranian uranium in Russia remains on the table.

Oil prices edged down yesterday, after surging 7 percent on Friday, as the military strikes by Israel and Iran over the weekend avoided oil production and export facilities. While investors remain on edge, stock and currency markets in Asia were little moved.

Group of Seven leaders gathered in the Canadian Rockies on Sunday with

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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পূর্বালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

## Summon Hasina via newspapers

## ICT issues order

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday asked the relevant authorities to publish notices in two newspapers asking ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan to appear before it on June 24.

The tribunals issued the order in connection with a case over crimes against humanity committed during the July uprising after the prosecution informed the court that despite drives at different places, the two could not be arrested.

On June 1, the prosecution formally pressed charges against Hasina, Asaduzzaman and former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun for murder, attempted murder, torture and use of lethal weapons, among others.

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DENGUE, COVID  
Health guidelines issued for HSC exams

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid a surge in Covid-19 and dengue cases across the country, the Inter Education Board Coordination Committee yesterday issued emergency health guidelines ahead of this year's Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent examinations.

The directive, released by Prof Khandoker Ehsanul Kabir, chairman of the Dhaka Education Board and head of the coordination committee, outlined several precautionary measures for examination centres.

All candidates and exam personnel will be required to wear masks at entry points. Hand sanitiser

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PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

This shop inside the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital campus sells essential items for patients and students. With temperatures soaring across the country once again, its shelves are now dominated by hand fans, portable fans, and stand fans. The photo was taken recently.

HELEMUL ALAM and PRABIR DAS

Sourav Chakrabarti, an HSC student from Noakhali, came to Daudkandi in Cumilla to spend his vacation with relatives. However, his holiday turned into a period of suffering after he was diagnosed with dengue.

He was admitted to Mugda General Hospital on June 14 and is now in slightly better condition after receiving treatment.

Sourav's father Shabuj Chakrabarti is also undergoing treatment in the hospital's dedicated dengue ward after contracting the virus.

"Many people in our area have been infected by this deadly virus," said Shabuj.

Tahmidul Islam, a resident of Jurain, was admitted to the hospital with a high fever on June 12. He said he is feeling a bit better after treatment but has not fully recovered.

A nurse at the hospital reported that 26 dengue patients are currently being treated in the hospital's dedicated dengue ward on the 10th floor. She noted that the number of dengue patients is increasing day by day.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), at least 30 people have died from dengue across the country



**At least 30 people have died from dengue across the country so far this year, while 5,988 others have been hospitalised, according to the DGHS.**

so far this year, while 5,988 others have been hospitalised as of yesterday.

Among the hospitalised patients, 1,393 are currently receiving treatment in different hospitals in Dhaka. Of them, 38 patients are being treated at the Mugda Medical College Hospital.

Meanwhile, Barguna is now the hotspot of

dengue cases in the country, with 1,685 cases reported.

Prof Nazmul of Suhrawardy Hospital said while their hospital has not opened a dedicated dengue ward, patients are being treated as needed.

He noted that although fewer patients are being admitted, many are receiving treatment at home.

He also mentioned a rising trend in chikungunya cases this year. "Patients are coming in with dengue, chikungunya, and coronavirus infections, which often causes confusion among both patients and doctors," he said.

Dr HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College, explained that patients with fever and cold symptoms often have viral infections such as influenza or Covid-19.

Covid-19 patients may also experience symptoms like loss of smell and mild diarrhoea. On the other hand, a fever without cold symptoms may indicate dengue or chikungunya, he added.

"We are seeing many chikungunya patients, most of whom do not require

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## Chief RO appointed for Ducusu polls

## DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University has appointed Prof Mohammad Zashim Uddin of Department of Botany as the chief returning officer for the upcoming Ducusu (Dhaka University Central Students' Union) election.

The appointment was made under Section 8(F) of the Ducusu Constitution by Vice-Chancellor Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan and was formally approved at the university's Syndicate meeting yesterday, according to a press release from the university's public relations office.

The press release also states that to assist the chief returning officer, nine additional returning officers have also been appointed.

They are Prof A S M Mohiuddin of the Department of Soil, Water and Environment; Prof SM Shameem Reza of the Department of Mass Communication

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13TH NATIONAL ELECTION  
EC moves forward with preparations

## Seeks updates on institutions to be used as polling centres

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahead of the 13th national parliamentary election, the Election Commission (EC) has requested updated information on minor repairs at educational institutions used or likely to be used as polling centres.

In a directive issued yesterday, the EC asked four ministries and two directorates to take necessary measures and submit progress reports within a month.

With this move, the EC is advancing its preparatory work for the upcoming national polls. The commission has already approved the policy for setting up polling centres.

The commission has emphasised the need to remain fully prepared for the 13th parliamentary election, whether it takes place in February or April next year. As the constitutional body responsible for organising the polls, it is prioritising the preparations for the election.

The EC has already made significant progress in several key areas, including updating the voter list, finalising parliamentary constituency boundaries, and registering new political parties.

However, the EC has not yet received any official communication regarding the joint statement issued in London by the interim government and BNP, which suggested that the election could be held in the week before Ramadan, in the first half of February 2026.

On Sunday, during a press briefing, Chief Election

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



Indiscriminate dumping of waste at this spot near Dhamondi Lake has become a regular sight. During heavy rains, the accumulated garbage is washed directly into the lake, worsening its pollution. The photo was taken near the Dhamondi 32 area in the capital yesterday.

ROAD ACCIDENT  
390 killed, 1,182 injured during Eid travel

Says Jatri Kalyan Samity

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road crashes and fatalities saw an increase during this year's Eid-ul-Azha compared to the same period last year, the Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity said yesterday.

At least 390 people were killed and 1,182 injured in 379 road accidents between May 31 and June 14 this year – marking a 16.07 percent increase in deaths, a 55.11 percent in injuries, and a 22.65 percent in crashes compared to the same period last year.

During the Eid-ul-Azha rush last year, at least 336 people were killed and 762 injured in 309 road crashes, the organisation said.

Mozammel Hoque Chowdhury, secretary general of the organisation, revealed the information at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity.

He said heavy rains had damaged highways and created potholes, which subsequently led to road crashes.

Many post-Eid crashes occurred as drivers continued operating vehicles without adequate rest, he added.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Repeal public service ordinance  
Demand Secretariat employees

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Secretariat employees have demanded a complete repeal of the recently enacted Public Service (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, rejecting any review or revision.

As part of their ongoing movement, which began before Eid-ul-Azha, the employees staged a rally and procession inside the Secretariat around 11:30am yesterday.

They first gathered in front of Building No-6 and marched towards the Cabinet Division. Around 12:00pm, their leaders held a brief meeting under the Cabinet Division building and announced the next day's programme.

Nurul Islam, co-chairman of the Bangladesh Secretariat Officers and Employees Unity Forum, said, "We don't care about amendments or revisions. We only demand repeal of this ordinance. There is no room for retreat."

He also condemned those involved in passing the ordinance, saying, "This 'black ordinance' was secretly passed through the Advisory Council. We condemn everyone involved."

Nazrul Islam, co-general secretary of the Unity Forum, warned senior government officials,

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

## KALIGANJ UPAZILA

# Maldah erosion threatens vital road, bridge

SDILIP ROY, *Salmonirhat*

A vital road and a bridge along the Bangladesh-India border in Salmonirhat's Kaliganj upazila are at risk of collapsing as erosion of the Maldah river has intensified.

The nearly 500-metre road was originally 18 feet wide. However, it has now shrunk to around 9-10 feet due to erosion. The bridge, located nearby, is also at risk of being washed away at any moment.

The road serves as a key patrol route for Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel along the border. If it collapses entirely, it could severely disrupt BGB vigilance in the area, raising concern among both BGB officials and local residents.

According to locals, the erosion has been worsening over the last one year. So far, the river devoured at least 10 homesteads and around 50 bighas of cropland in Bogurapara and Malgarapara villages. As monsoon looms this year, more than 50 homesteads and nearly 200 bighas of

arable land are now vulnerable.

Locals expressed concern that the erosion will intensify further during monsoon, and urged the Bangladesh Water Development Board to take immediate preventive measures.

"My homestead and three bighas of cropland were lost to the river, leaving me



with no choice but to relocate elsewhere," said Ismail Hossain, 58, of Bogurapara village, adding, "If the road and bridge also collapse, we'll be completely cut off from the district town and other areas."

Bulbuli Bewa, 65, of Malgarapara shared her plight.

"My house and half bigha of land are

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

### Ananta Apparels Limited

Ananta Plaza, 136 Elephant Road,  
Dhaka - 1205

#### NOTICE OF MEMBERS MEETING OF ANANTA APPARELS LIMITED

Pursuant to the order dated 20.05.2025 passed by the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh in Company Matter No. 792 of 2025, a notice is hereby given to all members that the Meeting of the Members of the Company shall be held at the registered office of the Company at Ananta Plaza, 136 Elephant Road, Dhaka-1205 on 9th July, 2025 Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. to consider the proposal for demerger of Ananta Apparels Limited into 5 (five) separate legal entities under section 228 read with section 229 of the Companies Act 1994 and to transact the following businesses:

1. To approve the Scheme of Arrangement for Demerger of Ananta Apparels Limited into 5 (Five) separate legal entities namely Ananta Apparels Limited (Demerged Company) and (i) Ananta Casual Wear Limited Restored Company 1) & (ii) Ananta Denim Technology Limited (Restored Company 2) & (iii) Ananta Fashion Limited (Restored Company 3) & (iv) DNV Clothing Limited (Restored Company 4)

To consider and if thought fit, to pass with or without modification(s), the following resolution by a majority in number representing three-fourth in value of the members:

**AGENDA-I:** Pursuant to the provisions of Section 228 read with section 229 and section 346(6) of the Companies Act, 1994 and read with Rule 8 of the Companies Rules, 2009 and subject to such conditions and modifications as may be prescribed or imposed by the Hon'ble High Court Division while sanctioning the Scheme and subject to the approval of the creditors at their respective meetings, consent/approval of the members be and is hereby accorded for Demerger/Splitting of Ananta Apparels Limited into 5 (five) separate legal entities namely Ananta Apparels Limited (Demerged Company) and (i) Ananta Casual Wear Limited (Restored Company 1) & (ii) Ananta Denim Technology Limited (Restored Company 2) & (iii) Ananta Fashion Limited (Restored Company 3) & DNV Clothing Limited (Restored Company 4), and the Scheme of Demerger for the same be and is hereby approved and shall become effective from the date stated in the said Scheme of Demerger.

**AGENDA-II:** To approve the proposed Shareholding structure of the restored entities namely, Ananta Casual Wear Limited, Ananta Denim Technology Limited, Ananta Fashion Limited and DNV Clothing Limited.

**AGENDA-III:** To approve the Board of Ananta Apparels Limited be and is hereby authorized to do all such acts, deeds, matters and things, as it may, in its absolute discretion deem requisite, desirable, appropriate or necessary to give effect to this resolution and effectively implement the Scheme of Demerger and to accept such modifications, amendments, limitations and/or conditions, if any, which may be required and/or imposed by the Hon'ble High Court Division, if and when applicable while sanctioning the Scheme of Demerger and to delegate such powers as the Board may deem fit and proper.

All shareholders of the Company as of 9th July, 2025 are requested to make it convenient to attend the meeting in time.

Copy of the Scheme of Demerger can be inspected during office hour at the Registered office of the Company at Ananta Plaza, 136 Elephant Road, Dhaka – 1205.

By order of the Board  
Md. Muzahidul Islam  
Company Secretary

## BNP switches

FROM PAGE 1  
grassroots, as these reflect local sentiment and could help prevent infighting.

Party insiders also expect tensions once the nominations are announced. Any internal discord, they fear, may be used by rivals to question the party's unity.

According to leaders, the party will not follow a single formula for nominations. Along with survey results, candidates will be assessed based on their involvement in the July-August movement, long-term participation in anti-government protests, experience of persecution, and public reputation.

### CANDIDATE SCRUTINY

As per the party's constitution, BNP's Parliamentary Board will select candidates from a shortlist recommended by each constituency. The Standing Committee will serve as the board.

Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, a member of the Standing Committee, told The Daily Star that applications will be invited after the election schedule is announced. Nomination interviews will be conducted, and input will be collected from upazila and district units.

Mosharraf said that popularity has always been a key factor, as chances of winning depend on public support.

"Along with popularity, we'll also consider who remained loyal and faced state repression over the past 14-15 years while nominating candidates."

Leaders said the ability to lead in parliament and assume governance responsibilities will also be considered -- candidates must be thoughtful and responsible, not just symbolic figures.

Opinions from the grassroots will carry significant weight, they said. A candidate with strong local support may be selected despite minor shortcomings. In cases with multiple qualified contenders, the final decision will consider administrative input, organisational recommendations, and field reports.

BNP leaders acknowledged that while it may not be possible to find candidates entirely free of controversy, those with minimal baggage will be prioritised.

