



## August 5 to be Student-People Uprising Day, public holiday

BSS, Dhaka

The government has decided to declare August 5 a public holiday, to be observed as Student-People Uprising Day.

The day will be officially celebrated every year.

The decision was made at a meeting of the advisory council at the State Guest House Jamuna yesterday.

After the meeting, Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki told reporters at the Foreign Service Academy that a preliminary decision had been made to celebrate August 5 as the Student-People Uprising Day.

The matter will be finalised next Sunday and a gazette notification may be issued the following day, he added.

August 5 is going to be a national day, so the Student People Uprising Day will be celebrated every year in the future, he said.

The Awami League regime fell on August 5 last year amid a mass uprising.

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam was present at the press briefing.



Seventh grader Ibrahim rests his head on a bench as his mother wipes sweat from his forehead while they wait to get him tested for Covid-19 at DMCH yesterday. Running a fever for 17 days, Ibrahim earlier tested negative for chikungunya and dengue. Doctors then advised a coronavirus test as his symptoms began resembling those of Covid-19.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Almost 32% had to bribe to get govt services

Finds BBS survey on 45,888 homes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

More than 31.67 percent of the people had to pay bribes to get government service in the last one year, according to a new Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics report.

Of those surveyed, 38.62 percent of the men and 22.71 women said they had to bribe, says the preliminary findings of Citizen Perception Survey 2025.

At the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, 63.29 percent of the service seekers had to bribe officials. This was followed by 61.29 percent at law enforcement agencies and 54.92 percent at land registry offices.

The study was conducted across the country from February 6-23 at 45,888 households in rural and urban areas. The surveyors interviewed a woman and a man, both aged over 18, from each household.

The BBS released the report at its office in the capital yesterday.

Addressing the event as chief guest, Planning Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud said those who paid bribes were mostly from middle-income groups because low-income people could hardly afford to pay bribes.

In other words, middle-income groups had to “buy a better service” in exchange for a bribe, he said, adding that this was a key problem.

It found 22 percent of the respondents -- 26.55 percent men and 17.81 percent women -- believing they could “influence politics”.

Nearly 85 percent -- 85.30 percent in rural and 83.75 percent in urban settings -- feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhoods after dark.

Nearly 93 percent rural and 91.88 percent urban people feel safe at home after dark. Over 93.35 men and 91.83 percent women expressed a similar view.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## ASSISTING IN POLLS Army to carry out duties as per govt instructions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Army said it has not yet received any official instructions from the government to assist in the upcoming election duties.

However, the force is prepared to act promptly if and when directed by the government.

“We have not received any formal instruction regarding election deployment yet. But the Bangladesh Army will carry out its responsibilities as per government orders,” said Colonel Mohammad Shafiqul Islam, colonel staff at the Army Headquarters, during a press briefing held at the Dhaka Cantonment yesterday.

The briefing focused on its recent nationwide operations, including anti-crime drives, Eid deployment, flood and disaster response, and law and order duties.

Over the past three weeks, the army recovered 56 illegal firearms and 990 rounds of ammunition, bringing the total (since August last year) to 9,667

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## BANKING REFORMS, TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

# ADB, WB approve over \$1.5b

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Asian Development Bank has approved a \$900 million loan to help Bangladesh reform its banking sector and strengthen its resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Of the total, \$500 million will support efforts to stabilise and reform the country's banking sector, while the remaining \$400 million will promote climate-resilient and inclusive development initiatives.

The \$500 million policy-based loan aims to strengthen governance, asset quality and stability within Bangladesh's banking system, the ADB said in a statement yesterday.

Also yesterday, the World Bank approved \$640 million for two projects aimed at enhancing gas supply and improving air quality in Bangladesh.

With the ADB and WB approvals, Bangladesh is set to receive more than \$1.5 billion -- a development that will ease the continued strain on its foreign currency reserves.

The ADB said the programme will improve the effectiveness of Bangladesh Bank's liquidity management, enhance supervision and introduce measures to address

the high volume of defaulted loans.

The key binding constraints in the banking sector include a lack of robust asset quality, tight liquidity and inadequate financial intermediation, leading to low rates of financial inclusion, said Sanjeev Kaushik, principal financial sector specialist at the Manila-based lender.

