



Iran fires missiles at US base in Qatar

Explosions heard over Doha as air defences intercept those; no casualties, damage reported; Trump floats 'regime change' idea



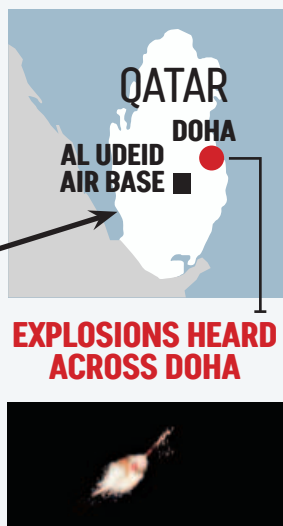
ISRAEL-IRAN WAR

ME countries shut airspace, disrupting flights

US says no other bases came under attack

Putin says US strikes on Iran 'unjustified'

Concerns grow as Iran mulls closing Strait of Hormuz



AGENCIES

Iran's military said it carried out a missile attack on the Al Udeid US airbase in Qatar yesterday after explosions were heard across the Qatari capital following Tehran's threat to retaliate for US airstrikes on its nuclear sites.

The Iranian military said the attack was "devastating and powerful", but US officials said no US personnel were killed or injured in the attack on the airbase, the largest US military installation in the Middle East.

Iran, which had been warned by Washington not to retaliate or face massive US military action, had informed the US via two diplomatic channels hours ahead of the attack, as well as Qatari authorities, a senior regional source told

Reuters.

Qatar's defence minister told Al Jazeera its air defences had intercepted missiles directed at the Al Udeid air base, the largest US military installation in the Middle East.

Iran had issued threats to retaliate against the United States after US bombers dropped 30,000-pound bunker-busters on Iranian underground nuclear facilities over the weekend, joining Israel's air war against Tehran, and President Donald Trump mooted the possibility of the Iranian government being toppled.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates yesterday condemned the attacks against Qatar calling it 'unacceptable'.

The attack came shortly after a Western diplomat told Reuters there had been a credible threat to a US military base in the

Gulf state following the unprecedented US airstrikes on Iran's uranium enrichment programme.

A source familiar with the matter told Reuters that Qatar, situated just across the Gulf from Iran, had shut its airspace after receiving the advance warning from Iran.

Bahrain, another US allied Gulf Arab state just to the north of Qatar, said it had also shut its airspace after the Iranian strike against the Al Udeid base. Kuwait also did the same causing flight disruptions.

In addition, the US Ain al-Asad air base in Iraq had activated its air defence system out of concern for a potential attack, military sources said.

The main US military base in Iraq's

DENGUE OUTBREAK Patients from outside swarm city hospitals

Highest single-day hospitalisations recorded yesterday; 2 more dead

HELEMUL ALAM and TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Mohammad Mizan, 38, from Juranpur in Cumilla's Daudkandi upazila, has been undergoing treatment for dengue at the Tropical Medicine Ward of Dhaka Medical College Hospital since Friday.

Though initially treated at home after being diagnosed on Tuesday, he was rushed to DMCH when his platelet

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

IMF approves \$1.3b in loans Unlocks fourth, fifth tranches together

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The executive board of the International Monetary Fund yesterday approved the fourth and fifth instalments of its loan for Bangladesh, a top-up of the original \$4.7 billion credit by about \$800 million with a six-month extension.

Following the approval, Bangladesh has received about \$1.3 billion from the IMF, the first disbursement under the country's interim government.

Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur confirmed the IMF approval in a text message to The Daily Star. "Certainly. The meeting was over a few hours ago as confirmed by the IMF

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2



Why Bangladesh needs a second chamber

P6



Turning reserved seats into real power for women

P7

Jamuna Bank Remembers Its Sponsor Director on his 50th Birthday



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24 June 1975 | 16 January 2007

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MY DHAKA

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

SKIP FANCY FLORISTS

Dhaka's wholesale flowers beat boutique prices

RBR

Dhaka still surprises me; can you believe that? Born and brought up in this city, I think I am a true ambassador of the town -- a little eccentric, a tad bit politically volatile, and very angry for no good reason.

Having lived here for a couple of scores and more, I take pride in the fact that I know Dhaka like the back of my palm. However, last Friday at the crack of dawn, Dhaka pulled a rabbit out of its cap for me -- the Shahbagh wholesale flower market.

I had heard about this wholesale and retail flower market many times. Still, I was under the impression that the few tin shacks, selling flower garlands and bouquets opposite the National Museum building, were all the fabled market had to offer. I never ventured beyond the walls of these flower shops and so had no knowledge that engulfed in darkness and lit by moonbeams, a wholesale flower market existed where farmers sell directly to traders.

The main trading begins around 2:00am and ends by 10:00am, but the vendors and small traders continue

for a while before going to their regular stalls and flower-selling spots throughout the city.

Heaps and heaps of marigolds, roses, jasmine, gerbera, tuberoses, and leaves lay on the ground of the area. The place is murky because of all the crushed petals and garbage; day-old unsold lots give out a stench as well. But the colours of the fresh flowers and the prices at which they are selling make up for all the nastiness.

I was floored when a young boy sold a dozen multi-coloured gerbera for only Tk 120. I asked him the price thrice, and he only smiled and said, "This is the wholesale market and not your street corner."

True enough, a stick of gerbera in any flower shop inside the city is Tk 30 each. The price of yellow, white, pink, and of course, red roses is between Tk 150 to Tk 200 for a bundle of 100 sticks. Young kids selling these roses at traffic

signals usually ask for Tk 250 for ten sticks.

This is the place where event planners go to buy their props. Besides flowers, the market has shops that sell everything a party planner needs, from scotch tapes to fabrics for pandals, fairy lights to wrapping paper, confetti, firecrackers -- the whole enchilada. Interestingly, these too sell at wholesale prices.

Intimate ceremonies have long been forgotten in our celebrations -- weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, even family or friends' get-togethers require party planners. When there is such a demand for all things pretty and flowery, no wonder flower farming has become important. You cannot import to meet mass demand.

Flowers thrive in sunlight. This is something our tropical country has in plenty. Jhikargacha in Jashore is the

major hub of floriculture, and places in other districts like Birulia in Savar, and Panchagar in Manikganj play along. Cultivation of tuberose, gladiolus, rose, marigold, lotus, gerbera, hyacinth, and chrysanthemum see year-round production.

Flower cultivation is a lucrative sector that is aiding the event management services, another emerging sector in Dhaka and other big cities, and thus, new production belts in Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, and Rangpur are added to the flower farming sector.

Extreme weather conditions like heat waves, incessant rains, and fog disrupt production and the prices go up, otherwise, the farmers are happy to cultivate all year round and sell at reasonable prices.

So, next time you just want to cheer up a dark corner of your home, give someone cut flowers, or even plan parties. Besides Shahbagh, Agargaon also has one such wholesale flower market as well, and occasional retailers like me are both surprised and impressed by the flurry of flower trading activity happening there, every dawn.



Iran fires missiles at US base in Qatar

FROM PAGE 1
western neighbour Syria was also on full alert for a possible attack by Iran or Iran-aligned militia groups, a Syrian security source said.

Two US officials said Washington had assessed that Iran could carry out attacks targeting American forces in the Middle East soon, although the US was still seeking a diplomatic resolution that would see Tehran forgo any reprisal.

Since Trump joined Israel's campaign by dropping massive bunker-buster bombs on Iranian nuclear production sites on Sunday morning, Iran has repeatedly threatened to retaliate.

"Mr Trump, the gambler, you may start this war, but we will be the ones to end it," Ebrahim Zolfagari, spokesperson for Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya central military headquarters, said yesterday in a recorded, English-language video statement.

The attack came as Iran and Israel yesterday kept up attacking each other for the eleventh day.

Israel yesterday hit Revolutionary Guard sites and the notorious Evin prison in Tehran, calling them its most powerful strikes yet on the Iranian capital. Iran, in turn, fired missile barrages at Israel and vowed retaliation against the United States for the strikes.

Loud explosions rocked the Iranian capital, where Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said the military hit "regime targets" with "unprecedented force", adding to speculation that Israel may seek to topple Iran's clerical leadership.

The targets included Evin prison, which Katz said "holds political prisoners and regime opponents", as well as command centres of the domestic Basij militia and the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

The Israeli military said in a statement that the targets belong to Iranian forces "responsible... for defending the homeland security, suppressing threats, and maintaining the regime's stability".

Iranian media and the Israeli military said Israel also struck Fordow, a key nuclear enrichment facility buried deep in the mountains south of Tehran, to obstruct access routes to the site.

The Israeli attacks followed after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said it was "very, very close"

to achieving its goals in Iran. On Sunday, the US hit three Iranian nuclear facilities -- Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan -- with aircraft and missiles in a military operation dubbed "Midnight Hammer".

Trump boasted the US strikes had "obliterated" Iran's nuclear capabilities, but other officials said it was too soon to assess the impact on Iran's nuclear programme, which Israel and some Western states consider an existential threat.

A day after the US top leaders tried to distance the strikes from an effort to regime change in Iran, Trump raised the question in a social media post.

"It's not politically correct to use the term, 'Regime Change,' but if the current Iranian Regime is unable to MAKE IRAN GREAT AGAIN, why wouldn't there be a Regime change??? MIGA!!!" Trump wrote on his social media platform.

US Vice President JD Vance and Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth, after the strikes, stressed they were not working to overthrow Iran's government, but warned against attacking any US interests and accepting "peace" that Trump offered.

Yesterday, sirens sounded across Israel, and AFP journalists reported blasts were heard over Jerusalem.

Iranian media said Israel's strikes hit a power supply system in Tehran, triggering temporary outages.

In Israel, the national electricity company reported "damage near a strategic infrastructure facility" in the south that disrupted power supply, without naming the location or specifying the cause.

Some details of the damage in Israel are barred from publication due to military censorship rules.

Israeli strikes on Iran have killed more than 400 people, Iran's health ministry said. Iran's attacks on Israel have killed 24 people, according to official figures.

After the US strikes, global markets reacted nervously, with oil prices jumping more than four percent early yesterday but dipping later in the day.

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday said that "unjustified" US attacks on Iran's nuclear sites were pushing the world towards great danger and promised

to try to help the people of the Islamic Republic, though he gave no specifics.