Standing Committee

member Salauddin Ahmed said, "We will choose candidates whom people can accept and who are not widely controversial. Some degree of controversy may exist, but the less controversial ones will be prioritised."

The July uprising, he added, will be a key consideration in candidate selection.

### ELECTION VIBE

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Salauddin called on the interim government to formally notify the Election Commission of the February timeline, as discussed in the meeting between Yunus and BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman in London.

"An election environment and excitement have arrived. As a political party focused on elections, we are always ready. We update our strategy when needed, both before and after the election schedule is announced."

Party sources said Tarique has become more engaged at the grassroots level since August 5 through events linked to BNP's 31-point reform agenda.

During the Awami League's rule, he avoided public interaction due to restrictions on airing his speeches. But over the past 10 months, he has taken a more active role, enabling him to better assess district-level leadership.

BNP activists have already begun early campaigning -- posters, placards, and billboards showcasing the party's 15-year struggle are visible in many areas.

Groups of party activists are holding indoor meetings, outdoor rallies, and door-to-door campaigns. The leadership has warned that any signs of infighting could lead to disciplinary action.

### SEAT SHARING

BNP leaders said discussions with allies on sharing seats will begin soon. These include Nogorik Oikya, JSD (Rab), Biplobi Workers Party, Ganashamhati Andolok, LDP, Gono Odhikar Parishad, Ganoforum, National People's Party, Bangladesh Jatiya Party, Nationalist Democratic Movement, and the I2-Party Alliance.

A senior leader, requesting anonymity, said, "We haven't formally discussed seat sharing yet in the party forum, but talks with allies will begin shortly. The main challenge will be balancing respect for partners with our own electoral strengths."

### LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)  
COMPANY MATTER NO. 696 OF 2025

**Abdus Sobhan, Son of Muscle Uddin and Soburon Nessa**, Shareholder cum Managing Director of Riya Rathin Trading Ltd. having its registered office at GC-035, Jamuna Future Park, Ka-244, Kuril, Vatara, Dhaka-1229, Dhaka.

.....Petitioner

Registrar, Joint Stock Companies & Firms, & Another

.....Respondents

Notice is hereby given that an application under Section 81(2) and 85(3) read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 for condonation of delay in holding the Annual General Meetings (AGM) of Riya Rathin Trading Ltd. for the year, 2021 to 2024 and to excuse of person/persons in default was moved before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the petitioner.

Upon preliminary hearing on 05.05.2025, **Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel** was pleased to admit the said application. Any one desirous of opposing the matter may appear before the Hon'ble court either personally or through his/her Legal Counsel on the aforesaid date. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary costs.

**Md. Akram Uddin**  
Advocate

The Supreme Court of Bangladesh  
Room No. 5010 (Annex Building)  
Supreme Court Bar Association, Shahbag, Dhaka

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## World faces new nuclear arms race

### Warn researchers

AFP, Stockholm

Most of the world's nuclear-armed states continued to modernise their arsenals last year, setting the stage for a new nuclear arms race, researchers warned yesterday.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said nuclear powers including the United States and Russia -- which account for around 90 percent of the world's stockpile -- had spent time last year "upgrading existing weapons and adding newer versions".

Since the end of the Cold War, old warheads have generally been dismantled quicker than new ones have been deployed, resulting in a decrease in the overall number of warheads.



A Palestinian woman mourns at the grave of a relative in Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

## UN scales back

FROM PAGE 2  
consequences are heartbreaking".

"Too many people will not get the support they need, but we will save as many lives as we can with the resources we are given," he said.

Aid will now be directed so that it can "reach the people and places facing the most urgent needs", with those in "extreme or catastrophic conditions" as the starting

point, said Fletcher. "This will ensure that limited resources are directed where they can do the most good -- as quickly as possible," the statement said.

Fletcher's call came as the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) issued a joint early warning report identifying worsening hunger in 13 hotspots.

## 4 children raped

FROM PAGE 12  
two separate cases, said Md Salah Uddin, OC of Pangsha Police Station.

Shihab was arrested around 1:30am yesterday. During preliminary interrogation, he confessed to the crime, while forensic evidence was also recovered from his clothes, the OC said. He was sent to jail later in the day, while efforts are on to arrest Hasmat.

In Habiganj's Nabiganj upazila, a 21-year-old garment worker was raped on a moving bus while travelling home from Dhaka on Sunday.

The woman, a resident of Baniachong upazila, first took a bus to Sylhet and then boarded another headed for Baniachong. When the bus neared Sherpur area, she was the only passenger left. Taking advantage, the driver Sabir Mia and his helper Liton Mia raped her, said Sheikh Md Kamruzzaman, OC of Nabiganj Police Station.

Her screams alerted locals, police and army personnel, who stopped the bus and detained Sabir, but Liton managed to flee. A case was filed that night.

Sabir was later sent to jail, while police are trying to arrest Liton.

In Gazipur's Sreepur upazila, a teenage girl was raped inside an ATM booth by a security guard who had promised her father to help her get a job.

The father, who knew the man, Md Liton Mia, 45, trusted him and accompanied his daughter to the booth in Mulaid area yesterday.

Liton led the girl into a small room inside, told her and the father an employer would arrive shortly, and then sent the father home. He then raped the girl, said Mohammad Abdul Barik, OC of Sreepur Police Station.

"The accused is currently on the run. We are trying to arrest him," he said.

(Our correspondents from Munshiganj, Faridpur, Moulvibazar and Gazipur contributed to this report.)

## The real reason Israel attacked Iran

AGENCIES

As the Israeli-Iranian confrontation enters its fourth day, casualties on both sides are mounting. At least 220 people have been killed in Iran and at least 24 in Israel. Despite the deadly response from Iran, Israeli officials have continued to insist that attacks on various Iranian nuclear and military facilities were necessary.

A number of justifications have been broadcast to the Israeli public, but none explains the true reasons why the Israeli government decided to carry out the unilateral, unprovoked assault.

### The nature of campaign as it unfolds seems to indicate that Israel never meant to wipe out Iranian nuclear activities

The Israeli government claims that the strike was a "preventive" one, meant to address an immediate, inevitable threat on Iran's part to construct a nuclear bomb. There appears to be no evidence for this claim.

Additionally, Israel has suggested that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report released on June 12 that condemned Iran for material violations of its Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) commitments until the early 2000s constitutes such an emergency. But even the IAEA seems to reject that claim.

The nature of the campaign as it

unfolds also seems to indicate that Israel never meant to wipe out Iranian nuclear activities, reports Al Jazeera online.

A third suggestion is that Israel has its heart set on jumpstarting "regime change" in Tehran. Even if that were the case, presuming that all the Iranians are waiting for is an Israeli strike to move against the regime demonstrates a profound lack of understanding with regard to the forces driving Iranian politics.

While many Iranians undoubtedly oppose the Islamic Republic, Iranians of all political persuasions are consistently "patriotic", committed to supporting Iranian sovereignty and independence from any attempts by external elements to impose their agendas on their country.

The "security" is what has motivated Israel's actions from Gaza to Yemen to Lebanon and Syria, and now in Iran. Such a "security regime" must expand continuously, of course. It can never stop. By striking Iran, Netanyahu has gone for broke, staking a claim for complete and absolute impunity for Israel as well as for himself, in The Hague as well as in domestic courts.

Will this be Netanyahu's salvation? Will the Israeli public forgive him for his abject failures at home and horrid transgressions in Gaza? When observing the current sense of jubilation in public Israeli discourse, this may very well be the case.

The long lines stretching from every open store, hardware to food, demonstrate that Israelis have entered blank survival mode. A docile citizenry may be good for Netanyahu, but it portends ill for any attempt to build and defend a robust Israeli society.

## US senator moves to limit Trump's war powers on Iran

REUTERS, Washington

A Democratic senator introduced legislation yesterday to prevent US President Donald Trump from using military force against Iran without Congress's authorisation, as an escalating battle between Israel and Iran raised fears of broader conflict.

Tim Kaine of Virginia has tried for years to wrest back Congress's authority to declare war from the White House.

During Trump's first term, in 2020, Kaine introduced a similar resolution to rein in Trump's ability to wage war against Iran. That measure passed both the Senate and House of Representatives, winning some Republican support, but did not garner enough votes to survive the Republican president's veto.

Kaine said his latest war powers resolution underscores that the US Constitution gives Congress, not the president, the sole power to declare war and requires that any hostility with Iran be explicitly authorised by a declaration of war or specific authorisation for the use of military force.

"It is not in our national security interest to get into a war with Iran unless that war is absolutely necessary to defend the United States. I am deeply concerned that the recent escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran could quickly pull the United States into another endless conflict," Kaine said in a statement. Under US law, war powers resolutions are privileged, meaning that the Senate will be required to promptly consider and vote on the matter.

Mizan said the execution was carried out after all legal procedures were completed and the verdict was upheld by the supreme court.

Yesterday, Iran's chief justice Ghahmoshsein Mohseni Ejei vowed swift trials for people arrested on suspicion of collaborating with Israel.

## Iran hangs man convicted of spying for Israel

AFP, Tehran

Iran's judiciary said yesterday it hanged a man arrested in 2023 and convicted of being a spy for Israel's Mossad intelligence agency, as fighting raged between the two foes.

Esmaeil Fekri, a Mossad agent convicted of the capital offences of 'corruption on Earth' and 'moharebeh' (waging war against God) was hanged after going through the full process of criminal procedure," the judiciary's Mizan Online news website said.

Mizan said the execution was carried out after all legal procedures were completed and the verdict was upheld by the supreme court.

Yesterday, Iran's chief justice Ghahmoshsein Mohseni Ejei vowed swift trials for people arrested on suspicion of collaborating with Israel.

## Britain appoints

FROM PAGE 12  
overseas and is tasked with defending Britain and its interests.

Metreweli previously held a director-level role in MI5, and studied anthropology at the University of Cambridge, the government said.

MI5 has had two female bosses, starting with Stella Rimington in 1992. Eliza Manningham-Buller ran MI5 between 2002 and 2007.

In 2023, Britain named its first female director of GCHQ.

Metreweli's appointment comes three decades after the actress Judi Dench first played a female boss of MI6 in the James Bond film "GoldenEye".



**নেতৃত্বো বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়**

নেতৃত্বো-২৪০০, বাংলাদেশ

সংস্থাপন শাখা

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তারিখ: ১৫ জুন ২০২৫ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

**নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

নেতৃত্বো বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নিম্নোক্ত পদসমূহে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে বর্ষিত শর্তাদি পূর্ণ সাপেক্ষে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে:

ক্রম	পদের নাম ও শ্রেণি	পদসংখ্যা	ক্রম	পদের নাম	পদসংখ্যা
০১	সিসিই বিভাগ	২	০৫	নির্বাচী প্রক্রিয়ালয়ী (সিভিস) (গ্রেড ৬)	১
০২	পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব) (গ্রেড ৫)	১	০৬	প্রেসার্যার (গ্রেড ৬)	১
০৩	পরিচালক (পরিকল্পনা ও উন্নয়ন) (গ্রেড ৫)	১	০৭	কুক (গ্রেড ১৬)	১
০৪	উৎপরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব) (গ্রেড ৫)	১	০৮	মেডিকেল এন্ট্রেনেজেন্ট (গ্রেড ১৬)	১

আবেদন শর্ত অন্তর্ভুক্ত ১৬ জুন ২০২৫ খ্রি. আবেদনপত্র আগামী ২৪ জুন ২০২৫ খ্রি. তারিখ ৪:০০ টার মধ্যে রেজিস্ট্রেশন দস্তুর নেতৃত্বো বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, নেতৃত্বো-২৪০০ ঠিকানায় পৌছাতে হবে। বিলৈয়ে প্রাপ্ত আবেদন বিবেচনা করা হবে।

আবেদনের শর্তাবলীসমূহ নিম্নোক্ত তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ করা যাবে।

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## Brace for a COVID-dengue double blow

Proper measures needed to prevent potential outbreaks

We are alarmed by the simultaneous resurgence of COVID and dengue at a time when the healthcare system and the government arms responsible for managing them remain quite unprepared. Of the two health threats, the rise in coronavirus infections—returning after a gap of several years—is particularly concerning, given how far behind public hospitals are in resuming basic testing services. If this situation persists, in an environment proving to be conducive to the spread of these infectious diseases, there could be simultaneous outbreaks, taking things out of control.

Currently, as per a report, over 90 percent of COVID tests are being conducted by private hospitals. In the first 15 days of June, tests were carried out at 20 hospitals, of which only three were government-run. This is because most government hospitals are still unable to conduct testing, with many requiring recalibration of long-unused equipment or facing a shortage of trained technicians in part due to the expiry of a major COVID support project. Although some government hospitals have received test kits and announced plans to resume testing, many have yet to begin. Meanwhile, 11 medical colleges outside Dhaka were instructed to reactivate their RT-PCR facilities. Given that the extended Eid holiday has only just concluded, some delay in resuming or upgrading services is understandable, but we urge swift progress.