Separately, the ADB also approved a \$400 million loan for the second phase of the Climate-Resilient Inclusive Development Programme (CRIDP) aimed at supporting Bangladesh's efforts to adapt to climate change, cut emissions and foster inclusive economic growth.

The programme includes \$113 million in co-financing from Agence Française de Développement and another \$400 million from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.

The programme will help Bangladesh achieve its climate goals more efficiently by bringing government agencies together and aligning their work with national policies, said Sameer Khatiwada, senior public sector economist at the ADB.

It will also remove obstacles to mobilising climate finance, reinforce

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

## CONSENSUS COMMISSION Parties split over how to elect president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties remained poles apart over the presidential election process on the fourth day of the second round of talks with the National Consensus Commission yesterday.

The method of electing the president came up in discussion for the second time in this phase, and still no consensus could be reached.

The BNP rejected the proposal for electing the president through an electoral college comprising lawmakers and local government representatives. The Communist Party of Bangladesh and LDP too stood by the current system, where parliament alone elects the president.

Jamaat-e-Islami and the National Citizen Party, on the other hand, endorsed the idea of an electoral college.

With no agreement in sight yet, the commission will hold another round of discussions on Sunday.

Towards the end of yesterday's session, it also introduced the issue of the prime minister's tenure.

The Constitution Reform Commission proposes that the president be elected by a majority vote in an electoral college made up of: one vote per member of both houses of parliament; one collective vote for each district council (64 votes if there are 64 councils); and one collective vote for each city corporation.

The Election Reform Commission recommends a much larger electoral college, incorporating around 70,000

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## Israeli gunfire, strikes kill 72 across Gaza

### 21 of them gathered near aid distribution sites

AFP, Gaza City

Gaza's civil defence agency said Israeli forces killed at least 72 people yesterday, including 21 who had gathered near aid distribution sites as famine looms after more than 20 months of war.

Civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that six people were killed while waiting for aid in the southern Gaza Strip and 15 others in a central area known as the Netzarim corridor, where thousands of Palestinians have gathered daily in the hope of receiving food rations.

The Israeli army told AFP that its troops in Netzarim corridor -- a strip of land militarised by Israel that bisects the Palestinian territory -- had fired “warning shots” at “suspects” approaching them, but that it was “not aware of any injured individuals”.

The army did not comment on the incident reported in the south.

In northern Gaza, Bassal said that nine separate Israeli strikes killed another 51 people, updating earlier tolls provided by his agency.

Bassam Abu Shaar, who witnessed the shooting incident in the Netzarim area, said thousands of people had gathered there overnight in the hope of receiving aid at the US- and Israeli-backed distribution site when it opened in the morning.

“Around 1:00 am (2200 GMT yesterday), they started shooting at us,” he told AFP by phone, reporting gunfire, tank shelling and bombs dropped by drones.

Abu Shaar said that the size of the crowd had made it impossible for people to escape, with casualties left lying on the ground within walking distance of the distribution point, which is run by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

## 5 secretaries, a grade-1 official sent into forced retirement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday sent five secretaries and a grade-1 official (secretary status) into forced retirement.

The officials are Kazi Enamul Hassan, director general (secretary) of Bangladesh Karmachari Kallyan Board; Sukesh Kumar Sarker, director general (secretary) of the National Academy for Planning and Development; Mohammad Salah Uddin, secretary (OSD) at the public administration ministry; Muhammad Ibrahim, chairman (secretary) of the Land Appeal Board; and Md Shahid Ullah, rector (secretary) of the National Academy for Development Administration.

Citing section 45 of the Public Service Act-2018, the public administration ministry issued five separate gazette notifications in this regard.

In another gazette notification, Lipika Bhadra, chairman (grade-1) of the Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation, was sent into retirement.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



An olive ridley hatchling swims into the Bay of Bengal after hatching on the shores of Saint Martin's Island - one of the last remaining nesting grounds for marine turtles, particularly the endangered olive ridley, in Bangladesh. In typical turtle behaviour, mothers come ashore to lay their eggs in the sand, covering the nests before returning to sea. Weeks later, the hatchlings emerge and begin life entirely on their own. Each faces countless threats: predators, plastic pollution, fishing nets, and climate change. And yet, with flippers barely strong enough, they swim towards survival, driven by an ancient, undeterred instinct. For this little one, the journey has just begun.

PHOTO: SHARIF SARWAR

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1