Putin received Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi in the Kremlin yesterday alongside his Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Kremlin foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov and Igor Kostyukov, the head of Russia's GRU military intelligence agency.

"The absolutely unprovoked aggression against Iran has no basis and no justification," Putin told Araqchi, adding that he wanted to speak about ways to calm the crisis. "For our part, we are making efforts to assist the Iranian people."

Putin, whose army is fighting a major war of attrition in Ukraine, has shown little appetite for a confrontation with the US over Iran, just as Trump seeks to repair ties with Moscow.

Meanwhile, China urged both Iran and Israel to prevent the conflict from spilling over, warning of potential economic fallout.

China's UN Ambassador Fu Cong said parties should restrain the "impulse of force, avoid exacerbating conflicts and adding fuel to the fire," according to the state broadcaster CCTV.

Fu said parties, especially Israel, "should immediately cease fire to prevent the situation from escalating and avoid the spillover of war."

Iran was hurt "but the United States' credibility was also damaged -- both as a country and as a participant in any international negotiations," Fu added.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio called on China to help deter Iran from closing the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint for one-fifth of the world's oil supply.

The European Union's foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said closing the strategic strait would be "extremely dangerous".

With Iran threatening US bases in the region, the State Department issued a worldwide alert cautioning Americans abroad.

Rafael Grossi, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), told an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council that craters were visible at the Fordo facility, but it had not been possible to assess the underground damage.

"Armed attacks on nuclear facilities should never take place," he added.

Patients from outside swarm city hospitals

FROM PAGE 1
count dropped to 19,000 and his stool turned black.

According to Mizan, several areas in Daudkandi, including Donarchar, Shahapara, and Sabjikkandi, have been seeing a surge in dengue infections recently.

"My platelet count is now 1.16 lakh, and I'm feeling better," he told The Daily Star from hospital.

Another resident of Daudkandi, Noor Mohammad, 18, was also admitted to DMCH after developing headache, abdominal pain, and low-grade fever.

"I was diagnosed with dengue at a local hospital, but was referred to DMCH when my platelet count fell to 65,000," said Noor, who is now recovering.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Motaleb, 40, of Narayanganj, was admitted to DMCH on June 20 after suffering from fever, vomiting, and diarrhoea for several days. "I was initially treated at local Victoria Hospital, but they referred me to DMCH when my condition worsened."

Like Mizan, Motaleb and Noor, many dengue patients are being brought to Dhaka as their conditions worsen, due to inadequate healthcare facilities in upazilas and districts.

Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the country's largest public hospital, Muga Medical College Hospital and the DNCC Dedicated Covid-19 hospital, also major government facilities, are seeing a rise in the number of patients from outside the capital amid a steady spike in dengue cases nationwide.

Health officials and experts have warned that hospitals in Dhaka may face even more pressure if outbreaks spread further into districts that lack doctors and essential equipment.

Their concerns come as two more dengue patients died and 392 were hospitalised across the country in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, marking the highest single-day hospitalisations so far this year. Of the 392, 305 were from outside Dhaka.

With these new figures, the total number of dengue hospitalisations this year stands at 8,150, of whom 6,353 (nearly 78 percent) are from outside Dhaka city.

Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) data shows that of the 34 dengue-related deaths so far, 15 occurred outside Dhaka.

Among the divisions, Barishal has reported the highest number of dengue

cases this year at 3,709. Other figures include: 2,558 in Dhaka (including both Dhaka city corporations at 1,797), 1,254 in Chattogram, 251 in Khulna, 217 in Rajshahi, 113 in Mymensingh, 26 in Rangpur, and 21 in Sylhet. The divisional tally, except for Dhakas, excluded the count in city corporation areas.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Cumilla Civil Surgeon Ali Nur Md Bashir Ahmed confirmed a high concentration of dengue cases in Daudkandi, especially Donarchar area. "We've informed the higher authorities about the situation."

Asked why so many patients from Cumilla are seeking treatment in the capital, he explained that Daudkandi is geographically closer to Dhaka than Cumilla city itself.

He added that although Cumilla Medical College Hospital and Cumilla Sadar Hospital have a combined 30 ICU beds, they are operating on a limited scale due to manpower shortages.

A DMCH doctor, preferring anonymity, said the hospital, as a multidisciplinary facility, often receives critical patients referred from upazila and district-level hospitals.

"For example, a dengue patient may require dialysis after going into shock, but many local hospitals lack the facility. In such cases, patients are referred to DMCH," he told this correspondent.

A nurse from DMCH's Tropical Medicine Ward, also speaking anonymously, confirmed that they have been receiving a large number of patients from Cumilla and Keraniganj in recent weeks.

A similar situation was observed during a recent visit to Muga Medical College Hospital, where many patients were also from outside Dhaka.

Brig Gen Md Asaduzzaman, director of DMCH, and Mezbahur Rahman, director of Muga Medical College Hospital, could not be reached for comments.

The DNCC Dedicated Covid-19 Hospital in Mohakhali, which now treats both Covid and dengue patients, is also witnessing a surge in cases from outside Dhaka.

"We estimate around 60 percent of our dengue patients are from Dhaka, the rest are from other districts," the hospital's Director Col Tanvir Ahmed told The Daily Star yesterday, adding, "Many travel to Dhaka seeking better treatment."

SITUATION MAY 'WORSEN'
A recent entomological survey by the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease

Control and Research (IEDCR) revealed high densities of Aedes mosquito larvae in several districts, indicating an increasing risk of outbreaks.

Conducted in May, the survey found that the Breteau Index (BI), which measures Aedes larvae-positive containers per 100 houses inspected, exceeded the critical threshold of 20 in three districts: Jhenaidah (BI 60), Magura (55.53), and Pirojpur (20). Patuakhali's BI stood at 19.26, just below the threshold.

According to global standards, a BI above 20 indicates a high risk of an uncontrollable dengue outbreak.

Magura Civil Surgeon Shamim Kabir said 13 dengue patients have been admitted this month, with four still undergoing treatment. No cases were reported there last month. "We're testing suspected patients and are prepared with sufficient test kits."

Jhenaidah Civil Surgeon Md Kamruzzaman confirmed one dengue-related death in Harinakundu upazila last week, but said there are no current hospital admissions for dengue.

He added that test kits are only available in Jhenaidah Sadar, but requests for more kits have been sent to higher authorities. "Once they arrive, we will distribute them at the upazila level."

Entomologist GM Saitur Rahman warned of the worsening dengue situation outside Dhaka and urged immediate action.

"We need nationwide serosurveillance to map antibody levels and identify high-risk clusters for effective mosquito control... Without identifying hotspots, it's impossible to run proper control and management programmes."

He stressed the need to make dengue a notifiable disease, trace sources of infection, and include entomologists in planning and response measures. "Many cases go unreported as patients treat themselves at home. Hospital data alone doesn't reflect the full picture."

Prof Halimur Rashid, line director of Communicable Diseases Control at DGHS, said although the entomological survey shows high Aedes larvae densities in some districts, the number of dengue patients in those areas remains low for now.

"We've already sent medicine and test kits to Barguna, which is currently the worst-hit district. Six doctors have also been transferred there. We will send the same to other affected areas when needed."

Ex-CEC Nurul Huda placed on 4-day remand
8 arrested in the capital including 2 former AL MPs, former MD of Islami Bank

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former chief election commissioner KM Nurul Huda was placed on a four-day remand for interrogation in a case filed over alleged poll irregularities committed during the past three national elections.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mustafizur Rahman passed the order yesterday afternoon after police produced him before the court with a 10-day remand plea, said a sub-inspector assigned to the court.

The same court also sent two former Awami League lawmakers -- Sabina Akter Tuhin, 46, from the reserved women's seat, and Mohammad Faisal Biplob, 55, of Munshiganj-3 -- to jail in separate cases.

Sabina was sent to jail in a case filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act, while Biplob was sent to jail in connection with the murder of Jubo Dal leader Shamim Mia.

Former CEC Nurul Huda, 79, was brought to the courtroom at 4:10pm amid heavy security. The magistrate entered the courtroom around 4:17pm, and the hearing began shortly afterwards.

During the hearing, Huda's lawyer informed the court that the charges brought against his client all fall under bailable offences under the Penal Code.

He also termed the case "legally flawed" and argued that it would "run contrary to the law" if Huda is placed on remand.

At 4:55pm, Huda spoke in the courtroom, telling the court that 15-17 lakh people were involved in conducting the 2018 election and that from Dhaka, there was no scope to monitor what happened in remote areas.

On Sunday, Nurul Huda, who oversaw the 2018 national polls, was arrested after a mob assaulted him at his Uttara residence.

Hours before his arrest, the BNP filed a case against him and 23 others with the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station over alleged irregularities in the 2014, 2018, and 2024 national elections.

The case also accused former CECs Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad and Kazi Habibul Awal, who oversaw the 2014 and 2024 national elections, respectively.

The case further sued 10 election commissioners, deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and 10 others, including former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan, former IGP's Hasan Mahmud Khandker, Javed Patwary, and Shahidul Haque; former DMP commissioner Benazir Ahmed; former Special Branch of police chief Monirul Islam; and former chiefs of the NSI and DGFI.

The BNP claimed these individuals were responsible for voter intimidation and manipulation of the electoral process.

FIVE OTHERS ARRESTED
Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) arrested five more individuals, including the former managing director of Islami Bank Bangladesh, in separate drives in the capital early yesterday.

The arrestees are Monirul Moutla, 62, former managing director of Islami Bank; Tariqul Islam, 38, former central committee member of banned Chhatra League; Abdul Wahab, 58, president of Awami League's Ward-9 unit; Mehedi Hasan Babu, 43, joint general secretary of Jubo League's Ward-25 unit in Lalbagh; and Zakir Hossain Ali, 61, assistant office secretary of AL's Ward-92 unit.

According to a press release issued by the DMP, there are specific cases against all of them at different police stations. Police claim they were involved in a coordinated effort to destabilise the country.

Help build a better future thru scouting

Yunus tells young scouts

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday encouraged the young people engaged in scouting to help open doors for others, discover the world of opportunities, know people better with broader friendship, and contribute to positive changes.

"Scouting has opened a big door of opportunities for you. It is a big opportunity for you to open the door for others," he said while inaugurating the Bangladesh Scouts Cub Carnival at the Chief Adviser's Office.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Yunus said this is a great opportunity to discover the world and, more importantly, to discover things within the youngsters involved in scouting.