Between June 5—when the first COVID death was recorded after the gap—and June 15, there have been four coronavirus-related deaths. As data on infections shows, the virus is quietly regaining ground, and with the Eid holiday now over, and increasing risks of community transmission in public spaces drawing large footfall, there could be a significant uptick if proper measures are not taken. Reports from neighbouring countries about a surge in infections caused by new coronavirus sub-variants also underscore the risk.

Equally worrying has been the parallel spike in dengue cases. From March to May, the number of dengue patients doubled each month. In the first half of June, 1,643 new cases were reported, which is nearly the same as May's total. The dengue risk is particularly grave outside Dhaka where current weather patterns—with excessive rain and humidity—as well as insufficient mosquito control measures in the absence of elected representatives have created an ideal breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes. What makes this situation more alarming is the simultaneous resurgence of coronavirus. Their convergence is bound to have a debilitating effect in areas already underserved by local health infrastructure.

We, therefore, urge the health authorities to expedite their preparations. Without proper interventions—such as mass awareness campaigns, improved testing and treatment facilities, and aggressive mosquito control drives—we risk repeating the mistakes that made previous outbreaks so deadly. Raising awareness is also crucial as most people still seem unaware of the health risks and protocols.

## Alarming increase in default loans

BB must take strict policies to improve banking sector's health

We are concerned about the rising volume of bad loans in the banking sector, which reached a record Tk 420,335 crore at the end of March. This accounts for 24.13 percent of the sector's total loans of Tk 17,41,992 crore. In other words, nearly one-fourth of all loans have become defaulted, which is staggering. According to the latest central bank data, state-run banks had bad loans amounting to Tk 146,407 crore, making up 46 percent of their total disbursed funds, while private banks faced Tk 264,195 crore in defaults, or 20.16 percent of their loans. Moreover, foreign banks had Tk 3,239 crore in bad loans, while specialised banks had Tk 6,494 crore. Additionally, the banking sector faced a provisioning shortfall of Tk 170,666 crore, further weakening its financial stability.

It should be mentioned that this increase in bad loans is largely the result of irregular lending practices during the now-ousted Awami League government, which are now turning into defaults. Reportedly, the rise in defaulted loans has been driven by various factors, including the rescheduling of term loan maturities through a central bank directive, the reclassification of large loans from certain clients as substandard by the Bank Inspection Department, the failure to reschedule existing loans, delays in repaying instalments of rescheduled loans, and the accrual of interest on already classified loan accounts. The recent tightening of loan classification rules has also contributed to this surge. Whereas previously loans were classified as overdue after 270 days, starting from April 2025, they are to be classified as non-performing after just 90 days. In some cases, defaults have also occurred due to genuine business struggles under global economic pressures.

When the Awami League assumed power in 2009, the total volume of defaulted loans stood at just Tk 22,481 crore. Since then, the amount has risen steadily. Economists allege that influential figures close to the then government siphoned large sums from banks through irregular means, much of which was laundered abroad. Moreover, the government allowed banks to conceal the true scale of the crisis. Political appointments, manipulative accounting, nepotism, and a lack of transparency in lending during the AL tenure contributed significantly to the sector's current instability.

We urge the government to take stringent measures to address the growing crisis of non-performing loans. It must act decisively against habitual defaulters and improve financial governance in the sector. At the same time, credible businesses should continue to receive necessary support, while efforts must be made to steadily reduce the volume of bad loans.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Mumtaz Mahal dies

On this day in 1631, Mumtaz Mahal, wife of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, died during childbirth, and in her memory he built the Taj Mahal.

# We must reform the health sector to ensure equity



Mamun Rashid, an economic analyst, is chairman at Financial Excellence Ltd and newly former managing partner at PwC Bangladesh. He was engaged with Bangladesh healthcare industry review and review of the health budget utilisation under the Sixth Five Year Plan.

MAMUN RASHID

In a small village in northern Bangladesh, a mother holds her sick child close, waiting for the only health worker who visits the area once a week. This is not just one family's story but the daily struggle faced by thousands around the country. While Bangladesh has made progress in some health indicators, the ground reality tells a grim story. Especially in rural and low-income areas, people continue to suffer due to a lack of basic medical services. The system is burdened with limited funding, staff shortages, and services that fail to reach those who need them the most. If you are lucky enough, you get a doctor to write you a prescription, and most of the medicines you need will require spending money from your own pocket. If you are extraordinarily lucky, you might get some medicines from the hospitals, but they will likely be of low quality and at times may even be adulterated.

Despite so much talk about development in Bangladesh, healthcare remains one of the most neglected sectors. In the outgoing national budget, an allocation equivalent to only 0.74 percent of the country's GDP has been set for public health. This is way below the five percent allocation recommended by WHO. As a result, most patients here are forced to pay out of their own pockets when they need treatment. In fact, in Bangladesh around 68.5 percent of all health spending comes directly from the patients—one of the highest rates in the world. For the poor, this often means choosing between medicine and food. Our health ministry is one of the top ones that don't have a good track record of spending their budget allocation efficiently, not to mention the rampant corruption and malpractices contaminating its activities.

If someone living in an upazila or union falls ill, finding proper treatment can be a huge challenge. Union-level health and family welfare centres are supposed to provide basic care, but many are not functioning properly. The 2022 Bangladesh Health Facility Survey found that a significant number of public healthcare facilities across the country face severe shortages of

trained staff, equipment, electricity, and medicines. These gaps have left large sections of our population without access to even the minimum healthcare support.

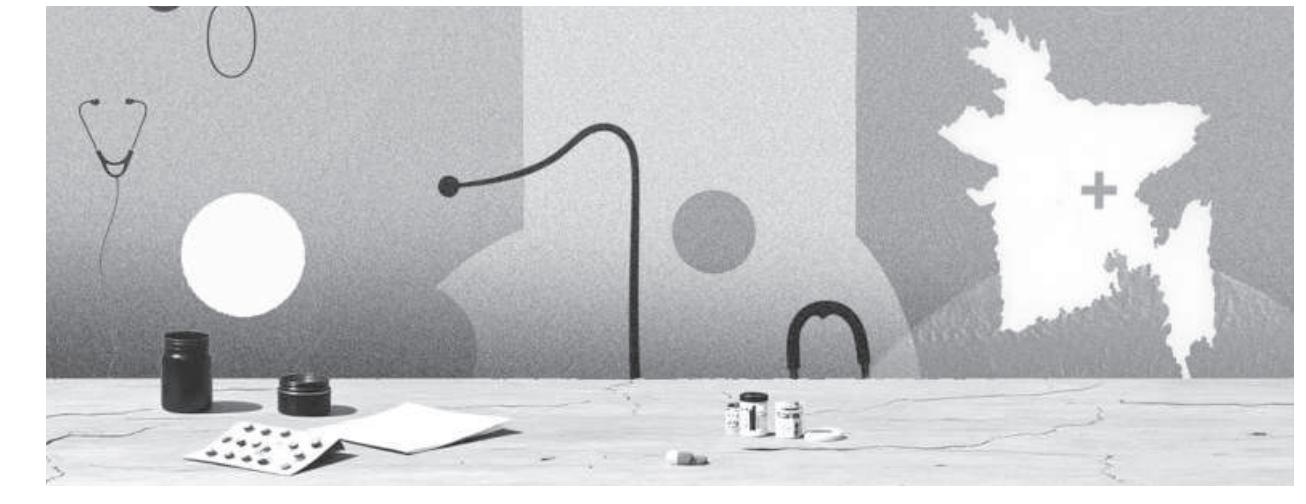
To address these long-standing problems, the Health Sector Reform Commission has made some serious recommendations. One of the core ideas is that primary healthcare should be recognised as a basic right under the constitution. This would mean providing free and essential health services to all citizens—whether they live in Dhaka or in a remote char area. If implemented, this move could bring real change to how healthcare is delivered across the country.

Services (DGHS), to reduce overlap and confusion.

Healthcare for women, especially in rural Bangladesh, has long been overlooked. The commission has recommended setting up a national institute for women's health that would focus on issues like maternal care, safe childbirth, family planning, and diseases that particularly affect women. This is long overdue and would mark a significant step towards making healthcare more inclusive.

To decentralise healthcare, the commission recommends forming 11 regional health authorities at the divisional level. These bodies would take local level decisions and speed up services. In cities, it proposes that primary healthcare centres be managed at the ward level, ensuring quicker access to services for urban poor communities who often fall through the cracks.

Another vital area is medicine. The current system allows pharmaceutical companies to influence doctors with gifts and incentives, pushing branded drugs over more affordable generics. The commission has rightly



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

The commission has suggested forming an independent national health commission that would monitor reforms, ensure transparency, and make health governance more accountable. It also proposes setting up a separate and autonomous health service authority to improve professionalism and reduce political interference in the health sector.

Let's also, with all due respect, talk about ensuring minimum possible governance structure and regulatory framework for prescribing and knowing-to-be specialist doctors. There have been countless allegations that many of them have the tendency to prescribe more than required medicines to their patients, and more so rampantly recommending antibiotics without even recognising drug allergies and

suggested banning such practices and encouraging doctors to prescribe using generic names. It has also proposed a nationwide pharmacy network that will make essential medicines available either free of cost or at subsidised rates, which could be a game changer for poor households.

The future of healthcare in Bangladesh depends on whether we can move beyond words and take real action. Whether someone lives in a high-rise building in Dhaka or a flood-prone village in Sirajganj, they deserve the same care and empathy when they fall sick. Overhauling our healthcare system is not just about building hospitals or appointing doctors. It is about fairness, compassion, and building a system that works for everyone with minimum possible responsibility. Only then can we say that our society truly cares for its ailing people.

## Bangladesh's energy policy raises more questions than it answers



Shafiqul Alam is lead energy analyst for Bangladesh at Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IIEFA).

SHAFIQUL ALAM

The government's approval of a new renewable energy policy, which sets higher targets of 20 percent and 30 percent electricity generation from renewables by 2030 and 2041 respectively, is a welcome step towards advancing the energy transition. However, despite these enhanced commitments, a lack of support mechanisms and persistent policy inconsistencies continue to hinder progress in the renewable energy sector.

While the national budget for fiscal year (FY) 2025–26, unveiled on June 2, articulates an ambitious vision of building a society based on "three zeroes"—zero poverty, zero unemployment, and zero net carbon emissions—it fails to offer incentives for the private sector to scale up renewable energy deployment.

In parallel, the government has made sweeping changes to the energy and power sectors. It repealed the Quick Enhancement of Electricity and Energy Supply Act (QEEESA) 2010, which previously allowed unsolicited project proposals without competitive bidding. It has also suspended renewable energy projects that had received Letters of Intent (LOIs) under QEEESA before August 2024.

Additionally, the government floated four tender packages for renewable

energy projects totalling over 5,000 megawatts (MW) in capacity but removed the payment guarantee clause. Such abrupt policy shifts raise serious concerns for investors.

The recent announcement to build a new coal-fired power plant to generate cheaper electricity than oil-fired power plants further highlights the lack of policy coherence.

A baseload coal plant is unlikely to reduce the share of oil-fired generation and may instead exacerbate the sector's overcapacity, especially amid sluggish power demand growth.

Proposed budget fails to incentivise renewable energy.

While solar power can reduce reliance on expensive oil-based generation, the proposed FY2025–26 budget does not include any incentives to promote solar or other renewable technologies. It also excludes the Tk 100 crore (\$8.2 million) in renewable energy funding that was allocated in the previous year's budget. This disconnect between the government's stated ambitions and actual fiscal measures undermines momentum in the renewable energy space.

Proposed budget fails to incentivise renewable energy.

Abrupt policy changes dent investor confidence. The sudden shift to competitive bidding and the suspension of more than 30 renewable energy projects

have cost developers dearly, as many had already invested substantial time and resources in land acquisition.

Furthermore, the exclusion of an "implementation agreement clause"—a provision akin to a payment guarantee—from the tender documents has negatively affected project bankability. Developers may now struggle to secure debt financing. The issue is already visible: Bangladesh failed to attract bidders for the first tender package of 12 projects totalling 453 MW, leading the government to extend the submission deadline six times.

Although 20 local companies ultimately submitted proposals, no foreign firms participated. This lack of foreign interest signals serious challenges for Bangladesh in achieving its 6,145 MW renewable energy target by 2030. Reaching this goal would require annual capacity additions of around 750 MW between July 2025 and December 2030. With the country's current renewable energy capacity at 1,562 MW—and only 400 MW of utility-scale projects under construction—domestic capital alone will not suffice. Foreign investment, along with support from multilateral and bilateral development partners, will be critical.

New coal plant will strain the power sector.

In June 2021, Bangladesh scrapped 10 coal-fired power projects due to concerns over excess capacity and the growing difficulty of securing funding, especially from institutions focused on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria. The move was also presented as part of the country's enhanced greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation efforts, raising hopes

for an accelerated renewable energy transition.

Fast forward to June 2025: the current government is now reconsidering one of the scrapped plants and plans to build a 1,200 MW coal-fired power plant in Matarbari, next to an existing plant. Although the rationale is to generate cheaper electricity compared to oil-based generation, this logic appears short-sighted.

Bangladesh's peak electricity demand declined by around 1.1 percent in 2025 compared to 2024—falling from 17,200 MW to 16,999 MW. With more than 7,000 MW of baseload capacity already under construction, adding another coal plant will only worsen the country's reserve margin, which currently stands at around 61 percent. This surplus will further strain the power sector's finances as capacity payment obligations rise in the absence of sufficient demand.

The decision also contradicts the GHG mitigation pledge made in 2021 and risks damaging Bangladesh's credibility in the eyes of investors and development partners.

As the government finalises the FY2025–26 budget, it should reconsider introducing a dedicated renewable energy fund and reinstating the Tk 100 crore allocation. It should also waive import duties on components used in rooftop solar systems.

Achieving Bangladesh's renewable energy targets will require not only sustained fiscal support but also a stable and predictable policy environment. Avoiding abrupt policy reversals is essential to attract long-term domestic and foreign investment.

# Why we need to hear the women of the hills



Dibarah Mahboob  
is filmmaker, artist, and visual anthropology postgraduate from Goldsmiths, University of London.

DIBARAH MAHBOOB

When we talk about Bangladesh's water crisis, the discourse usually falls on the coastal belt, where salinity, sea-level rise, and water scarcity dominate headlines. Yet another crisis is quietly unfolding in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), where long-running mountain streams are drying slowly but inexorably, pushing Indigenous communities deeper into precarity. This is not merely an environmental issue, but also a deeply gendered one.

Take Shishikha Chakma from Bilaichhari. Her home lies a hill away from the nearest trickle of water. On a regular day, she makes the climb twice; when guests visit, it becomes six. The water she hauls is used strictly for cooking and drinking. To bathe or wash clothes, she must walk farther, facing multiple risks. "Most of our lands lie vacant," says fellow villager Proshanto Chakma. "We don't have enough water to cultivate."

Across the three CHT districts of Khagrachhari, Rangamati, and Bandarban, women like Shishikha begin their days with long, perilous, potentially hazardous treks. As the once-reliable streams fade to muddy trickles, the walks grow longer.

But these women are far from powerless. Indigenous communities, many of whom are matriarchs, have always practised adapting to climate change through ancestral knowledge. In Bandarban alone, more than 55 crop varieties and 289 medicinal or edible plants are cultivated using a deep understanding of altitude, soil, wind, and microclimates. This knowledge, passed down orally, has grown from the land itself. It is essential and invaluable.

CHT's Indigenous women have long been

ecological caretakers, building bamboo check dams, harvesting rainwater, and relying on knowledge passed down through matriarchal lines, like reading tree canopies, bird calls, and forest signs to find hidden springs. They know which forest plants heal, which nourish. This deep ecological wisdom—relational, practical, and spiritual—is rarely acknowledged in climate fund discourses and development frameworks.

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Across Khagrachhari, Rangamati, and Bandarban, women begin their days with long, perilous, potentially hazardous treks to fetch water.

PHOTO: UNDP ARCHIVE

to recover. Where fallow periods once allowed land to heal, today's intensification erodes topsoil and drains fertility.

The Asian Development Bank (2011) notes that CHT's watershed degradation stems from deforestation, road construction, short-rotation jhum, and the cultivation of root crops like cassava and turmeric on steep slopes. Modifications of traditional practices have led to landslides, biodiversity loss, and diminished aquifer recharge. The International Soil Reference and Information Centre's Global Assessment of Soil Degradation report (2006) identifies CHT soils as shallow, low in organic matter, and highly susceptible to erosion if forest cover is lost.

From my field visits, I realised another overlooked culprit is the unchecked spread of teak plantations. Touted for timber, these

non-native trees are poorly suited to the CHT's ecology. They consume large amounts of water, crowd out native species, and do little to stabilise soil. Their oily, waxy leaves repel water, causing surface runoff rather than allowing it to seep into the ground. Ironically, many of these plantations were funded as "green" afforestation projects, equating monoculture with ecological health.

Where groves were once considered sacred and served as natural reservoirs, state-driven afforestation and market forestry have turned biodiverse systems into commercial monocultures. The result is cracked soils, silenced springs, and parched hillsides.

In Rangamati, only 63 percent of the population has access to safe drinking water. Deep wells, even when available, offer no certainty in a landscape shaped by landslides and erratic rainfall. Girls skip school, and

elders fall ill. Still, women continue to build clay-lined pots, shaded wells, bamboo spouts—quiet acts shaped by care and underlined by community resistance.

Before colonial forestry and market logic affected the hills, Indigenous cosmologies governed land use. Forests were sacred and responsive. Land was not measured by yield, but by relationship. Indigenous studies scholar Ranjan Datta documents how these ecologies of care were systematically eroded by brickfields, plantations, and NGO schemes that favoured output over reciprocity.

Still, many women remember. They remember *Boghe Puja* and *Hanci Puja*, where land and spirit were one. They remember that sustainability was never about metrics, but kinship. This knowledge lives on—in bodies, rituals, and the quiet, persistent tending of place and selves.

Historically, ecological governance in the CHT followed matrilineal rhythms. Women planted by the moon, made offerings before harvests, and treated land not as a resource, but as kin. Now, that balance is unravelling. Climate change accelerates displacement already driven by land grabs, militarised development, and the dismissal of Indigenous practice. Despite being frontline stewards, Indigenous women remain absent from forest and water governance. There is no systematic effort by the government to document and integrate Indigenous knowledge in any sector plan or biodiversity conservation planning.

While climate finance conversations increasingly include coastal women, hill women remain largely invisible within a system that does not recognise their ancestral kinship with the land.

To move forward, we must go beyond the convenient trope of resilience and focus on justice. Centring Indigenous women as knowledge holders, protectors, and leaders—not simply as token guest speakers—is a start. Their governance systems, rooted in reciprocity, offer models of survival we can no longer afford to ignore.

As Datta reminds us, sustainability without justice is abandonment. The drying streams are not just symptoms of climate collapse; they are signs of what we've been apathetic to.

## What UNOC3 portends for future ocean governance



Dr Mizan R Khan  
is technical lead at LDC Universities Consortium on Climate Change (LUCCC).

MIZAN R KHAN

The third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3), co-hosted by France and Costa Rica, convened in Nice from June 9 to 13 this year. Attended by more than 60 heads of state and government, the conference sought to build on the outcomes of the preceding UNOCs held in New York in 2017 and Lisbon in 2022, and to accelerate progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas, and marine resources.

UNOC3 concluded with the adoption of the Nice Ocean Action Plan, a two-part outcome comprising a political declaration and hundreds of voluntary commitments from both state and non-state actors. The conference centred on three key priorities: finalising the declaration and action plan, mobilising financial resources, and advancing the ratification of the High Seas Treaty (HST)—formally the agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ). This treaty, open for signature since September 2023, represents a landmark attempt to govern more than half the planet's surface—areas beyond national jurisdiction that remain largely unregulated.

The declaration, titled "Our Ocean, Our Future: United for Urgent Action," reflects growing alarm over the accelerating loss of marine biodiversity, marine pollution, resource depletion, and the impact of climate change on ocean health. It calls for transformative action and acknowledges the ocean's interdependence with other multilateral environmental regimes, particularly those on climate and biodiversity. It reaffirms the global commitment to a legally binding agreement on plastic pollution and reiterates the "30x30" pledge—to conserve 30 percent of the planet's land and marine areas by 2030.

Despite these commitments, reality remains sobering. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in its special report on oceans and the cryosphere, issued dire warnings on the deteriorating

state of ocean health. Yet, little has changed. Only 2.7 percent of the ocean is currently safeguarded from unsustainable extraction. In Europe, a World Wildlife Fund report reveals that just two percent of marine waters are under active management, despite 11 percent being officially designated for protection. Many observers have described these commitments as little more than political box-ticking. Monitoring and enforcing agreements across the fluid, expansive domain of the high seas remains a formidable challenge.

SDG 14 is also among the

**Covering over 60 percent of the world's oceans, the HST will only enter into force once 60 countries ratify it. So far, more than 50 countries have done so, including 19 during the conference itself. However, several key maritime powers—Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, South Africa, and the UK—have yet to ratify. The US signed the treaty in September 2023 but is unlikely to ratify it, having never ratified UNCLOS, the parent convention. This lack of participation by major powers raises questions about the treaty's future enforcement and legitimacy.**

least funded of all SDGs. The UN estimates that implementing major ocean-related initiatives will require \$175 billion annually over the next five years. So far, only around \$10 billion has been pledged. At the conference, the European Commission committed one billion pounds to ocean conservation, sustainable fisheries, and marine science. Germany announced a 100-million-pound initiative to clear underwater munitions in the Baltic and North seas. New Zealand pledged \$52 million to strengthen ocean governance in the Pacific. In a move towards innovative financing, Indonesia and the World Bank introduced a Coral Bond to support reef conservation, while the Bloomberg Ocean Initiative pledged support for establishing a secretariat to help implement marine protected areas (MPAs) under the HST.

Covering over 60 percent of the world's oceans, the HST will only enter into force once 60 countries ratify it. So far, more than 50 countries have done so, including

fragility of multilateralism. Funding for multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) has stagnated, as evidenced in climate and biodiversity negotiations. The experience in Nice was no different. The US withdrawal from global environmental leadership, alongside the downsizing of USAID and recent aid cuts from several European governments, suggests that the international funding landscape will

remain challenging. The absence of the US from key multilateral initiatives is likely to cast a long shadow over global efforts to protect the oceans.

For Bangladesh, a maritime nation with significant interests in ocean governance, the stakes are high. The country ratified the High Seas Treaty in September 2024 and has initiated several national marine policies and institutional reforms. Oceanography

departments have opened in universities, and the Bangladesh Navy has established a dedicated Maritime University. At the Nice conference, China's vice president offered support for building marine research and skills in developing countries. Bangladesh should seize this opportunity by establishing a bilateral partnership with China to strengthen its marine science and governance capacities.

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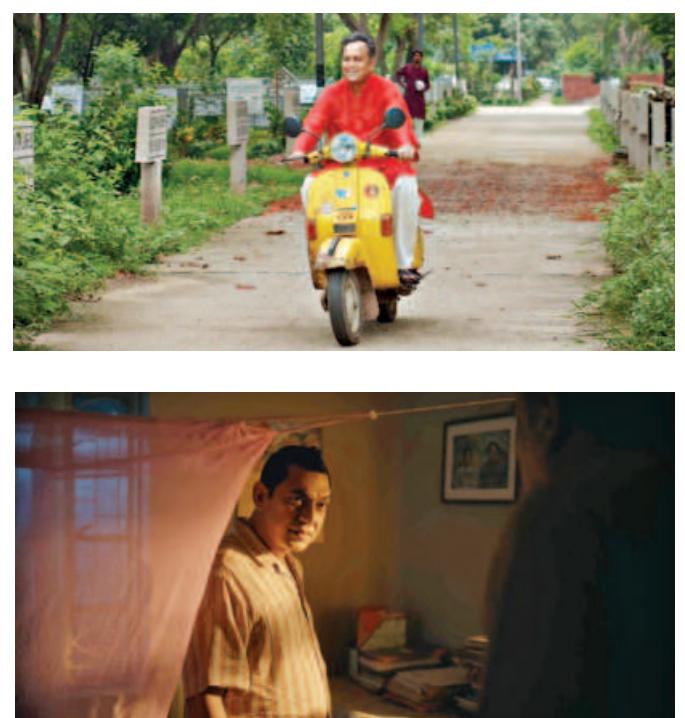
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# 'Utshob' and the art of tenderness

**When was the last time you had a smile plastered across your face throughout the entirety of a film? In this instance, getting into the cinema hall was an event in itself.**

**Crowds huddled near the elevator to get to Star Cineplex in Shimanto Shambhar, waiting for over an hour just to make it in on time for the films they'd booked. I've rarely seen this kind of eagerness for Eid films, let alone such a scramble for seats.**

**By the time my family and I made it to the screening of *Utshob* by Tanim Noor, the hall was nearly full -- even a full week after its release.**



NAZIBA BASHER

People of all ages and backgrounds had gathered, waiting for something they already sensed would be different -- from the trailer, the posters, the songs. These glimpses alone promised something new, something free from the tropes we have come to expect in our films. They promised joy; and we were desperate for it.

For anyone who grew up reading or watching *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, *Utshob* is a warm wave of nostalgia. For those raised in 1990s Bangladesh -- whether or not they're familiar with Dickens -- the film offers a loving nod to the dramas and films of that era. And even for viewers with no emotional ties to either Dickens or the 90s, this film still feels like a two-hour-long hug, a very warm one.