"Otherwise, there is no other opportunity to get to know you. You must



Professor Serajul Islam Choudhury at an event at Bangla Academy in Dhaka yesterday, on the occasion of his 90th birthday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

'Aggressive nationalism' threatening world peace

Says Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury at event marking his 90th birthday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The present-day world is witnessing a form of "aggressive nationalism" in various ways, said Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury yesterday.

"The Zionist activities of Israel, the way people are being killed, the way children are being killed in Palestine... all of these represent that aggressive nationalism," he said.

One of the country's foremost public intellectuals, Prof Serajul, made the remarks while speaking on "The Liberation War of 1971 and the Role of Nationalism" at an event marking his 90th birthday.

"Natun Diganta Paribar", a platform formed by his colleagues at the magazine Natun Diganta, where Prof Serajul serves as editor, organised the discussion at the Abdul Karim Shahityabisharad Auditorium of Bangla Academy in the capital.

In his speech, Prof Serajul addressed

issues related to the Liberation War, contemporary global affairs, and different socio-economic problems.

He said war comes in many forms, and the war fought by the Bangladeshis in 1971 was a "people's war".

War comes in many forms, and the war fought by the Bangladeshis in 1971 was a "people's war". Nationalism also takes different forms. It can be aggressive, or it can be a form of resistance.

"Similarly, nationalism also takes different forms. It can be aggressive, or it can be a form of resistance," he said.

While Bangladesh experienced aggressive nationalism from the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971, the nationalism upheld by the people was one of resistance.

Prof Serajul noted that foreign powers like the US, China, and Russia (then Soviet Union), who played roles in Bangladesh's Liberation War, had their own "nationalistic perspectives".

"India's involvement was also driven by nationalistic interests. However, it included a humane approach, as India provided shelter to hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshi refugees," he said.

He pointed out that Pakistan's attempt to impose Urdu as the state language in 1948 was also driven by a nationalistic desire to "create a nation", despite significant differences in ethnicity and other areas between West and East Pakistan.

Prof Serajul said declaring amnesty for local collaborators of the Pakistani occupation forces, known as Razakars, and not preparing a list of them were "mistakes" by the post-war Awami League government.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Freedom of expression vital for democracy

Speakers tell MJF event; 'Swadhinata' project launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Safeguarding freedom of expression is essential to upholding democratic values in the digital age, said speakers at an event yesterday.

They expressed concern over the growing threat of misinformation and emphasised the importance of digital literacy, inclusive participation, and civic responsibility.

They made the remarks during the launch of the EU-funded "Swadhinata - Freedom of Expression for Digital Democracy (FREEDOM)" project, which was held at a hotel in the capital.

Jointly implemented by Plan International Netherlands, Plan International Bangladesh, and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), the project aims to strengthen freedom of expression, improve information literacy, and promote online safety.

Speakers said the initiative will follow a cascading model to engage young people,

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Tarique invited to visit China

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

China National Congress Deputy Li Hongzhong has invited BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman to visit China.

He made the invitation during a bilateral meeting between BNP and Communist Party of China (CPC) held yesterday afternoon at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

The meeting began with CPC Politburo member Li Hongzhong, welcoming the BNP delegation, which was led by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Tarique, the eldest son of BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, has been living in London since his release from prison during the state of emergency in 2008.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5



NAGAR BHABAN REOPENING Services resume on limited scale, protests continue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After remaining shut for 40 consecutive days, the Dhaka South City Corporation headquarters, Nagar Bhaban, reopened yesterday, with the resumption of limited civic services amid ongoing protests.

From early morning yesterday, citizens began arriving in hope of availing essential services. By 9:00am, all gates of Nagar Bhaban were unlocked, except for the DSCC administrator's office and the engineering department, which remained padlocked.

Mansura Khatun, who came from Bashabo, said she had been unable to withdraw a grant for her father's medical treatment during the closure. "Today, I submitted the application again. The

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



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US STRIKES ON IRAN Hopes for nuke diplomacy shattered

REUTERS, Paris

In a bid to defuse the conflict over Iran's nuclear program, foreign ministers from Europe's top three powers hurried to meet their Iranian counterpart on Friday in Geneva.

Those hopes collapsed on Saturday when US President Donald Trump ordered airstrikes on Iran's three main nuclear sites, in support of Israel's military campaign.

"It's irrelevant to ask Iran to return to diplomacy," Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, visibly angry, told reporters in Istanbul on Sunday, promising a "response" to the US strikes. "It's not time for diplomacy now."

Trump, who said the US airstrikes "obliterated" the sites, warned in a televised speech on Saturday the US could attack other targets in Iran if no



PHOTO: AFP

Palestinian children wait at a food distribution point in Nuseirat, central Gaza Strip, yesterday. The Israeli blockade, imposed in early March amid stalled truce negotiations, has created famine-like conditions across Gaza, according to rights groups.

US military pulled back into Middle East wars

AGENCIES

The US strikes on nuclear sites in Iran are an extraordinary turn for a military that was supposed to be moving on from two decades of forever wars in the Middle East, and they put the United States back on war footing.

Across the region, where more than 40,000 American troops are on bases and warships, the strikes ushered in a period of high alert as the Pentagon braced for almost-certain retaliation from Iran.

President Trump announced on social media that three Iranian sites were hit, including the mountain facility at Fordo. The bombs used in the strikes are believed to include "bunker busters," which are

designed to destroy deep underground bunkers or well-buried weapons in highly protected facilities.

The strikes, whether successful or not, are likely to trigger a fierce response. Tehran has vowed to strike at American bases in the Middle East, and American intelligence agencies confirmed before the strikes took place that Iran would take steps to widen the war and hit US forces in the region.

US officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss intelligence, said the strikes against the three nuclear sites were complete. The official said no follow-up attacks were expected, although commanders were ready to respond to any Iranian retaliation, reports New York Times online.

Iran has many ways to retaliate, including naval assets and other capabilities it would need to shut down the Strait of Hormuz, a move that could pin any US Navy ships in the Persian Gulf, American military officials say. Iranian officials have threatened to mine the strait if the United States joined Israel's attack on the country.

Iran would not need much preparation to attack US air and naval bases in the region. The Iranian military has missile bases within easy striking range of Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Indeed, American officials said earlier this week that Iran had prepared missiles and other military equipment for strikes on US bases in the region.

Won't let terror 'drag Syria back to instability'

Says Erdogan after suicide
attack at Damascus church

AFP, Istanbul

Turkey will not allow extremists to drag Syria back into chaos and instability, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday after a suicide attack killed 22 at a Damascus church.

"We will never allow our neighbour and brother Syria... be dragged into a new environment of instability through proxy terrorist organisations," he said, vowing to support the new government's fight against such groups.

He did not explain what he meant by "proxy" groups but vowed that Turkey would "continue to support the Syrian government's fight against terrorism". The Damascus government blamed Sunday night's shooting and suicide attack — the first of its kind in the Syrian capital since the fall of strongman Bashar al-Assad six months ago — on Islamic State (IS) group militants.

It cast the attack as a bid to "undermine national coexistence and to destabilise the country", which only began emerging from the post-civil war chaos after Assad's ouster six months ago.

POLITICAL, JUDICIAL CRISIS Embattled Thai PM reshuffles cabinet

AFP, Bangkok

Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra yesterday began a cabinet reshuffle as a political and judicial crisis sparked by a leaked phone call threatens to sink her government.

The 38-year-old daughter of controversial former PM Thaksin Shinawatra began handing out ministerial posts vacated when her main coalition partner quit last week — a move that nearly took her government down.

Paetongtarn, in office for less than a year, is hanging on by a thread, and on top of the party horse-trading she now faces a Constitutional Court case that could see her barred from office.

She faced calls to quit or call an election last week as critics accused her of undermining the country and insulting the army during the leaked call with former Cambodian leader Hun Sen, which focused on a festering border dispute.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CRLIWM-CHT) Sector Project Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council, Rangamati.

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)(Firm/NGO) (National) for Consulting Services for Watershed Management Non-Government Organization (NGO) hiring for Khagrachari district

Package No. CRLIWM/SD-39 (ADB Package-CHT/NGO-WSM/KHAG/SD-07) for
Khagrachari District,

- The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) under the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA), has been allocated public fund from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the "Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CRLIWM-CHT) Sector Project". A portion of the GoB and ADB fund is intended to be used for payments under the contract for Recruitment of Consulting Firm(s) for which this Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) is being issued.
- The overall objective of the services: The WSM-INGO will support the rehabilitation and sustainable management of Khagrachari watersheds in the CHT by mobilizing local communities, strengthening community-based organizations (e.g., Para Development Committees and Village Common Forest committees), and building their capacity in social, technical, agricultural, forestry, and water management practices. Working under the guidance of the PMO-CHTRC, PISC experts, and Khagrachari DPMO-Khagrachari HDC, the NGO will ensure participatory planning, implementation, and maintenance of watershed interventions. The goal is to enhance ecological resilience, improve livelihoods, and promote inclusive governance of natural resources in alignment with project objectives, as detailed in the Terms of Reference (ToR)
- The main scope of services is the contracted WSM-INGO will provide qualified staff, mobilize communities, and conduct social and technical assessments in prioritized sub-watersheds, ensuring alignment with project safeguards and participatory approaches. It will support implementation of watershed interventions, prepare annual plans and budgets, and coordinate with PMO, DPMO, and PISC for effective execution. The NGO will also handle financial management, reporting, grievance redress, and synergies with other project components while adhering to environmental and social safeguards. Regular progress reports, data collection, and compliance with project guidelines will be maintained to achieve sustainable watershed management outcomes.
- The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) now invites national eligible consulting firms (NGOs) to submit Expression of Interest (EOI) for providing the required services.
- The consulting firm(s) should be nationally reputed and may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications. No firm should form more than one association or joint venture (JV). If a firm submits more than one EOI forming more than one JV/association, all EOIs submitted by forming JV/association with that firm and also EOI submitted by that firm will be rejected.
- The Consultant will be selected under Consultant Qualitative Selection (CQS) method in accordance with the procedures set out in the ADB Procurement Policy 2017 ("Policy") and the Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers 2017 ("Regulations"):

<https://www.adb.org/documents/adb-procurement-policy>

<https://www.adb.org/documents/procurement-regulations-ADB-borrowers>

'Short-listing' of the Consulting Firms submitting Expression of Interest (EOI) will be done by Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) based on the complete information submitted in the Standard EOI form by

the intending Consulting Firms through the Consultant Management System (CMS) as mentioned in sl. 8. Intending Consulting Firms shall have, but not limited to the following competences-

a) Management competence: Firm's management and organizational strength, financial strength, number and capabilities of permanent employees and key staff, etc.

b) Technical Competence:

- Firm's specialization compared with the sectoral focus of the assignment;
- Firm's specific experience the NGO or its consortium/JV must possess demonstrated experience in watershed management, village common forests (VCF), agriculture, and/or community infrastructure development within the specified Hill District, supported by a team proficient in all local ethnic languages to ensure effective communication. The partnership must include at least one women's NGO (unless the lead NGO specializes in gender work) and showcase a minimum of 10 years' development experience in the CHT region, including 5 years specifically in capacity-building projects related to these sectors. Additionally, the consortium must demonstrate the capability to recruit qualified technical professionals (engineers, watershed specialists, and agriculture/forestry experts) while ensuring that at least 70% of project staff are from CHT's ethnic communities, with equitable representation across different groups.;
- Firm's experience in ADB/World Bank funded similar projects will be given priority.

c) Geographic Competence: Experience in similar geographic area (i.e. country experience, regional experience).