The acting was tender and restrained. Zahid Hasan and Shommo Jyoti as the dual versions of Abu Nizar Jahangir (our Eid-time Ebenezer Scrooge), Sadia Ayman and Afsana Mimi as Jesmin, and the delightful trio of Christmases, or in our case, Eid spirits played by Chanchal Chowdhury, Jaya Ahsan, and Aupree Karim (appearing as themselves), were all perfectly cast. None of these characters were overwrought or unnecessarily complex. Writers Ahsab Ahmed Shadhin and Samiul Bhuiyan chose simplicity -- and that was where they struck gold.

Jahangir is a cranky, miserly man -- affectionately hated in his neighbourhood and mockingly called "khaishtha [obnoxious] Jahangir". No one really knows what turned him sour, only that he complains about everything and everyone. In contrast, his cousin Mobarak was beloved and known for his iconic *Chaand Raat* gatherings. When Mobarak dies mid-celebration one *Chaand Raat*, it sparks a reckoning in Jahangir that becomes the heart of the story.

Mobarak's ghost visits Jahangir that night, warning him of three spirits who will come. Jahangir brushes it off -- until he's woken again by the sound of *Shada Shada Kala Kala* and greeted by a ghost who has taken the form of Chanchal Chowdhury.

What follows is a journey into Jahangir's past, present and future -- into the fractures that shaped his life.

The humour was gentle and well timed, the moral reflection poignant but never preachy. It shows how even the smallest missed moment -- a decision deferred, a word unsaid -- can alter the course of a life.

The music elevated the experience, with no gaudy item numbers or melodrama -- just well-placed songs that served the story. The inclusion of Artcell's *Dhushor Shomoy* was a stroke of genius for every 2000's teen in the room. It was 'Kaiser'-era Tanim Noor at his best -- evocative, grounded, and intimately nostalgic.

Sunehra Binte Kamal's surprise appearance as Jahangir's long-lost daughter was the final emotional crescendo. One particular moment drew an audible gasp from the audience, followed by collective laughter and an outburst of "baap ka beti! (a father's daughter)" in unison. It was the kind of audience-film synergy that is hard to forget.

Despite it being 2025, most of our filmmakers believe a specific format needs to be followed when it comes to making a film: a hero, a heroine, a villain, multiple songs, including an "item" one; and nowadays, rape has also become staple.

*Utshob* had none of that. The story itself was the hero, the heroine and all else. And most of all, what it had was heart. A pure and full heart.

As the credits rolled, not a single person left with a dry eye or an empty heart. We all emerged smiling -- strangers who had cried, laughed, and healed together for two short hours.

*Utshob*, to me, is not just any "good film", it is profoundly human, and magically so. It felt like sipping on a warm mug of hot chocolate with marshmallows on a cold winter night.

In a cinematic landscape often saturated with noise and spectacle, *Utshob* offered something radical: tenderness.

And in doing so, it reminded us that the best stories are not the loudest ones; but the ones that sit with you long after the lights come on.

## Brad Pitt's racing drama 'F1' set for June 2025 release



Brad Pitt returns to the big screen in *F1*, a high-speed Formula 1 drama from *Top Gun: Maverick* director Joseph Kosinski.

Set for release on June 27, 2025, the film will hit theatres across the US and Canada, including IMAX screens.

Pitt plays Sonny Hayes, a former F1 driver pulled out of retirement to join the fictional underdog team APXGP, alongside Javier Bardem.

Shot during actual F1 race weekends at Silverstone, Monaco, Spa, and Mexico City, the film emphasises realism -- Pitt drove a modified Formula 2 car at speeds nearing 180 mph.

Co-produced by seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton through Dawn Apollo Films, *F1* incorporates authentic garage dynamics and team interactions, with unprecedented access to real paddocks and FIA infrastructure to ensure accuracy on and off the track.

## 'Tagar' pulled from multiplex amid low turnout



The Eid-ul-Azha release *Tagar*, starring Puja Chery and Ador Azad, has been removed from Star Cineplex, Blockbuster Cinemas, and Lion Cinemas due to low audience turnout.

Directed by Aalok Hasan and produced by AR Movie Network, the film was initially scheduled to release in 11 theatres, but ultimately opened in just six.

Billed as a mix of romance, revenge, and political drama, the film failed to sustain interest despite promotional efforts and early hype. Multiplex authorities cited lack of demand for the decision, noting stronger responses for other Eid releases.

# NEWS

## Aging population, urban surge

FROM PAGE 12

Fifty-seven percent of the population was of working age in 2021, up from 41 percent in 1990. Projections show this group will peak at 64 percent by 2040.

Conversely, the proportion of children under the age of five decreased to just 8 percent in 2021 from 17 percent in 1990. If this trend continues, it is likely to fall further to 4 percent by 2050.

In the 2030s, the number of elderly people (aged 65 and above) will surpass that of children under five for the first time. The elderly are projected to make up 18 percent of the population in 2050. Moreover, life expectancy has been on the rise -- it went up to 72 years in 2021 from 60 years in 1990.

This means Bangladesh now needs to start building a well-organised elderly care system and a robust social protection framework, said the report.

Every stage of life -- childhood, adolescence, working age, and old age -- must be supported with appropriate healthcare services, taking gender and social context into account, it added.

### CHANGES IN DISEASE BURDEN

Referring to the 2021 report, the commission said both the number and rate of age-specific deaths and Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) in the country have changed dramatically over the past decade.

DALY is a widely used public health metric that quantifies the total burden of disease by measuring the number of years lost due to ill-health, or early death.

Individuals aged 65 and above account for more than half of all deaths and also have the highest mortality and DALY rates, said the commission.

Though mortality among older adults has decreased slightly, their quality of life is worsening due to chronic conditions and decline in their ability to perform everyday activities, it mentioned.

"This clearly indicates a growing need for long-term and integrated healthcare services as the population ages."

Among the working-age population, mortality rate remains relatively low, but this group carries the largest share of the total disease

### burden.

The growing DALY burden in this age group is mainly driven by non-communicable diseases, accidents, and mental health issues, most of which are preventable. "Yet, the existing healthcare system has not been effective in addressing these challenges," the commission noted.

The analysis shows that the primary challenge for the healthcare system is no longer just saving lives but also ensuring that people stay healthy."

According to the 2021 Global Burden of Disease report, cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death, accounting for 36 percent of all deaths in the country.

It is followed by respiratory infections and tuberculosis (19 percent), chronic respiratory diseases (11 percent), and cancer (8 percent). Various non-communicable diseases also account for a major share of the total DALYs.

For both the working-age population and the elderly, prevention and early diagnosis of these diseases, rehabilitation, and long-term care are vital to help them not only live longer but live well, added the report.

This information," said a police official involved in the investigation.

Zahidul Islam Sajal, vice-president and head of media and communications at Nagad, said, "We are relying on police investigation."

Regarding the incident, he said that the CCTV footage points to a well-planned operation.

Mahidul Islam said that multiple detective teams, including cyber and surveillance units, are working to identify the suspects and determine how they obtained Rab uniforms and

internal conflicts or irregularities within the organisation [Nagad]. We have interrogated Nagad staffers and asked them not to leave the stations until the end of investigation."

Regarding the incident, he said that the CCTV footage points to a well-planned operation.

"Preliminary evidence suggests that the robbers had prior knowledge of the cash transport. It is possible that an [Nagad] employee passed on

had detailed knowledge of Nagad's cash distribution process.

Abdur Rahman, a local distributor for Nagad, filed a case on Saturday night with Uttara West Police Station, accusing 8-10 unidentified people over the robbery.

Nine individuals -- including the Nagad distributor, two managers, a salesman, and a security guard -- have already been questioned.

"Preliminary evidence suggests that the robbers had prior knowledge of the cash transport. It is possible that an [Nagad] employee passed on

the breadth of the enclave.

Israel says it has had to crack down on distribution because Hamas fighters were diverting food aid. Hamas members deny this and say Israel is using hunger as a weapon.

Lazzarini said Israel had not lifted restrictions on UN agencies including UNRWA bringing in aid, despite an abundance of assistance ready to be moved into the enclave.

The ACC's Money Laundering Unit is leading the probe, with Deputy Director Md Jahangir Alam and Assistant Director Saifur Rahman heading the investigation.

"We have initiated a primary inquiry based on the initial information. Legal action will be taken if evidence is found," Akhtarul Islam, public relations officer of the ACC, told The Daily Star.

Philippe Lazzarini, the head of the United Nations Palestinian refugees

## ACC asks UK

FROM PAGE 12  
optimistic about recovering the assets allegedly laundered by Saifuzzaman, provided the allegations are proven.

He confirmed that UK authorities have already seized assets worth approximately Tk 1,025 crore (around £70 million), believed to be owned by the former minister.

The seizure was carried out with the cooperation of the British government," Momen said, adding that documents related to properties allegedly tied to Adnan, an associate of Saifuzzaman, would soon be forwarded to the UK to pursue further recovery of assets.

Regarding British MP Tulip Siddiq, Momen said, "No matter how much Tulip claims she is a British citizen, our documents show she is a Bangladeshi national. We are proceeding under our laws against our citizens... If she was innocent, why did she step down? Why did she lose her ministerial post?"

### ACC TO PROBE SAIDA MUNA

The ACC has launched an investigation into allegations of large-scale bank fraud and money laundering against Bangladesh's former high commissioner to the UK Saida Muna Tasneem, her husband Tawhidul Islam Chowdhury, and 15 others.

According to the complaint, Tawhidul, also the chairman of Generation Next Fashions Ltd, in collusion with officials of several banks and financial institutions, allegedly embezzled around Tk 2,000 crore in loans taken under the names of at least 12 companies. The funds were reportedly laundered abroad.

The complaint further alleges that the loans were obtained from at least nine financial institutions, including United Commercial Bank, Bank Asia, Eastern Bank, City Bank, BRAC Bank, National Bank Limited, Trust Bank, Southeast Bank, and AB Bank, using the names of non-existent businesses. Authorities are currently verifying the legitimacy of the entities.

The ACC's Money Laundering Unit is leading the probe, with Deputy Director Md Jahangir Alam and Assistant Director Saifur Rahman heading the investigation.

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## Inform EC of Yunus-Tarique

FROM PAGE 12

at a programme organised by Nagorik Oikya at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

The BNP standing committee member's comment comes as the Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin on Sunday said the Election Commission was not aware of the agreed timing of the election at the closed-door London meeting.

"I can't comment on that -- I don't know what was discussed behind closed doors," he told reporters.

The EC will learn the government's stance on election timing after holding formal discussions with it, he added.

"We call on the interim government, on behalf of the people and in support of democracy, to take the necessary steps so that we can move quickly towards a democratic transformation," Salahuddin said at the event yesterday.

There was no discussion about anyone's immunity at the London meeting.

The advisory council was formed under Article 106 of the Constitution and the government is functioning in line with it.

The interim government would require ratification from the next elected parliament as per

### constitutional obligations.

"This is something the interim government should keep in mind. If ratification is required, we will consider where and how this legitimacy will be granted," he said.

As per the Constitution, the advisers are to hold the status of ministers.

"According to Article 66, a minister must have the qualifications of a member of parliament. I would remind the advisers to be mindful of this. Foreign citizenship is also not allowed there, and there are several other matters," Salahuddin added.

In another development, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sarah Cooke called on BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir at the party's Gulshan office.

BNP Standing Committee Member Abdul Moyeen Khan was also present at the hour-long meeting.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Moyeen said detailed discussions were held on various issues, including the overall political situation in Bangladesh, the outcome of the discussions held in London, the subsequent reaction and situation, the existing bilateral relations between the two countries and further areas of cooperation.

## Türk criticises legal changes

FROM PAGE 1

effect until the International Crimes Tribunal completes the trial of the party and its top leaders.

Last October, the Bangladesh Chhatra League, the student wing of the AL, was declared a terrorist organisation and subsequently banned. Several affiliated bodies also fell under the current ban.

The 2009 Anti-Terrorism Act allowed authorities to ban entities identified as terrorist organisations, but did not include provisions for banning their activities. However, the newly enacted Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, expands that scope, authorising the government to "ban all activities of any entity."

Türk also spoke about the global implications of ongoing trade wars, citing the aftermath of high tariffs introduced by the Trump administration on countries including Bangladesh.

"Many of the poorest people in the world are falling even further behind, with their rights to food, health and an adequate standard of living

more than half of low-income countries are currently in, or at high risk of, debt distress. Many are also on the frontlines of the climate crisis. And the development finance they desperately need is dwindling, as major economies shift their priorities, expand defence budgets, and cut development finance."

"The recent imposition of soaring tariffs may seem like a high stakes poker game, with the global economy as the bank. But the shockwaves of a trade war will hit Least Developed Countries with the force of a tsunami."

He warned that small island states, Caribbean nations, and countries with large export sectors -- including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam -- could face severe consequences. "Higher tariffs could put healthcare, education and a nutritious diet out of reach for many."

## NEWS

## Man beaten to death in Narayanganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A man was beaten to death by a group of locals, who suspected him of being a mugger, in Narayanganj's Bandar upazila early yesterday.

The incident took place around 2:30am in the Dakshin Lakkhankhola area, said Tariqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Bandar Police Station.

The identity of the deceased, believed to be around 30 years old, could not be confirmed immediately.

Police have detained two men -- Sohan, 30, and Sani, 25 -- both employees of a local fuel distribution company, for questioning in connection with the incident, said the OC.

Citing witnesses and primary investigation findings, OC Tariqul said some locals found the man hiding in a bush around 2:30am and began beating him up, suspecting him to be a mugger.

Responding to a call made through the 999 emergency helpline, a Bandar police team rescued the man and took him to the upazila health complex, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

"We are working to identify the victim, and further legal procedures are underway," the OC added.

## Dengue

FROM PAGE 3

hospitalisation, which is why these cases often go unrecorded," he also said.

He explained that joint pain from chikungunya typically lasts more than a week, making it difficult for patients to stand straight, while dengue-related muscle pain usually eases within a week.

Prof Nazmul advised everyone to use mosquito nets and wear masks to prevent infection.

He also recommended getting an NSI test immediately after the onset of fever to detect dengue. Since chikungunya testing is not widely available, patients who test negative for NSI are observed for a few days before being treated for suspected chikungunya.

He also advised anyone with a fever to consult a doctor and stay hydrated with fluids like coconut water, saline, and fruit juices.

## EC moves forward

FROM PAGE 3

Commissioner (CEC) Kazi Habibul Awal said, "Whether the national election is held in February or April, we must be prepared. Earlier, we were told the timeframe could be from December to June, and we are making preparations accordingly."

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

At the briefing, Election Commissioner Md Nasir Uddin said, "The timing will depend on discussions with the government and the readiness of all involved. Our responsibility is to prepare thoroughly so we are ready whenever the decision is made."

The number of voters is expected to be around 12.5 crore, according to the EC.

In the last parliamentary election, held on January 7, 2024, there were over 42,000 polling centres and more than 260,000 polling booths.

Education institutions are typically used as polling centres. On average, one polling centre is allocated for every 3,000 voters and one polling booth for approximately 500 male voters or 400 female voters.

The EC's directive was sent to the secretaries of the Secondary and Higher

Division, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives; Technical and Madrasah Education Division, Ministry of Education; and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, as well as to the chief engineers of the Local Government Engineering Department and the Education Engineering Department.

"A letter has been sent to the authorities concerned requesting information about establishments used as polling centres in the past and those that could potentially be used in the upcoming election," said Election Commissioner Md Anwarul Islam Sarkar yesterday.

The letter, signed by EC Deputy Secretary Dewan Md Sarwar Jahan, noted that some educational institutions used in the previous national election or considered for use in the upcoming one lack boundary walls or have damaged doors and windows.

The letter further stated that these institutions should undergo minor renovations using funds from the respective ministries or divisions.

The EC Secretariat has requested updated information on the renovation progress of these institutions. The information is to be submitted by July 17.

## Maldah river

FROM PAGE 4

gone. If the erosion continues, more families will be left destitute," she said.

Ramjan Ali, panel chairman of Gorol Union Parishad, said, "Just two years ago, the river was about 400 metres away from the road. However, last year's erosion brought it alarmingly close to devouring the entire road."

The Maldah is a small but mighty river that flows along the Bangladesh-India border before passing through Kaliganj and Aditmari upazilas of Lalmonirhat. It stretches around 36 kilometres with an average width of 18 metres. Its meandering nature and strong currents during monsoon often leave the riverbank areas prone to erosion.

Shunil Kumar, executive engineer of BWDB in Lalmonirhat, said, "We visited the erosion-affected site on June 4. The situation has been reported to higher authorities. Once funds are allocated, we will take immediate preventive measures."

## Chief RO appointed

FROM PAGE 3

and Journalism; Prof Golam Rabbani of the Institute of Social Welfare and Research; Prof Kazi Mostak Gausul Hoq of the Department of Information Science and Library Management;

Prof Kazi Maruf Islam of the Department of Development Studies; Prof Nasrin Sultana of the Institute of Health Economics; Prof Md Shahidul Islam Zahid of the Department of Banking and Insurance; Prof Tariq Manzoor of Department

of Bangla; and Associate Professor Sharmin Kabir of Institute of Education and Research.

The returning officers will consult with the VC to determine the next steps in the election process and proceed accordingly, the press release said.

While previous Dcsc elections were overseen by a six-member commission, this time the number has been increased to ten to ensure greater transparency, credibility, and operational support, it added.

## Summon Hasina via

FROM PAGE 3

The tribunal took cognisance of the charges and set yesterday as the next date of hearing, asking the trio to be produced before it.

Meanwhile, two crude bombs were hurled from a moving vehicle on the road between Curzon Hall and the tribunal building around 5:45am yesterday, said Shahbagh Police Station Officer-in-Charge Khalid Mansur.

He said one of the bombs detonated, while a police bomb disposal unit later recovered the other unexploded device from the scene.

No casualties were reported as of filing this report. Law enforcement officials are investigating the incident.

## Repeal public service ordinance

FROM PAGE 3

saying, "If the government repeals the ordinance, we will return home silently. But if you try to play with fire, we will respond in a way that makes it impossible for you to enter your own homes. Don't force us to act."

Leaders also urged employees from all

ministries to join the movement.

After the rally, protesters submitted a memorandum to the adviser of the Ministry of Housing and Public Works and concluded the day's programme.

Before Eid, the government formed a

committee led by Law Adviser Asif Nazrul to review the ordinance.

The ordinance, issued on May 25 amid protests at the Secretariat, allows dismissal of public servants for administrative disruptions within 14 days and without departmental

proceedings.

The EC's directive was sent to the secretaries of the Secondary and Higher

Education

## PRAYER TIMING

JUNE 17

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-05 12-45 5-00 6-50 8-15

JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-55 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Health

FROM PAGE 3

must be made available at entrances, and cleanliness in and around the centres is to be strictly maintained to help prevent the spread of dengue, the directive said.

In coordination with local authorities, mosquito repellent spray must be applied prior to each examination session. Centres must also ensure seat arrangements follow board prescribed distancing protocols.

Medical teams will remain on standby at every examination venue in coordination with civil surgeons or upazila health officials, it added.

It also called for public awareness initiatives to discourage gatherings of guardians near exam centres.

This year's HSC and equivalent examinations will begin on June 26 and run until August 10. Practical exams are scheduled between August 11 and 21.

## 390 killed

FROM PAGE 3

The report shows that motorcycles once again topped the list. At least 134 motorcycle-related crashes led to 147 deaths and 148 injuries -- accounting for 35.35 percent of total road crashes.

The victims also included 61 drivers, 50 transport workers, and 58 pedestrians, the organisation said.

Overcharging and harassment of passengers were rampant during this Eid as well, Mozammel said.

Due to fare chaos, poor people were forced to travel on the roofs of buses and trains, in open trucks, or on goods-laden vehicles -- risking their lives to return home for Eid, he added.

Mozammel said at least four days of government holidays before Eid are necessary to reduce road crashes and ease travel-related suffering.

He emphasised the need for long-term planning to improve Eid travel and called for enhancing public transport capacity and removing small vehicles from highways. He also stressed the importance of trained drivers, fit vehicles, quality roads, and proper enforcement of laws.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Chattogram City Corporation  
Tigerpass, Batali Hill, Chattogram  
www.ccc.gov.bdনিয়মিত পৌর কর  
পরিশোধ করুন

Memo No. 46.11.1600.002.03.25.100-19

Dated: 15/06/2025

## e-Tender Notice-SE/Elect/2024-25/02

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

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of works	Tender ID	Tender document last selling/ downloading date and time	Tender closing & opening date and time
1.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-019	Procurement of LED Drivers for LED street lights under Zone-01.	1104373	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
2.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-020	Procurement of Led Drivers for LED Street Light under Zone03.	1104375	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
3.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-021	Supply and fitting fixing of triangular craft design bracket and other accessories from Boropol circle to Nimtola bridge.	1104377	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
4.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-022	Supplying of Electrical goods at electrical Sub Division Zone 01 under CCC.	1104379	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
5.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-024	Supply and fitting fixing for concealed wiring and other accessories at Bahadherhat Tax Office-02.	1104381	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
6.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-025	Supply and Installation of new prepaid meter and other accessories at Momin Road Jhautola Sebok Colony.	1104382	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
7.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-027	Installation of new main service line by changing old main service line at Patharghat City Corporation College and Bolowa Dighi Mohassan under CCC.	1104383	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
8.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-028	Supply and Installation of CCTV camera, networking cable, IT and networking materials for CCC pull office at Dampara, Laldighi Library Bhaban, CCC Head Office as well as national program purpose.	1104384	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
9.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-029	Supply and Installation of networking products at CCC.	1104386	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
10.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-030	Emergency lighting with LED street light, pole and accessories at Paharika Residential Area under Ward-03.	1104387	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
11.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-031	Supply and Installation of LED Street Light with necessary elements for 11 No. Ward Halishahar A-Block Road.	1104388	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
12.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-032	Supply of LED drivers, relay, Magnetic Contractor and other accessories for principal roads under Zone-03.	1104390	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
13.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-033	Electrical Re-wiring work at Shah Amanath Super Market (Ground floor to 3rd floor) under CCC.	1104391	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
14.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-034	Uprooting and Shifting of LED pole, light, and other electrical equipment from 41 Ward Office to Sea Beach (Both side) under "Chattogram City Outer Ring Road Project" implementing by CDA.	1104392	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
15.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-035	Supply and installation Digital PABX system at Tigerpass Nogor Bhaban under CCC.	1104393	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
16.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-036	Supply and installation of base set, antenna, walkie talkie and other accessories for mayor's residential office.	1104394	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
17.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-037	Supply of magnetic contractor, LED drivers, cable and circuit breaker for Zone-01.	1104395	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
18.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-038	Old & damage pole erection from Sagarika Road and re-installation & lighting works.	1104396	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
19.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-039	Supply and fitting fixing IP camera, optical fiber, cat6 cable, server rack, sinewire oips and other accessories for Jangoli Pahartoli in 01 No. Ward.	1104397	30.06.2025 12.00	30.06.2025 14.00
20.	CCC/ESD/Goods /2024/25-042	Supplying & fitting fixing of LED light, garden light & LED strip light at Laldighi & Laldighi Park under Chattogram City Corporation.	111941		

# Juggling academics and work life as a computer science major



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

HASAN MAHMUD ABDULLAH

**Adaptation is the name of the game here, with the necessity to focus on either work or studies based on which demands are more pressing. But if you are blessed enough to have a supportive friend circle at university, you will find more breathing room.**

The world of computer science, as saturated as it is, still allures fresh faces by the minute. When everything in the world, starting from toasters all the way to toilet seats, is going through some sort of technological overhaul, it's no wonder why the field is an ever-growing beehive. The usual roadmap is to go through the motions of a degree, choosing a specialisation in the final year, and then opting to conduct thesis work or land an internship. It's an age-old blueprint that's been tried and tested.

There is a catch, however. Whereas universities abroad provide co-op, where the institution itself facilitates the placement of students in alternating full-time work periods – the responsibility of obtaining an internship in Bangladesh often falls solely on the student. Nonetheless, there are those proactive bunch that choose to go against the grain, building marketable skills early on, in order to beat the curve and short-circuit their way to the industry.

**Building up to be marketable**

"For some context, I have been programming since class 7 and by the time I got my first job in March 2022, I was already working as a freelancer. And I enrolled in BRACU that very fall," said Imran Rahman, a part-time full-stack developer at TechSpire Ltd.

"First off, you need raw hard skills," emphasised Imran, stressing the importance of actual technical know-how. "Since I've already had some experience in programming, all I needed to do is to apply those skills to learn a backend framework, Django in my case, build some rock solid projects, and cross my fingers."

The focus on technical prowess is highlighted by North South University student Khan Asfi Reza, who works as a Lead Backend Engineer at Zelf Technologies. As Reza notes, "A student should first focus on learning the basics, gradually improving, and applying that knowledge in real-world scenarios."

"Creating an online presence is equally important, whether by working on projects, or participating in hackathons and competitions. Contributing to open-

source projects and engaging in competitive programming can give a career boost," said Asfi highlighting the multiple pathways of building a portfolio.

"The ability to speak English properly and without any mistakes is a must," added Zobaer Ibn Razzaque, Operations Manager of Ontik Technology and a student of United International University. But we only have so many waking hours. "Time management skills are paramount. You cannot go with the flow for the long haul," stressed all three with equal fervour.

**Making the landing**

"By the time I got my first job, I was 250-300 applications deep. I was simply applying to any job on LinkedIn that matched my skill set. I was lucky enough to get a reply from a CTO of a company," Imran explained regarding the factor of luck in applications.

"During the interview, we mostly talked about my previous experience, before moving on to some technical questions related to Django and system design. And then we negotiated about work hours, I was expected to work 20 hours a week," continued Imran.