- In addition to the above, the list of the experts along with their CVs are required for the Consultants' Qualifications Selection evaluation. For CQS selections, proposed experts during the EOI stage will be evaluated using the Personal Evaluation Sheet template, like (i) General Qualifications, (ii) Project-Related Experience, and (iii) Experiences with international/development partners organizations or in their projects.
- Only EOIs submitted electronically through ADB's CMS using ADB template will be evaluated. EOI submitted using other than ADB templates will not be evaluated. Incomplete EOI will also not be evaluated.
- Interested consulting firms are requested to submit the Expression of Interest (EOI) electronically, using standard EOI template available through ADB's CMS by 11:59 PM (Manila Local Time) and by 09:59 PM (Dhaka Local Time) on or before 22 July, 2025 through the link of <http://csrm.adb.org> [Project Name: Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts Sector Project, Package Name: Consultancy Service regarding "Watershed Management Implementation NGO"(Package No: : CRLIWM/SD-39 (ADB Package-CHT/NGO-WSM/KHAG/SD-07) for Khagrachari District]. Please note that only online submission of EOIs in ADB's CMS is allowed. Any offline or manual EOI submission is not permissible and will not be considered.
- Only the first ranked short-listed firm will be invited to submit a "Request for Proposal (RFP) for Technical & Financial Proposals which will be evaluated by the Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) of CHTRC.
- Under no circumstances will ADB or CHTRC, be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by the firm(s) in connection with the preparation or submission of the EOI. Interested consulting firm(s) is/are requested to submit relevant documentary evidences in support of their competence in EOI submission.
- Interested consulting firm(s) may obtain further information including Scope of Works and Terms of Reference (ToR) from the Consultant Management System on the ADB website at <http://csrm.adb.org> or from the office of the undersigned during regular office hours on all working days before deadline of submission. The EOI notice will also be available at the following websites www.cptu.gov.bd.
- The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs received without assigning any reason thereof.

Paban Kumar Chakma

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The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Uncertainty is stifling the economy Govt must proactively alleviate the concerns of business community

It is hardly surprising that economists and business leaders believe deep uncertainty is stalling businesses. We, too, have been highlighting this issue in this column for months. However, the government's continued failure to effectively alleviate such uncertainty is concerning.

At a post-budget dialogue organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), economists warned that the country's business climate is being weighed down by a pervasive sense of uncertainty, which is slowing economic progress. This is reflected in Bangladesh's GDP growth of just 3.97 percent in the current fiscal year—the slowest in 34 years, excluding the pandemic period. Making matters worse, there have been a significant drop in annual imports—which include essential inputs for production—and a decade-low private-sector credit growth of just 7 percent in the first quarter of 2025, which further underscore the signs of economic stagnation. Additionally, businesses are grappling with rising operational costs, largely due to a steep increase in bank borrowing rates.

As a result, business leaders have expressed frustration at having to bear the burden of high interest rates, despite many not being responsible for the looting under the previous government that contributed to increasing interest rates and business costs. They have also called on the authorities to identify those who misappropriated public funds and bring them to justice, rather than raising interest rates to subsidise the stolen money.

Another important point raised by the economists is about the government's tendency to "listen without responding." Business leaders have similarly criticised the authorities for failing to engage with them over the recent US tariffs. According to them, this lack of dialogue will only worsen the country's business environment, especially if the inflated duties in the American market are not addressed properly.

The recently approved budget has also been criticised by some economists and business leaders for being overly conventional. Much more was expected, they said, particularly given that four members of the advisory council are economists. This reflects a lack of boldness on the government's part and sends a discouraging signal to the broader business community. Moreover, the changes to the income tax threshold—which will disproportionately increase the burden on low- and middle-income earners over the next two fiscal years, while those in higher income brackets face only a modest rise—are also disappointing.

Given the circumstances, the government must not only take these concerns seriously but also engage with relevant stakeholders, especially business leaders, to explore possible solutions. The uncertainties that are stifling businesses must be addressed immediately. Otherwise, the economy will continue to suffer, with potentially severe consequences for both citizens and the country in the long run.

Why can't the govt stop mob violence?

Controversial ex-CEC must face legal process, not violence

We are deeply concerned by the growing culture of mob violence that has almost become a norm in recent times. The latest incident occurred on June 22, when former Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda was assaulted by a mob prior to his arrest in a case filed by the BNP, accusing him and 23 others of electoral irregularities. A video that went viral on social media showed Huda standing with a garland of shoes around his neck, surrounded by a group of individuals. At one point, a bearded man struck him twice in the face with a shoe while others chanted slogans. Moments later, a police officer took Huda by the hand and led him away.

This kind of public harassment and mob trial before any legal proceedings have taken place is totally unacceptable. It poses a serious threat to the rule of law and undermines the legal rights of the accused. The question is: why did the police not take adequate precautions before attempting the arrest? Were they unaware of the risk of such an incident occurring, especially in such a high-profile case?

Among those accused in the BNP case are three AL-time CECs—KM Nurul Huda, Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad, and Kazi Habibul Awal—and 10 election commissioners. Ahmad and Awal oversaw the national elections of 2014 and 2024 respectively, while Huda oversaw the 2018 election amid widespread allegations of ballot-box stuffing on the eve of polling. Nurul Huda, along with others involved in these controversial elections that enabled a fascist regime, must face legal proceedings. However, any mob assault prior to legal action, or at any stage of the trial, serves only to raise question marks about their chances of getting justice.

Over the past 10 months, there has been a disturbing surge in incidents of mob justice where violent groups have taken the law into their own hands. Sometimes top leaders of Awami League, accused in various cases including those related to the July brutalities, faced assaults even on court premises. Alarming, in most instances, the government has remained silent, and the law enforcement authorities have failed to take action against the perpetrators.

This time, while the government has issued a statement assuring that law enforcement agencies will identify those responsible for the incident, as of writing this editorial, no action has been taken yet. We urge the government to identify the perpetrators through available video footage and bring them to book. By arresting them, it can send a strong message to the public that mob justice is unacceptable and will not be tolerated any more.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Napoleon invades Russia

On this day in 1812, French Emperor Napoleon—who had massed his troops in Poland in the spring to intimidate Russian Tsar Alexander I—and 600,000 troops of his Grand Army launched an ill-fated invasion of Russia.

Why Bangladesh needs a second chamber



Dr Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir is professor at the Department of Development Studies, University of Dhaka.

RASHED AL MAHMUD TITUMIR

As the nation grapples with complex challenges—from economic equity to climate resilience—the limitations of a unicameral parliament are becoming increasingly apparent. A second chamber is not about importing foreign templates. It is about crafting a Bangladeshi solution for deeper representation, effective legislation, and inclusive nation-building.

This cannot be a mimicry of Westminster or Washington, but must be a deliberate effort to democratise the polity. Yet constitutional change must not be abrupt. History teaches that sudden, sweeping reforms, detached from lived institutions, have a pronounced tendency to destabilise—such as Nepal's turbulent, decade-long transition to federalism, which commenced in 2008. The pathway for Bangladesh, therefore, must be cautious, the steps meticulously deliberate—an evolution firmly grounded in the nation's distinct social fabric and historical journey.

Constitutional architecture, like deltaic landforms, requires patient sedimentation. Bangladesh suffers from institutional anaemia, not mere design flaws. Despite having constitutional provisions for local government, it commands only around five percent of national expenditure, and the state remains lopsided. Forging an upper house atop this hollow base risks consolidating a Dhaka-centric oligarchy. True reform must aim for devolution rather than centralisation, redistributing power downward before horizontally.

Before erecting an upper chamber, the priority must be establishing local self-government at the grassroots, not merely extending the presence of the central state. This, among other reforms, may require amendments to Articles 59-60 to vest upazila parishads with genuine fiscal and legislative authority over core public goods—beginning with primary healthcare and education. Such enhancements echo India's post-73rd Amendment reforms in 1992 or Indonesia's devolution after 2001. The reform for devolution, not decentralisation in its truest sense, is not transplantation—it is constitutional composting: meticulously fertilising the soil before planting the tree.

Reform must commence not with

dismantlement, but with robust fortification. The unicameral Jatiya Sangsad must be strengthened to enable deeper scrutiny and enhance public accountability. Empowering parliamentary standing committees, for example, with independent research units, significantly improved staffing, and specialised legal expertise, could substantially enhance their capacity to dissect bills and monitor government action effectively—akin



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

to Germany's Bundestag Scientific Service, expanded after 1949, or the longstanding Congressional Research Service in the US.

A formal advisory "Council of Experts" could also be established to offer informed and invaluable input before bills formally reach the parliamentary floor, drawing inspiration from France's Conseil d'État—a model institutionalised by Napoleon in 1799 to ensure legal consistency in policymaking.

Enhanced citizen consultation must unequivocally accompany this. Mandating robust public hearings and structured feedback mechanisms on significant bills would undoubtedly

foster broader public buy-in and help uncover critical blind spots—practices now common in many countries.