On the other hand, Asfi was starting out from a different vantage point. "Beginners should start networking through LinkedIn, reaching out via cold emails, or exploring freelance platforms like Fiverr and Upwork. I started working as a freelance web developer on Fiverr and Upwork in 2020, which helped me build my online presence, and improve my GitHub profile. That's what played a key role in landing a job at Zelf."

But aspirants need not feel limited to just LinkedIn applications or cold emails for there is a much simpler method that stood the test of time: networking with alumni. "One of the company's owners is my school alumni; he is like a mentor to me. I discussed with him my passion for team leading and having my work have an impact on people's lives," Zobaer revealed. "Through him, I joined my current workplace as an operations intern and fast forward about 1.5 years; here I am."

**Managing academic workload**

Balancing work life and a full course load

is as cumbersome as it sounds, and that's without factoring in the labyrinthine maze to be navigated, that is Dhaka's traffic. But you might just not need to.

"My boss is kind enough to grant me remote work, with a flexible schedule which makes it a lot easier since I don't have to commute," commented Imran about the nature of his job. "I can also take days off when I have exams, although I end up having to pull one too many all-nighters. On the flip side, work also gets affected when there's a little too much going on at university, which could definitely leave a lasting mark on your professional track record."

Adaptation is the name of the game here, with the necessity to focus on either work or studies based on which demands are more pressing. But if you are blessed enough to have a supportive friend circle at university, you will find more breathing room.

"I have a very close group of friends, and I just read the notes they prepare before exams. Having great friends at university is not a joke," responded Zobaer on the topic of balancing work-study.

Or if push comes to shove, strictly compartmentalise your study hours to the weekends. "I usually focus on studying during weekends. During exams, I try to complete my job tasks early so I can dedicate time to studying. I usually take my classes in the early morning and finish by 1-2 PM, which gives me time to work the rest of the day," explained Asfi.

**With great power comes great responsibility**  
While a steady paycheck and an invaluable addition to your resume are all very attractive prospects, maintaining a corporate job is no walk in the park. As Imran put it aptly, "It's important to understand that your code is important and there are people who depend on it."

The aforementioned raw skills will be put to the test often when working day-to-day. "My responsibilities include designing and architecting solutions using the cloud, developing services to analyse and process data, creating API endpoints and managing continuous integration and deployment," said Asfi.

For those opting for non-IT sectors, communication and project management skills will be at the forefront. "Everything from closing deals to project management, delivery handling and client support keeps me occupied. There are days I find myself doing 7-8, often consecutive, meetings," Zobaer elaborated.

**Sacrifices to be made**

It's not all fun and games, there are genuine sacrifices to be made when taking on a lifestyle this occupies. "It often means sacrificing sleep. There have been times when I missed classes due to work, forcing me to catch up on the syllabus later," said Asfi, shedding light on the frustrating reality.

"To follow this route, you need a lot of patience and grit. You will have to make sacrifices, especially regarding social life," said Imran while Zobaer stressed the same point, "The greatest sacrifice was my leisure time that I could have spent with family or friends. There can be weeks in a stretch where I am gone for the entire day." Yet Zobaer remains aware that all good things come at a cost. "These are steps that I knowingly took to start my career early on and explore what I am capable of."

## JOBS SPOTLIGHT

### United International University (UIU)



Lecturer, Pharmacy

Deadline: June 30

**Eligibility:**

② 4-year B.Pharm degree with MPharm thesis degree or 5-year B.Pharm professional degree or PharmD degree.

Minimum experience: N/A

**BRAC**

Assistant Officer, Production (BRAC Fisheries Enterprise)

Deadline: June 19

**Eligibility:**

② Diploma in Fisheries with minimum 2nd class/division or CGPA 2.50 or equivalent result in all academic examinations.

Minimum experience: N/A

### International Rescue Committee (IRC)



Manager/Senior Manager - HR

Deadline: N/A

**Eligibility:**

② Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Master's degree or other advanced qualifications in a relevant field is a plus.

Minimum experience: 6-8 years

**Akij Venture**

Head of Digital Marketing

Deadline: June 22

**Eligibility:**

② Bachelor's/Masters' degree in Marketing/Business or related field from any reputed university.

Minimum experience: 8-10 years

**FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.**



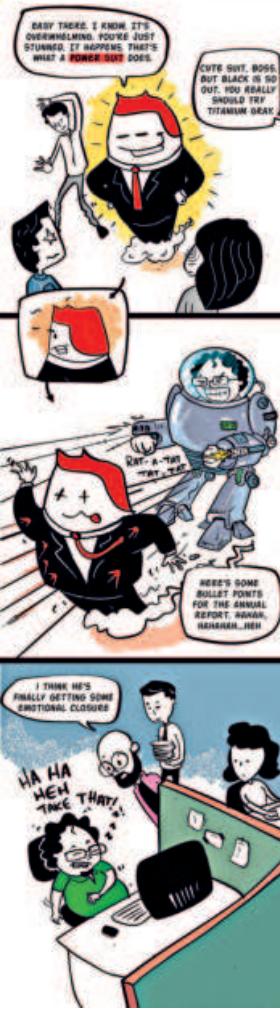
**"Lock up your libraries if you like; but there is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind."**



VIRGINIA WOOLF

### THE BOSSMAN

BY E. RAZA RONNY



## Turing Award winner Yoshua Bengio launches AI safety lab

NEXT STEP DESK



Yoshua Bengio, a leading figure in artificial intelligence and a 2018 Turing Award winner, has launched LawZero, a nonprofit lab focused on making AI safer for humanity. Speaking to the Financial Times this month, Bengio revealed that LawZero aims to tackle the growing risks associated with powerful AI systems by prioritising safety and ethical development.

According to a report by TechCrunch on the matter, Bengio's lab has raised \$30 million from high-profile supporters such as Skype co-founder Jaan Tallinn, former Google CEO Eric Schmidt, Open Philanthropy, and the Future of Life Institute. Its name, LawZero, draws inspiration from the Zeroth Law of Robotics – a fictional rule that places humanity's welfare above all else.

Often called one of the "godfathers" of modern AI, Bengio has become an outspoken voice on AI safety, supporting legislative efforts like California's SB 1047, which seeks to prevent AI systems from causing large-scale harm. Yet he remains wary of major tech companies like OpenAI and Google, doubting their willingness to prioritise safety in the rush to develop increasingly advanced AI.

## This company introduced a hotline for calling its CEO's AI clone

NEXT STEP DESK

Klarna, a Swedish fintech company, has recently launched an artificial intelligence-powered hotline allowing users to provide feedback directly to a virtual version of its CEO and co-founder, Sebastian Siemiatkowski.

According to a recent statement from the company, the service enables customers and merchants to call a phone line and speak to a digital replica of Sebastian Siemiatkowski trained on his voice, insights, and experiences. The AI CEO is programmed to respond to questions about Klarna's products, vision, and founding story, and encourages callers to offer feedback on their experiences with the platform.



Once a call is completed, Klarna says a transcript and summary are automatically generated using a large language model (LLM). These insights are then fed into an internal dashboard used by the company's product and engineering teams to assess potential improvements. Klarna claims the process allows for feedback to be acted upon quickly, with the possibility of product changes being made as soon as the following day.

The hotline is currently accessible via phone numbers in the United States (+14246675385), and Sweden, (+46852512594). The initiative follows previous uses of generative AI by Siemiatkowski, including deploying an AI version of himself to present company earnings reports.

**Meta invests \$14.8 bln in Scale AI, hires its 28-year-old CEO**

NEXT STEP DESK

Meta, the parent company of Facebook, has invested \$14.8 billion in Scale AI, a data-labeling startup, in a deal that values the company at \$29 billion. As part of the agreement, Scale AI's 28-year-old CEO, Alexandre Wang, will step down to join Meta's artificial intelligence (AI) initiatives. The deal gives Meta a 49% nonvoting stake in Scale AI but does not include a board seat or control over the startup.

Scale AI specialises in labelling data used to train AI models, working with major tech firms, including Microsoft and OpenAI. Wang, a college dropout who co-founded Scale AI in 2016, quickly rose to prominence in Silicon Valley, turning the company into a key player in AI development. His move to Meta signals CEO Mark Zuckerberg's push to strengthen the company's AI capabilities after setbacks in open-source AI development.

The deal is Meta's second-largest investment ever, behind its \$19 billion acquisition of WhatsApp in 2014. While it provides a lucrative exit for early investors in Scale AI, questions remain about how other AI companies will react. Some may reduce their reliance on Scale AI's services due to concerns about Meta gaining indirect insights into their operations.

# Fresh Test dawn beckons Tigers and Lions in Galle

SPORTS REPORTER

As the new World Test Championship (WTC) cycle begins today, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh will look to rebuild and rise in Galle.

For Bangladesh, the 2023-25 cycle marked a step forward. After finishing bottom in the first two editions, the Tigers climbed to seventh last season, winning four matches -- including three rare away Test victories in a single year, a feat previously unmatched in their 25-year Test history.

Yet, progress was uneven. Their away form surged, but home performances faltered -- managing just one win from six home Tests. It was a stark reminder of how misleading momentum can be.

Najmul Hossain Shanto, who captained most of the previous cycle, returns at the helm with his leadership extended for another year. The core squad remains largely unchanged, and the task is clear: to build on last season's promise and aim even higher.

However, a repeat of past batting woes could stall that ambition. Bangladesh failed to cross 200 in 13 innings and managed scores above 300 in just four out of 24. Shanto admitted as much in yesterday's pre-match press conference, stressing the need for discipline and adaptability in a venue known to challenge batters and favour spinners.

"I think there are many cricketers who have the experience of playing in this condition," Shanto said.

"If they can use their experience,

**Head-to-Head:** Matches 26, Bangladesh-1, Sri Lanka-20, Draw-5  
**Tigers' record in Sri Lanka:** Matches 14, Won-1, Loss-11, Draw-2

**In Galle:** Matches-2, Loss-1, Draw-1

\*Bangladesh lost by 259 runs in the last Test they played in Galle, in 2017, before bouncing back to clinch a landmark first-ever Test win against Sri Lanka in the second and final Test in Colombo, coinciding with their 100th Test appearance.



PHOTO: SRI LANKA CRICKET

I think it will be good for us. But I think we need to play good cricket here.

"I think the batters will have the challenge. The spinners can take a lot of wickets here. If you see, there can be a lot of runs here in the first two to three days. There will be challenges in all conditions but it's important how much we enjoy those," opined the Bangladesh captain, adding that the Tigers will be waiting for recovering Mehidy Hasan Miraz until the very end before forming their playing eleven against a team they have beaten only once in 26 attempts.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, are entering a new phase of their own. Though the Lions narrowly missed out on a place in the last WTC final -- undone by key lapses at crucial moments -- they remain a formidable home force.

Now, under Dhananjaya de Silva's leadership, they begin a transition. The squad features six uncapped players, with prospects like wicket-keeper Lahiru Udara, allrounders Sonal Dinusha and Tharindu Rathnayake stepping into the spotlight. The changes follow the retirement of former captain Dimuth Karunaratne, while veteran Angelo Mathews is set to bow out after the first Test.

"We had one hand on a spot in the final but a few brain fades at crunch moments cost us dearly," Sri Lanka captain Dhananjaya told reporters.

"We've learnt our lessons. A strong home start lays the foundation for success on the road."

## Mathews to sign off where it all began

AGENCIES

Sri Lanka are set to begin a two-Test series against Bangladesh in Galle on Tuesday, a match that carries special significance as it marks the end of Angelo Mathews's illustrious career in Test cricket.

The veteran all-rounder, who debuted at the same iconic venue beneath the ramparts of the Galle Fort in 2009, will bid farewell to the longest format after 118 Tests.

"It's been a dream run," said the 38-year-old Mathews. "The wins in England in 2014 and the whitewash of Australia in 2016 stand out. I've seen so many youngsters come through the ranks. I truly believe Sri Lanka's future is in good hands."