A gradual approach could be undertaken, laying the groundwork to establish a full-fledged second chamber. There could be a transitional upper house, its composition—blending experts and other members—determined by both MPs and local governments. This chamber would initiate debates and offer reasoned objections without wielding veto power.

Contingent on the success of the advisory stage, it could be granted limited powers through referendum, following Ireland's 1937 precedent. These powers might include a suspensive veto (e.g., delaying legislation for 6-12 months), mirroring France's Sénat under the 1958 constitution, while a qualified veto would require a supermajority in the upper house.

bicameral parliaments globally, including Westminster, where the House of Commons gained financial supremacy through historical struggles culminating in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Comprehensive constitutional amendments would then formalise this bicameral structure, enshrining the powers of each house and ensuring a stable and enduring framework for governance. These may include provisions for resolving deadlocks, such as joint sittings (as in Section 57 of Australia's 1901 constitution) or conference committees (used in the US Congress since 1789). The amendments must also enshrine the financial primacy of the national parliament's lower house, like the Commons' supremacy secured through the UK Parliament Acts of 1911 and 1949.

The vision is to see a Garo leader debating climate policy alongside a

Dhaka-based economist, transforming democratic imagination into democratic practice.

The hope is up in the air. Most of the political parties want a bicameral parliament. Sceptics may cite costs, yet stable bicameralism is worthwhile. Bicameralism is not an indulgence, it is insurance against democratic decay. By design, it compels dialogue.

Bangladesh did not win its independence hastily. Constitutional evolution demands equal patience. Beginning modestly, there is a greater need to embed checks and balances and expand responsibilities judiciously. Such a governance structure is the people's aspiration, expressed through the July 2024 uprising.

Never again, again

89 seconds to midnight

MIND THE GAP

Barrister Noshin Nawal is an activist, feminist, and a columnist for The Daily Star. She can be reached at nawalnoshin@gmail.com.

NOSHIN NAWAL



After the Holocaust, when six million Jews and millions of others were exterminated by a genocidal regime, the world made a promise: never again would we let hatred escalate into mass murder. Never again would civilians be slaughtered while governments stand by. Never again would we turn genocide into bureaucracy. But here we are. *Again and again.*

The Doomsday Clock now stands at 89 seconds to midnight—the closest we've ever been to global catastrophe. That's not a metaphor. That's nuclear scientists, war analysts, and climate experts saying: we are seconds away from ending the world as we know it. And still, we do nothing.

Gaza is being obliterated. Over 50,000 Palestinians have been killed. At least 15,000 of them are children. The bombs keep falling. The excuses keep coming. Israel continues its assault, calling it self-defence, while wiping out entire families in their sleep. Aid is blocked. Hospitals are bombed. International law is mocked in real time.

Iran has entered the conflict directly. The region is no longer at risk of war. It is at war. A regional one, with

global consequences. Iran and Israel are escalating in real time, pulling allies, proxies, and entire populations into the crossfire. The red lines everyone thought were there? Already crossed. The silence from global powers? Deafening. This is no longer about political alliances. This is about war crimes unfolding live.

Amidst this, President Donald Trump stepped onto the stage. After the US launched airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities at Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan, Trump hailed the attacks as "a spectacular military success," declaring that "Iran's key nuclear enrichment facilities have been completely and totally obliterated." He didn't stop there. In his national address, he warned: "There will be either peace, or there will be tragedy for Iran far greater than we have witnessed over the last eight days."

Describing Iran as "the bully of the Middle East," Trump asserted, "Iran, bully of the Middle East, must now make peace." He even offered Iran an ultimatum: "If they do not make peace, future attacks will be far greater and a lot easier."

Let's be crystal clear: this is direct

military escalation, sanctioned by a US president. Trump has crossed the threshold from political threat to operational violence, stoking a war spiral that could trigger a global conflagration.

And yet, Western governments can't seem to find their voice. The same countries that had lectured the world on "rules-based order" in Ukraine were suddenly unsure when it came to Gaza. The same world that rushed to defend Kyiv keep dragging its feet on Rafah. The hypocrisy isn't just frustrating. It's fatal.

Meanwhile, Sudan is collapsing. Over 14 million displaced. Civil war. Famine. Ethnic cleansing. And no one's paying attention. Congo is bleeding. Myanmar is disappearing. Yemen is starving. Ukraine is still at war. And yet we scroll past all of it as if it's background noise. This is organised abandonment.

And the cost isn't just human. It's planetary. A mass coral bleaching event is killing off 84 percent of the world's reefs. Climate refugees are closing in on the number of those fleeing war. The oceans are boiling. Forests are burning. But governments are still pouring billions into weapons instead of survival. They're fuelling wars while the planet can't breathe.

Let's stop pretending this is normal. Let's stop dressing up civilian massacres as military operations. Let's stop justifying collective punishment with political talking points. Let's stop calculating "acceptable losses" as if human lives are numbers on a spreadsheet. We have seen what war

does. We've lived through it. We've buried generations because of it.

But now we're so desensitised, we treat war like it's seasonal. A headline one week, a talking point the next, then gone. Gaza today, Sudan tomorrow, Iran-Israel the day after—just names on a screen until it's your city, your family, your child under the rubble. Let's be clear: this is not a failure of policy. It's a collapse of conscience. Where is the international community that once put Nazis on trial? That drafted human rights conventions? That meant it when it said "never again"?

Gone. Replaced by governments that issue statements, delay ceasefires, and send more weapons. So, let's say it plainly: we are witnessing genocide in Gaza. We are watching a regional war erupt between Iran and Israel, which has extended to the US. We are closer to nuclear conflict than we've ever been in human history. And most of the world is standing by and doing nothing. This is not complicated. This is not nuanced. This is not strategic ambiguity.

This is failure. Of leadership. Of morality. Of everything we claimed to stand for after the last world war. We said, "never again." What we meant was: never again, unless it's politically inconvenient. Never again, unless the victims are brown. Never again, unless we're profiting from it.

The Doomsday Clock says 89 seconds. Not 89 years. Not 89 days. We are out of time. And out of excuses.

So, say it again. But mean it this time. Never again. Not this war. Not this silence. Not this time.

Turning reserved seats into real power for women

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SIBBIR AHMAD and RAHNUMA SIDDIKA

Since independence, Bangladesh has pledged to make politics equally accessible to men and women. To support this, it introduced reserved seats for women in parliament—an affirmative action strategy employed globally to rectify historical injustices and dismantle structural barriers. However, the objective of such measures is not permanence; rather, it is to build a society where women can compete and succeed on an equal footing with men.

We began with 15 reserved seats in 1972. Today, there are 50. On paper, this expansion signals progress. In practice, however, the structure and process of filling these seats—originally intended to amplify women's voices—have become politically ornamental, elite-driven, and disconnected from public legitimacy. Instead of electing women based on public preference and political merit, the system centralises power in the hands of party leadership. As the country charts its democratic future, it is time to reimagine how women enter parliament—not through party patronage, but through public preference and political merit.

Under Bangladesh's current parliamentary structure, 50 seats are reserved for women. These are not filled through direct elections but allocated to political parties in proportion to the general seats (out of 300) they win. After the election, parties nominate women of their choice to these reserved seats entirely at their discretion and without any voter input.

While this arrangement was originally intended to ensure gender balance, in practice, it has created a system where representation is

symbolic but not substantive. Since these nominations take place behind closed doors and are not subject to public scrutiny or electoral competition, they often reflect party loyalty rather than public service credentials.

Too often, parties treat these seats as rewards for insiders—selecting the wives, daughters, or close relatives of influential leaders, or women with no proven record of political engagement or policy knowledge. In some cases, nominees have lacked the capacity to speak effectively in parliament, propose

legislation, or represent women's interests. This undermines the promise of gender inclusion, reducing it to tokenism and eroding the credibility of women's representation.

Rather than nurturing future female leaders, the current system risks entrenching cronyism and gatekeeping within male-dominated party structures. Many women MPs feel sidelined, treated more as guests at public events than as lawmakers. The result is symbolic representation with little substance. Consequently, the very objective of reserved seats—empowering women to participate in and shape national policymaking—is often defeated. This is not how affirmative action should function. It should elevate qualified women into leadership. It should prepare them to contest general seats and lead with legitimacy.

Some have proposed holding direct elections for the reserved seats. But this, too, presents practical and fairness challenges. One version suggests that each reserved seat should represent three constituencies combined—a burden no general MP bears.

securing their support.

More importantly, this would make the reserved seats a true reflection of women's political will. A party could fail to win a single general seat yet secure reserved seats based on strong support among women. This would open space for newer, smaller, or reformist parties to build a women-centric political base, encouraging competition centred on women's rights and representation.

Second, another reform concerns the timing of party nominations. Currently,

the first time, women voters would directly influence which women represent them.

Moreover, this would foster internal democracy by requiring parties to identify and prepare women leaders before the election, rather than selecting loyalists once results are declared. It would also help build a pipeline of competent female politicians who are prepared to lead.

Third, while reserved seats remain, reserved-seat MPs should be given more defined political roles. Assigning them clear portfolios—such as



FILE VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

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it displace strong male candidates and create political resentment? Separate "women-only" and "general" seats could also reinforce the notion that women can only win when men are excluded. That is not equality; it is a workaround that risks backfiring.

Rather than introducing new fairness issues, Bangladesh can reform the existing system to make it more democratic and accountable, while planning for its gradual phase-out.

First, a more empowering and politically accountable model would allocate reserved seats based on the percentage of women's votes each party receives. Since male and female ballots are already cast in separate boxes at polling stations, the Election Commission could easily tabulate party-wise support among women voters without any major administrative overhaul.

This reform would incentivise political parties to genuinely engage with women voters, campaign on gender-responsive platforms, and prioritise women's issues. Parties that previously took women's votes for granted would now have a direct stake in

parties nominate women for reserved seats only after the general election. This backroom process is opaque and unaccountable. Instead, parties should be required to submit a list or panel of female nominees—proportionate to the number of general seats they are contesting—before the election. For example, if a party contests all 300 general seats, it must nominate 50 female candidates for the reserved seats, just as it announces candidates for general seats.

This would create transparency and allow for public scrutiny. Voters, especially women, could evaluate who the party is promoting as future lawmakers. If a party nominates unqualified or token candidates, it risks losing support from female voters, which would, in turn, affect its share of reserved seats under the vote-based system.

This reform would push parties to nominate capable women, engage seriously with female voters, and campaign on women's rights and concerns. It would compel them to engage substantively with women voters and campaign on relevant policy issues. For

oversight of specific ministries or coordination zones—would increase their authority and relevance.

It is worth noting that some women leaders already contest general seats through direct elections. Many have succeeded, and many more will. The goal of reserved seats is to ensure interim equity until women achieve full participation in regular elections. The answer is not to make women's entry harder, but to ensure their voices are heard more meaningfully within the current framework.

Ultimately, the aim must be to phase out quotas as women gain parity in electoral representation. Reserved seats should not become permanent structures, but temporary scaffolding for a more inclusive democracy. Until then, we must reform how they function—making them more democratic, accountable, and reflective of women's aspirations.

Rather than merely fulfilling a constitutional checkbox, reserved seats should be a mechanism for real political change—where women shape the agenda, hold power, and inspire the next generation of leadership.

FROM STRAIT OF HORMUZ TO DHAKA

How a distant crisis could hit our homes



Bahauddin Foizee
is a columnist and geopolitical analyst.

BAHAUDDIN FOIZEE

What if a narrow stretch of water, thousands of miles away, could influence how much you pay for your next meal in Dhaka?

On Sunday, Iran's parliament has passed a bill that could allow the country to shut down the Strait of Hormuz if deemed necessary, although the final decision rests with the Supreme National Security Council. This comes in response to recent escalations in Israel's war on Iran, particularly after the US carried out strikes on three key nuclear sites in Iran. But if the Strait of Hormuz bill is implemented, its consequences would ripple far beyond the Middle East, reaching even Bangladesh. Those effects might be visible from our petrol pumps to kitchen markets.

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most strategically vital maritime chokepoints. More than 20 million barrels of oil, which is roughly 20 percent of global daily consumption, flow through it each day, connecting oil-rich countries such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE to markets across Europe and Asia. Any blockade or significant disruption in this strait might dramatically affect these global oil and gas supply chains.

inevitably rise.

For instance, if Iran does proceed to shut down the strait, global oil prices could see a sharp increase. Analysts cited by *The Washington Post* suggest that crude oil could easily climb to well over \$100 per barrel. Such a spike would have knock-on effects across the world—including in Bangladesh—impacting areas such as transport, electricity, industrial production, agriculture, and ultimately household finances.

A significant portion of our electricity supply depends on imported oil and gas. If global prices rise, the government will face tough decisions between increasing subsidies at the expense of taxpayers or passing the costs on to consumers. In either case, ordinary households will be left to bear the brunt, primarily through higher electricity and cooking gas bills.

Transportation and agriculture, two key pillars of our economy, are also vulnerable to fuel price hikes. Public buses, cargo trucks and lorries all run on diesel or petrol, so higher fuel costs would push up the fares and logistics expenses. Diesel is also used for irrigation pumps, while both fuels power the vehicles that transport crops from rural

fields to city markets. The combined effect would, therefore, be a rise in the prices of essentials such as rice, lentils and vegetables, further straining household budgets.

There's more to this. When energy and transport costs go up, production expenses in industrial units and factories rise as well. This can also push up the prices of everyday consumer goods. For lower-middle-income families already operating on tight budgets, this could make life more difficult. A household earning, say, Tk 20,000 a month may find its expenses rising to Tk 25,000, necessitating difficult adjustments.

Moreover, the supply of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from the Gulf region could also be affected. Qatar, one of the world's leading LNG exporters, transports most of its shipments through the Strait of Hormuz. Any disruption in this route would affect LNG availability and pricing, with potential implications for Bangladesh's power grid and cooking gas supplies.

At a time when inflation and recession risks are already looming over the US, Europe and parts of Asia, another shock to the oil and gas markets could push the global economy into deeper trouble, one that developing countries like Bangladesh would find especially difficult to withstand. Indeed, Bangladesh, because of its overreliance on imports, might be one of the firsts to feel the pinch and one of the last to recover. That said, the speed of impact and recovery will ultimately depend on a range of factors including its policy

response, reserves, alternative fuel contracts, as well as global response.

Iran, no doubt, understands the global economic stakes of closing the strait. It is itself a major oil exporter and remains deeply tied to the international energy market. One hopes that Tehran views the Strait of Hormuz bill as a strategic instrument rather than a tactical step and, accordingly, resists the urge to weaponise a chokepoint so vital to the global economy.

If, nevertheless, the situation escalates, a coordinated response from other key global players—including Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, China and the UAE—will be critical. They must work to ensure that vital international shipping lanes remain open and oil markets are kept stable.

To many of us in Bangladesh, the prospect of the Strait of Hormuz being closed may seem like a distant and abstract issue—just another geopolitical development in the headlines. But if the strait is indeed blocked, it may not be long before the repercussions are felt at our own cities and homes.

It may sound poetic at this stage of the Iran-Israel-US conflict, but the truth remains that diplomacy—not war—must be the way forward in this crisis or those that may follow. This is a lesson that the US and Israel should also take to heart. For us in Bangladesh, however, there is little to do but watch, wait, and hope that world leaders will act with urgency, restraint, and a sense of global responsibility.

সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড
(পেট্রোবাংলার একটি কোম্পানি)
Sylhet Gas Fields Limited
(A Company of Petrobangla)

গ্যাস জাতিয় সম্পদ।
এর অপব্যয় রোধ করে জাতির
সামগ্রিক পালন করুন।

Ref No. : 28.20.9153.000.287.30.0001.25 Date: 22-06-2025

e-Tender Notice

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

Sl No.	Description of Works	Tender ID	Last selling of Tender (Date & Time)	Tender Closing & Opening (Date & Time)
01.	Procurement of Supply and Installation Cathodic Protection (CP) system for the gas gathering pipelines of Sylhet Gas Fields Limited [Unit-1: Well No. BB-2 (L=2.61km & DN=6") at Beanibazar Gas Field and Unit-2: Well No. RP-03 (L=1.50km & DN=8"); Well No. RP-04 (L=7.00km & DN=6"); Well No. RP-05 (L=1.70km & DN=6") & Well No. RP-07 (L=10.60 km & DN=6") at Rashidpur Gas Field] Sylhet.	Tender ID: 1117376	13-Jul-2025 17:00 Hours	14-Jul-2025 15:00 Hours

- 1) This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.
- 2) To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
- 3) The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited through any registered bank's branch.
- 4) Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and from e-GP help desk helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd

22.06.2025
(Engr. Nipun Chandra Samadder)
General Manager (TS), Additional Charge
Technical Services Division
e-mail: gmts@sgfl.org.bd

GD-1447

Minimum

FROM PAGE 12

government officials have also been raised to a minimum of Tk 750 from Tk 500.

On June 3, following the placement of the national budget, the government issued a circular regarding the special allowances.

According to the circular, government staff under the national pay scale in grades 1 to 9 will receive a special allowance of 10 percent of their basic salary, while those in grades 10 to 20 will receive 15 percent of their basic salary.

However, in all cases, the increase will not be less than Tk 1,000.

The minimum special allowance was officially approved while approving the budget for the next fiscal year in a meeting presided over by the chief adviser on June 22.

Retired government pensioners, including reinstated pensionable employees, whose entitled monthly pension is Tk 17,389 or above, will receive an increase of 10 percent.

Those entitled monthly pension of Tk 17,388 or below will receive a 15 percent increase, but not less than Tk 750.

Additionally, MPO-listed teachers will receive a minimum special allowance of 10 to 15 percent based on their grades, but not less than Tk 1,500.

Meanwhile, officials of the judicial service and pensioners in that service will receive a special allowance of 10 percent of their basic salary.

Iran-Israel

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh imports about 1.8 million tonnes of LPG annually through private operators. Around 12 companies are currently importing and distributing LPG, with a monthly demand of approximately 150,000 tonnes.

Meanwhile, a crude oil tanker departed from Saudi Arabia's Ras Tanura port on June 15 and is scheduled to arrive in Bangladesh's maritime boundary by Tuesday.

Another shipment carrying 100,000 tonnes of crude oil is expected to depart from the Jebel Dhanna port in Abu Dhabi on July 8 or 9 passing through the Strait of Hormuz, according to Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation officials.

"If the conflict prolongs or the Strait of Hormuz is closed, fuel imports could face serious setbacks," BPC Chairman Md. Aminul Ahsan told The Daily Star.

Iran's Supreme National Security Council must make the final decision to close the strait, Iran's Press TV said on Sunday, after parliament was reported to have backed the measure.

However, the decision to close the strait is not yet final, as parliament has not ratified a bill to that effect.

"The rapid price increase in the global market is also worrying us," Ahsan said.

Washington's decision to join Israel's attacks on Iran has spurred forecasts of oil surging to \$100 a barrel.

Both Brent and West Texas Intermediate crude hit fresh five-month highs on Monday in choppy trade as investors weighed the potential risks to supply.

Shipping rates for supertankers, which can carry 2 million barrels of oil, have also soared, more than doubling in a week to over \$60,000 a day, reports Reuters.

"We are concerned about the situation in the Middle East since our energy sector heavily relies on it. We are closely monitoring developments in the region and maintaining constant communication with our suppliers to ensure the supply chain remains uninterrupted," said Zahidul Hasan, chief executive officer of BM Energy BD.

Man found dead

FROM PAGE 12

officer-in-charge of Jagannathpur Police Station.

"We are still looking into the matter. It is unclear whose bullet caused his death," Imtiaz said.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate said the joint forces operation was conducted at Hatiya village under Kulonj Union Parishad of Dirai upazila.

The drive was launched after armed professions and gunfire were reported amid clashes between two rival groups over supremacy in the area.

Members of one of the gangs, led by local union council Chairman Ekrar Hossain, fled to Gadalia village and started firing indiscriminately.

When they fired at the security personnel, the army retaliated in self-defence, the ISPR said. A team of the joint forces later recovered the body of Sayeed from the scene, it added.

It also said four criminals – Tajuddin, Amir Uddin, Hiron Mia and Jamir Mia – were arrested during the drive. Following information given by the suspects, five guns, a bullet, six bullet-proof jackets and some sharp weapons were recovered from their houses.

Quoting locals, OC Imtiaz said the leader of the gang, Ekrar, is also a Jubo League leader. Imtiaz said the locals identified the leader of the rival group as Atikur Rahman, president of BNP's local union unit.