Mathews retires as Sri Lanka's third-



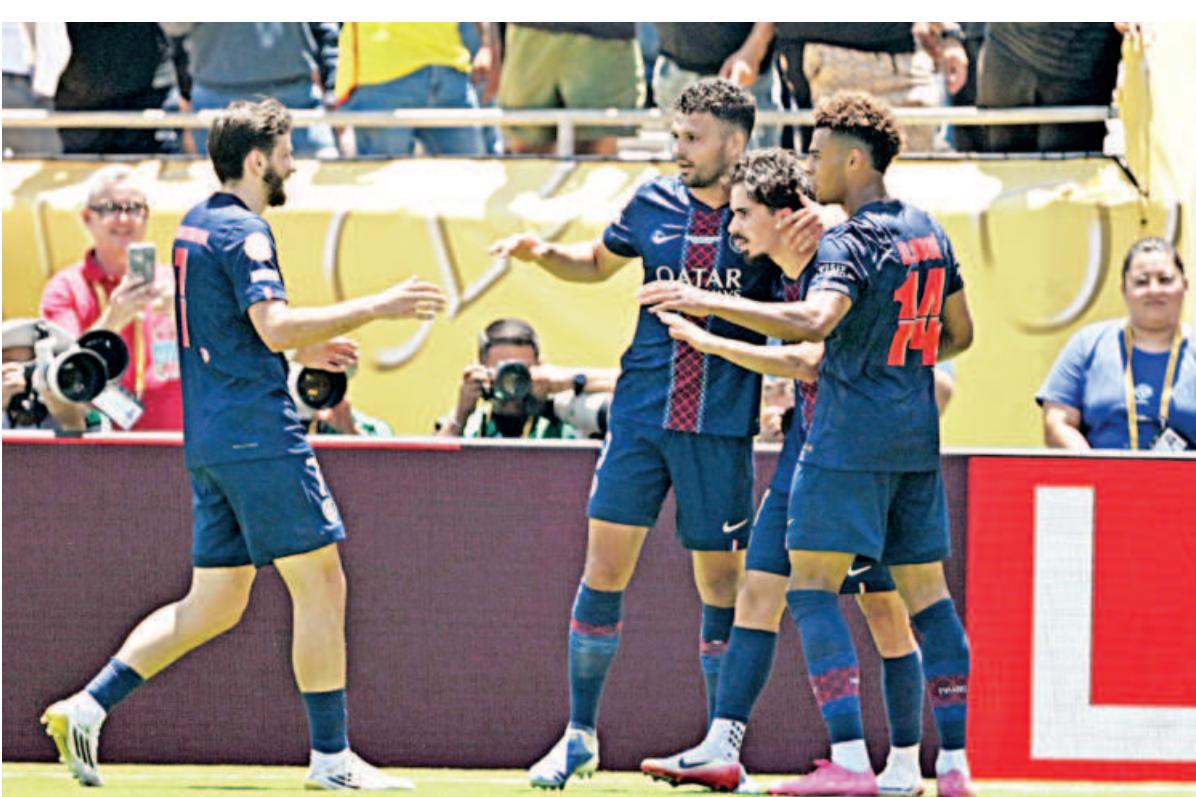
highest run-scorer in Tests, with 8,167 runs -- trailing only the legendary Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene.

Sri Lanka's squad for the series includes six uncapped players, with at least one debutant expected. As always, spin will be central to their strategy, with Prabath Jayasuriya as the lead spinner and Akila Dananjaya returning to the fold.

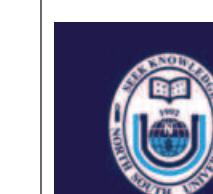
Captain Dhananjaya de Silva expressed his team's motivation to give Mathews the send-off he deserves.

"The best thing we can do for Angelo is win the match for him and give him a good farewell. Unfortunately, we couldn't do that for Dimuth [Karunaratne] earlier this year. Personally, I'm hoping we can do it for Angelo," he said.

Mathews retires as Sri Lanka's third-



PSG signaled their intentions of global domination at the FIFA Club World Cup with an emphatic 4-0 win over Diego Simeone's Atletico Madrid in their tournament opener at the Rose Bowl stadium yesterday. Fresh from their Champions League triumph, PSG delivered a dazzling display with goals from Fabian Ruiz, Vitinha, Senny Mayulu, and Lee Kang-in as the Parisians, who have already won four trophies, are looking to add more gloss to a superb season with a fifth title.



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Experience Requirements:

- Minimum 15 years of hands-on experience in IT systems development and infrastructure management.
- At least 8 years experience in a senior leadership role, preferably in a university, telecom operator, large corporation or ISP environment is must.
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Salary: Deserving candidate will be offered attractive salary package with other fringe benefits.  
Age : Not exceeding 50 years.

For more information please visit: [jobs.northsouth.edu](http://jobs.northsouth.edu)



## HP aim to 'fast-track development' in Chattogram

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh High Performance (HP) team departed for Chattogram yesterday for the first phase of their training camp, slated to begin from June 17.

Twenty-eight players, including the likes of Jishan Alam, Mahfuzur Rabbi, Aich Mollah and Ripon Mondol, have been picked for the HP core squad till 2026, and the group will undergo training till July 14.

HP head coach David Hemp will be undertaking the session and said that the upcoming camp is not only to develop skills but also to build characters. "Obviously they are not finished products," Hemp said before the side's departure for Chattogram yesterday.

"So, the key bit for us is making sure the programme challenges the players, moves them out of their comfort zone, builds their characters and develops them not just as players but also their personalities.

"When they do step outside from us, they can actually impact the game and stay there for a longer period of time."

The Bermudian further informed that the purpose of the current camp is to facilitate faster development.

"In terms of the next group, we don't say we want five players to debut next year. It's more about what group of players we have and the talent available there, and make sure we are communicating with Phil Simmons and the coaches above us."

"Our job is to fast-track the development of these players," Hemp stated.

Meanwhile, the national players of the ODI setup who are not part of the Test side had begun their camp in Mirpur last Saturday. The white-ball players will depart for Chattogram on June 20 and play two intra-squad matches on June 23 and 25.

## SHORT CORNER

### 'No control, no impact': Kirsten breaks silence on Pakistan exit

Former South Africa opener and celebrated coach Gary Kirsten has offered a frank assessment of his ill-fated tenure as Pakistan's white-ball head coach, revealing he felt sidelined from the outset and unable to effect meaningful change in a dysfunctional system. "Cricket teams need to be run by cricket people," Kirsten said.

### Himu Bachar turns up the heat in Singapore

Himu Bachar scored the highest number of points for Bangladesh's compound archer when he shot 707 in the qualification round of men's compound event in the 2025 Asia Cup World Ranking Tournament, Stage-2 in Singapore on Monday. Himu scored 707 points from his 72 shots (maximum 720 points) to finish fourth. Kushal Dalal of India topped the qualification round with a score of 714 points.

### Auckland brought a pen, Bayern a panzer

Nathan Lobo perhaps had more on his mind than defending Michael Olise at the FIFA Club World Cup on Sunday. The 22-year-old Auckland City left-back had a university exam scheduled during the competition -- to be taken from his hotel room in Cincinnati. Elsewhere in the line-up of the New Zealand side were a primary school teacher, a barber, a Coca-Cola salesman, and a part-time insurance broker.

\*Read The Daily Star website for full stories.

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## ACC asks UK to seize assets of 2 top Bashundhara Group executives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has written to the United Kingdom's National Crime Agency (NCA), requesting it to seize the assets of Bashundhara Group Vice Chairman Shafat Sobhan (Sanvir) and Co-Chairman Sadat Sobhan.

ACC Chairman Mohammad Abdul Momen confirmed the development at a press conference at the commission's headquarters in the capital's Segunbagicha yesterday.

"Recovering laundered money is a complex process. However, we are trying. If we can provide enough evidence to our courts and theirs, it will be possible to bring the assets back to Bangladesh," he said.

The ACC has also sought assistance from the NCA in seizing the assets of Anisuzzaman Chowdhury, brother of former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Javed, and Mohammad Adnan Imam, former executive committee chairman of NRB Commercial Bank.

Momen said the commission is

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PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Green sludge covers the Dholaikhal reservoir, which was meant to be revitalised under the "Dholaikhal Reservoir Greening and Aesthetic Environment Development" project by the DSCC by April last year. However, the project remains incomplete. The photo was taken yesterday.

## Inform EC of Yunus-Tarique talk outcome BNP leader Salahuddin urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leader Salahuddin Ahmed urged the government to immediately inform the Election Commission of its decision to hold the national polls in February next year.

In a closed-door meeting with BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman in London on Friday, Chief Adviser Muhammed Yunus agreed to hold the polls before the start of Ramadan in February next year.

"We hope that the decision taken in the London meeting will soon be communicated to the Election Commission through the appropriate channel so that they can publicly say they have received an advisory or directive message from the government," he said

SEE PAGE 8 COL 5



## Britain appoints first female head of MI6

REUTERS

Britain yesterday named Blaise Metreweli, a career intelligence officer, as the first female head of the Secret Intelligence Service, the foreign spy service known as MI6.

Metreweli, 47, who is currently MI6's head of technology, known as "Q", joined the Secret Intelligence Service in 1999, and has spent most of her career in operational roles in the Middle East and Europe, the government said in a statement.

Richard Moore, the current chief of MI6, will step down in the autumn after a five-year tenure.

"I am proud and honoured to be asked to lead my service," said Metreweli, who takes on one of the most powerful jobs in Western intelligence and will be known by the code name "C".

MI6, founded in 1909, joins the other main British spy agencies, the domestic spy service MI5, and the intelligence communications agency GCHQ, in having appointed a female head.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who is currently in Canada for the G7 summit, said Metreweli's appointment comes when Britain is "facing threats on an unprecedented scale".

"I know Blaise will continue to provide the excellent leadership needed to defend our country," he said.

Metreweli's biggest challenges are likely to be dealing with Russia, China and Iran.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

## Aging population, urban surge warrant healthcare overhaul

Says Health Sector Reform Commission

TUHIN SHUBHIRA ADHIKARY

With significant shifts in population distribution and demographics, Bangladesh's health sector must realign its focus on medical care for the fast-growing urban and ageing population, says a report of the Health Sector Reform Commission.

Citing data from multiple studies, the commission said the country saw a surge in urban population over the last few decades, highlighting the need for a fundamental transformation in planning, structure, management, and financing of healthcare services.

Though Bangladesh still has a predominantly young population, it is gradually transitioning into an ageing society, warranting a well-organised elderly care system, said the report submitted to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus early last month.

The commission identified non-communicable diseases such as respiratory and heart-related illness, tuberculosis, and cancer as major health risks in the country. It urged the government to spend

**Though mortality among older adults has decreased slightly, their quality of life is worsening due to chronic conditions and decline in their ability to perform everyday activities, says the Health Sector Reform Commission report.**

more on preventive measures, early detection, rehabilitation, and long-term medical care.

### SURGE IN URBAN POPULATION

Referring to the 2022 data of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the commission said that in 1974, around 9 percent of the population lived in urban areas, which rose to 32 percent by 2022.

The annual population growth rate in rural areas is only 1.2 percent, compared to 4.4 percent in urban

areas, it said.

The country's population density is over 1,200 people per square kilometre, while more than 1,750 people reside per square km in Dhaka city and its surrounding areas, which continue to expand.

"In light of this reality, it is time to reshape the country's healthcare system." The primary healthcare structure was developed with a focus on the rural population, but the situation has changed, the report pointed out.

Rapid urbanisation has created new demands and challenges such as overcrowding, lack of safe water and sanitation, severe air pollution, and the growing burden of non-communicable diseases, said the commission, stressing the need for innovative solutions to make the urban healthcare system more inclusive and effective.

### DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

According to the 2021 Global Burden of Disease report, more than one-fourth of the population is below the age of 20, and a significant portion falls within the working age group (between 20 and 64).

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Starving people killed by 'lethal distribution system': UN

Aid distribution site 'turned out to be a trap': survivor

## 4 children raped in as many days Woman raped on running bus; 4 accused sent to jail, one sued

STAR REPORT

At least five people, including four children and a woman, were raped in separate incidents in four districts between Friday and yesterday.

Four accused were sent to jail, while another was sued in connection with the attacks.

In Munshiganj, an 11-year-old girl was raped by two men on Friday.

Her father filed a case that night against Md Akash, 25, and Md Hossain Fakir, 28, said police.

According to the complaint, the parents had left for work and the child was home alone with her four-year-old brother when the accused entered the house around noon and raped her.

Acting on a tip-off, police arrested both men early yesterday, said Saiful Alam, officer-in-charge of Munshiganj Sadar Police Station. They were produced before court later in the day and sent to jail, added Kamrul Islam, in charge of Munshiganj Court Police.

In Rajbari's Pangsha upazila, two teenagers, aged 14 and 15, were raped while returning home from private tuition around 11:00am on Sunday.

Police said Hasmat Ali, 22, and Shihab, 20, stopped the girls on the way, held them at knifepoint and took them to a nearby betel leaf orchard, where they raped them.

The victims informed their families, who filed

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5



Tahamidul Islam, 10, watching videos on a phone while undergoing treatment for dengue at the Mugda Medical College and Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He was admitted three days ago after suffering from a fever for several days and testing positive for dengue. Story on page 3.

## TK 1.08CR HEIST Police yet to ID suspects, hint at inside job

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Police have yet to identify or arrest any of the suspects involved in Saturday's daring robbery in Dhaka's Uttara, where criminals disguised as Rab personnel snatched Tk 1.08 crore from a Nagad representative.

The heist took place around 8:00am near roads 12 and 13 in Uttara Sector 13. The suspects in a microbus intercepted two motorcycles transporting Nagad staff and fled with the cash.

When one of the motorcyclists was trying to escape, the criminals chased him down, forced him into the microbus, and made off with the cash.

Despite reviewing CCTV footage and deploying multiple intelligence and detective teams, police yesterday said that they were yet to trace the suspects or recover the money.

Md Mahidul Islam, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Uttara Division, told The Daily Star today, "We're following several leads, including possible

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1