Several attempts to reach Ekrar and Atikur were unsuccessful. Ekrar's phone was found switched off, while Atikur did not answer calls.

Outrage after assault on ex-CEC Huda

FROM PAGE 12

including two other former CECs and deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, over alleged manipulation of the 2014, 2018, and 2024 parliamentary elections.

According to witnesses, a group entered Huda's home, assaulted him, put shoes around his neck in presence of law enforcers, and then handed him over to police.

Twenty-three eminent citizens in a joint statement issued by Human Rights Forum Bangladesh (HRFB) expressed grave concern, saying that any form of degrading or violent behaviour outside the judicial process violates individual rights and is contrary to the constitution.

The rights body added that such actions are punishable offences under the existing law.

The statement warned that mob violence must not be justified or tolerated.

HRFB also criticised the government's immediate response as insufficient, demanding public disclosure of legal actions taken and effective prevention of such incidents in future.

Rights activists include Hameeda Hossain, lawyers Sultana Kamal, Raja Devasish Roy, ZI Khan Panna, Sara Hossain, Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shaheen Anam, Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman, Nijera Kori Coordinator Khushi Kabir, and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad

President Fauzia Moslem signed the statement.

Rights organisation, Ain o Salish Kendra, said such public humiliation and violence undermine the country's constitution, basic human values, and the rule of law. Even if there are serious allegations, the only way to resolve them is through established legal procedures, not mob attacks.

ASK said at least 83 deaths occurred due to mob violence from January to June 2025, describing it as a sign of alarming lawlessness. "The government cannot avoid responsibility for such incidents."

In a statement, Human Rights Support Society condemned the "mob terrorism" and humiliation of a former senior government official. "Such actions are contrary to democratic etiquette and the rule of law."

"No individual should be subjected to mob violence. All must be judged under the existing laws of the country. These incidents severely undermine personal dignity, civil rights, and public trust in the rule of law."

The organisation called for a thorough investigation and prosecution of those responsible.

Another rights body, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, expressed deep concern over the arrest of former CEC Huda from his Uttara residence and his harassment in front of law enforcers.

"BLAST demands immediate and fair probe of the incident and ensuring accountability and proper justice of those responsible, as well as

strong steps to stop such organised violence," the organisation said in a statement.

Speaking at an event in Gazipur's Kaliakair, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam described the assault on Huda as "completely unacceptable", reports BSS.

"The attack on Nurul Huda was carried out in the presence of law enforcement personnel. If any member of the law enforcement agencies is found involved in the incident, legal action will be taken after investigation."

He urged the people not to take the law into their own hands, stressing, "Offenders should be handed over to the authorities for appropriate legal action."

Meanwhile, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin told the media, "We don't believe in mob culture. We are relentlessly fighting for the establishment of the rule of law in the country."

He added that allegations against Huda, his arrest, and trial must be handled lawfully.

"We don't support the disgraceful behaviour he was subjected to."

He said this was an isolated incident. "If any BNP leader or activist is found to have been involved, the party will probe and take disciplinary action. That is our position."

The BNP leader also criticised Huda for his role in damaging democratic institutions but reiterated, "We don't believe in such toxic culture or mob justice."

Hasina found to be 'fully complicit'

FROM PAGE 12

Additionally, the International Crimes Tribunal has been analysing documents abandoned at the Gono Bhaban after August 5, 2024. Among them, the ICT discovered two handwritten notes by Rab officers, dated 2015. Addressed to the director of Rab's intelligence wing, the officers in the note refused to carry out unlawful orders.

"These weren't formal letters but personal declarations, yet even these had clearly been forwarded to Sheikh Hasina, who kept them in her files from 2015 until she escaped to India in 2024," the commission said.

Investigators have tracked down the officers who wrote the notes.

One of the notes read: "... when I was ordered to go on an operation by the Rab authority, I said that if there is any plan of extrajudicial killing or firing which is not permitted by the law of the country, I cannot take part in such an act."

In this context, the commission's report said, "The very existence of these notes, handwritten by junior officers yet deemed important enough to be placed before the then prime minister, underscores the extent of Sheikh Hasina's personal oversight."

"The generals who headed DGF [at that time] served as direct interlocutors between the armed forces and figures such as Sheikh Hasina and General Tariq Siddiqui when they ordered enforced disappearances."

The report further added that senior generals, along with high-ranking police and security officials, received instructions directly from the political leadership.

It noted that Major General Kabir Ahmed, currently the commandant of the School of Infantry and Tactics, told the commission that while serving as DGF's Counter Terrorism and Intelligence Bureau (CTIB) director, he personally discussed the illegal detention of Brigadier General Abdullahil Amaan Azmi with two DGF director generals – Lt Gen Saiful Alam and Lt Gen Ahmed Tabrez Shams.

Both Alam and Shams were sent into forced retirement by the interim government on September 12, 2024.

A junior DGF officer also told the commission that former CTIB director Brigadier General Ahmed Tanveer Mazher Siddiqui personally informed him of Brigadier Azmi and Michael Chakma's presence at the JIC, in order to coordinate their food supply.

The commission expressed frustration in its report over the fact that the top brass remain at large.

On January 6, 2025, the ICT issued arrest warrants for 11 individuals, based on prima facie evidence of complicity in enforced disappearances. The list includes Sheikh Hasina, former defence and security adviser Major General Tarique Ahmed Siddiqui, former inspector general of police Benazir Ahmed, five DGF director generals, a DGF director, and the former head of the police's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit Md Asaduzzaman.

The DGF generals named are: Lt Gen (ret'd) Md Akbar Hussain, Maj Gen (ret'd) Md Saiful Abedin, Lt Gen (ret'd) Mohammad Saiful Alam, Lt Gen (ret'd) Ahmed Tabrez Shams Choudhury, and Maj Gen (ret'd) Hamidul Haq.

The report states that these generals were in command at DGF when individuals such as Brigadier Azmi, Lt Col Hasin, Ambassador Maroof Zaman, and others were detained inside the JIC.

"Based on repeated checks on the command structure, we can state with certainty that enforced disappearance at JIC during that period could not have occurred without the explicit knowledge and acquiescence of these generals."

While Lt Gen Akbar has not been arrested, he has responded to summons and appeared twice before the commission, beginning in December last year.

"He expressed frustration over the cancellation of his passport. He made it clear that he felt cornered, without any avenue of departure from the country," said the report.

IMF approves \$1.3b in loans

FROM PAGE 1

staff," he wrote, referring to the IMF board meeting in Washington.

Additionally, the IMF executive board approved a modification of performance criteria and granted a waiver for the non-observance of the performance criterion related to the non-imposition and non-intensification of exchange restrictions, based on the temporary nature of the non-observance and the implementation of corrective measures.

Programme performance for the third and fourth reviews remains broadly satisfactory despite the difficult political and economic context, the IMF said in a statement after the meeting.

Bangladesh's macroeconomic challenges have increased since the 2024 uprising, which led to the ouster of the previous government. The timely formation of an interim government has helped stabilise political and security conditions, fostering a gradual return to economic stability.

"However, the economic outlook has worsened due to persistent political uncertainty, continuation of tighter policy mix, rising trade barriers, and increasing stress in the

banking sector," the IMF said.

Near-term policies should prioritise rebuilding external resilience and reducing inflation, said Nigel Clarke, deputy managing director and acting chair of IMF, after the board meeting.

The authorities' recent steps to implement a new exchange rate regime and include revenue-enhancing measures in the fiscal 2025-26 budget are "welcome", Clarke said.

A balanced policy mix, anchored in maintaining a tight monetary policy stance, greater exchange rate flexibility and revenue-based fiscal consolidation, will support efforts to restore both external and internal balances.

Efforts to raise tax revenues and rationalise expenditures, including through subsidy reduction, are critical for creating the fiscal space needed to strengthen social, development and climate initiatives.

"Sustained structural reforms are essential for Bangladesh to achieve its goal of attaining upper middle-income status," Clarke said.

"Key priorities include diversifying exports, attracting greater foreign direct investment, strengthening governance and enhancing data

Trilateral talks

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh, statement, however, did not mention any such agreement.

All three countries, however, agreed to forge cooperation on the principles of openness, inclusivity, good neighbourliness, equality, mutual trust and common development.

"It was an informal meeting. Nothing substantial was decided," a foreign ministry official, wishing to remain anonymous, told this newspaper.

Bangladesh's inclusion in the "trilateral cooperation mechanism" drew questions from foreign policy analysts and an economist.

Selim Raihan, professor of economics at Dhaka University, said this trilateral initiative has significant geopolitical implications and raises an important question: "Does the current interim government have the mandate to commit the country to any strategic alignments?"

He stated that the interim government is primarily tasked with overseeing important reforms and preparing for the national election; its authority to enter into long-term international agreements would be highly questionable.

Obaidul Haque, associate professor of international relations at Dhaka University, thinks China has taken the initiative considering the short tenure of the interim government in Bangladesh.

He said the trilateral initiative could be intended to recalibrate power dynamics in the South Asian region and expressed his doubts

about its effectiveness in the long run.

He said it is important for Bangladesh to keep in mind the geopolitical reality.

"We have to be aware of our national interest."

Since the ouster of Sheikh Hasina, who is sheltered in New Delhi, the relations between Bangladesh and India have remained strained.

On the other hand, Bangladesh's relations with Pakistan have improved somewhat following the political changeover.

China has good relations with both Bangladesh and Pakistan – both members of China's Belt and Road Initiative, a geopolitical project of China opposed by India and the US and its allies.

Obaidul said, "Bangladesh and China already enjoy solid trade ties. As for Bangladesh-Pakistan relations, there's been some improvement lately – but it's unlikely to go much further since there's not a whole lot of economic incentive. Plus, there's still some historical baggage between them that hasn't really been dealt with."

Former ambassador M Humayun Kabir said the interim government already has a lot of work to do before the elections, and why it needed to be involved in such an initiative is not clear.

"It should have consulted the relevant stakeholders before such a trilateral meeting when we already have good bilateral relations with these countries."

"Whatever we do, we must think of the past, present and future. Prudence is better than repentance."

Govt turns to AI for faster

FROM PAGE 12

Officials with knowledge of the planned programme say the new system will address long-standing bottlenecks in project formulation and execution by introducing a single digital platform for end-to-end processing, with AI integrated into decision-making, monitoring and risk management.

The move comes in response to chronic inefficiencies in the current system. On average, it takes three years to prepare, process, and approve a project. This results in more than 1,000 projects requiring revisions or deadline extensions each year, according to the planned project's proposal.

To improve performance with the new programme, the government plans to build a centralised platform integrating IBAS+ (Integrated Budget and Accounting System (IBAS+)), e-PMIS (electronic Project Management Information System), and related asset and project management systems.

A single sign-in mechanism will allow real-time data exchange across agencies, while AI tools will help analyse project data and identify delays or implementation issues.

Civil servants will receive training in AI-based analytics, cybersecurity, and risk management to support the transition.

Around 36 percent of the project's budget is likely to be allocated for ICT equipment, software, and databases. A further 20 percent is expected to go toward local and foreign training, and 28 percent will likely be earmarked for consultancy services.

The AI-driven reform project is one of six proposals expected to be up for approval at today's ECNEC meeting, with a combined value of Tk 4,017 crore.

Among them is a Tk 552 crore project titled "Procurement Modernisation to Improve Public

Swechchhasebak Dal

FROM PAGE 12

The OC said drives are underway to arrest the other who took part in the assault.

On Sunday evening, a mob, which police said consisted mostly of local members of Swechchhasebak Dal, gathered in front of the former CEC's residence in Uttara and assaulted him. They later handed him over to the police.

The video of the assault has gone viral on social media.

Earlier, Hafizur Rahman, while talking to The Daily Star, said that police have identified Mozammel Haque Dhali, a Swechchhasebak Dal activist, who was seen assaulting the former CEC in a video.

A case was in the process of being filed, he added.

According to police sources, at least 200 people were present in the area during the attack, led by Sheikh Farid Hossain, president of Swechchhasebak Dal's Dhaka city north unit.

Farid, however, denied being present at the scene.

"I was in Gulshan when the incident took place. I later asked some of our party men to go there to ensure that no one takes the law into their own hands," he said.

When asked if Dhali is affiliated with his party, Farid said he does not hold any position but is an activist of the Swechchhasebak Dal.

A video of the incident shows Nurul Huda, dressed in a white T-shirt and lungi and with a garland of shoes around his neck, surrounded by a group of people. At one point, a bearded man hit Huda in the face twice with a

Service Delivery", which is expected to receive Tk 433 crore in financing from the World Bank. It aims to upgrade the electronic government procurement (e-GP) system with a new data centre, updated modules, contract management tools, and online training platforms.

Emerging technologies, including AI, machine learning, and Open Contracting Data Standards, will be used to enhance transparency, enable real-time analytics, and strengthen evidence-based procurement decisions. The project also includes a long-term capacity-building strategy to professionalise procurement and encourage sustainable, eco-friendly practices.

Another major project on the agenda is a Tk 652 crore programme to improve access to safe water, sanitation, and waste management for Rohingya refugees and host communities in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char. The Asian Development Bank is expected to provide Tk 420 crore in grant financing.

Key interventions include building new pipelines, installing household connections, improving surface water reservoirs, and setting up human waste management systems in the refugee camps.

The government also plans to undertake a Tk 2,009 crore project titled "TVET Teachers for the Future (TTF) Programme" to improve the quality of technical education. The Asian Development Bank is expected to finance Tk 1,800 crore of the total cost.

Bangladesh currently has 55,304 technical and vocational education and training (TVET) teachers, of whom 21 percent are women.

The project aims to provide high-quality teacher training in five priority technology areas aligned with future industry needs: electrical and electronics, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, computer science and engineering, and agriculture and food.

shoe, while others nearby appeared to attempt to stop the assault.

A few seconds later, a policeman grabbed Huda by the hand and took him away. At that moment, someone was heard saying, "We've been keeping him [Huda] on watch since last night [Saturday]."

When the former CEC was being put into a police vehicle, the people gathered there were heard chanting pro-BNP slogans.

On Sunday afternoon, the BNP filed a case against three former CECs, including Huda, deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, 10 election commissioners, and 10 others over election irregularities with the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station.

The two other CECs are Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad and Kazi Habibul Awal, who presided over the 2014 and 2024 national elections.

Opposition parties allege that ballot box stuffing took place on the night before election day in 2018 under the KM Nurul Huda-led election commission.

After the incident, the government urged people not to take the law into their own hands.

"Physically abusing an accused is illegal and a criminal offence," the government said, adding that the former CEC was arrested in connection with a specific case.

The law enforcement agencies will identify those responsible for instigating chaos through mob action and will take appropriate steps against them, it added.

"All accused will be brought to justice in accordance with the country's law," it added.

Aggressive nationalism Secretariat staff

FROM PAGE 3
He also said the world is witnessing the killing of people en masse in different ways – not just through genocide, but also through environmental destruction, illegal drug smuggling, and arms trade.

"To resist such killings, the world must end individual wealth accumulation and move toward a 'social ownership'," he said. "The era of individual wealth accumulation is nearing its end. Now, the only path to survival is social ownership."

Prof Serajul also said Bangladesh has never been able to overcome poverty because its wealth continues to be smuggled abroad.

"This was done by the Pakistanis. Now, the Bangladeshi rulers are smuggling wealth – and they are doing it openly," he said.

Prof Serajul also praised the role of women in the July uprising, but lamented the tragic death of Lamia, the 18-year-old daughter of a July martyr, who died by suicide in April after being a victim of rape earlier in March.

A social revolution is necessary to eliminate violence against women, he said.

At the event, various

socio-cultural organisations and prominent figures congratulated Prof Serajul on his 90th birthday with floral bouquets.

Left-leaning politician Mujahidul Islam Selim also congratulated Prof Serajul, saying the nation needs him for many more years, as he is "a beacon during progressive movements".

He noted that the recent anti-discrimination movement opened a new chapter in Bangladesh and urged people to understand its true essence.

He called on the country's leftist parties to unite and form a greater alliance.

Presiding over the discussion, former TIB Chairperson Prof Perween Hasan said Bangladesh can become a peaceful nation if its people embrace diversity and reject exclusivity.

Prothom Alo Executive Director Sazzad Sharif said Prof Serajul Islam has evolved from a classroom teacher to a "guardian of the nation" by standing with the people in their struggles and movements.

Senior journalist Abu Sayeed Khan, alongside left-leaning politicians Razekuzzaman Ratan and Subhrangshu Chakraborty, also spoke at the event, which was moderated by Prof Azfar Hussain.

Coast Guard to receive

FROM PAGE 4
The Coast Guard also received several operational items from Australia, including helmets, boarding vests, self-inflatable life jackets, knee and elbow pads, and tactical gloves.

"They will also support us with modern technologies. We expect to receive drones soon to enhance maritime surveillance," said the DG.

Rear Admiral Ziaul emphasised the importance of boosting regional maritime awareness, joint training, intelligence sharing, and strategic coordination to combat maritime threats.

He said Australian support has already enhanced the Coast Guard's operational capacity.

Rear Admiral Brett Sontner noted that a memorandum titled "Civil Maritime Security and Maritime Safety" was signed in 2024 to support cooperation on maritime threats.

"As part of that agreement, we are working together to counter illegal fishing, drug smuggling, human trafficking, and people smuggling. We have already conducted multiple training sessions," he said.

"We want to take this relationship to the next level. As Indian Ocean neighbours, it's crucial to address shared challenges," he added.

NO SECURITY THREAT IN ST MARTIN'S

There is no security threat on St Martin's Island, said the Coast Guard chief.

"Everything is normal in St Martin's. Just as we live peacefully in Dhaka, people in St Martin's are also living peacefully," he told reporters.

He said members of the Coast Guard, Navy, police, and other law enforcement agencies are always stationed on the island, so there is no cause for concern.

On the issue of push-in incidents from India, he confirmed one such case on the eastern side of the maritime boundary, but added that due to strong vigilance, no further incidents have occurred.

Regarding the Myanmar maritime border, he said the Coast Guard maintains a working understanding with rebel groups to ensure security.

Commenting on recent incidents involving Bangladeshi fishermen, he said those captured by the Arakan Army had crossed into foreign waters. "There has been no incident of rebel groups entering our waters to abduct fishermen," he added.

No houseboats

FROM PAGE 4
Contacted, Mohammad Rezaul Karim said, "We are not restricting houseboats from Tanguar Haor entirely, but from entering certain areas to conserve the biodiversity and environment. When numerous boats gather at the watchtower, it disrupts the ecosystem of this particular part of the Ramsar Conservation Site."

Over the years, Tanguar Haor has become a popular tourist destination, with hundreds of houseboats navigating its waters during summer and monsoon. Environmentalists have raised concerns as the haor's biodiversity is increasingly under threat.

FROM PAGE 4
Md Nurul Islam, another co-chairman of the forum, described the government initiative as "a controversial and black ordinance" and said if it is not withdrawn immediately, a larger unified movement will be launched nationwide.

Meanwhile, around 4:00pm yesterday, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul and Energy Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan held a meeting with forum leaders at the Secretariat.

During the discussion, the employee leaders

reportedly highlighted the reasons behind the resentment among public servants regarding the ordinance.

Later, in a press release, the forum announced that their public outreach programme would continue today and tomorrow (Wednesday). They also affirmed that the movement would continue until the ordinance is repealed.

Since May 24, officials and employees across ministries and divisions have been protesting inside the Secretariat against the ordinance.

Help build a better

FROM PAGE 3
remember that you can create the world of the future with your scouting experience," he said.

He also said it is an opportunity for the young people to depict the path of the future, taking advantage of their involvement in scouting.

The chief adviser presented the highest award of the Cub Scouts, the "Shapla Cub Award", and the "Gallantry Award" of Bangladesh Scouts to the

family members of eight scouts who were martyred in the July movement for their bravery.

This carnival has started simultaneously in 527 places across the country.

Funded by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, the Cub Carnival is being implemented simultaneously in all upazilas and special districts of Bangladesh under the management of the Bangladesh Scouts Program Department.

Freedom of expression

FROM PAGE 3
human rights defenders, civil society actors, and media professionals across all eight divisions of Bangladesh – promoting a more inclusive and participatory digital democracy.

Speaking as chief guest, Dr Michal Krejza, head of development cooperation and minister counsellor at the EU Delegation to Bangladesh, said, "All of us here understand the special importance of a free society. By enhancing digital literacy – particularly among youth, human rights defenders, and media professionals – this project will help build a more informed civic space."

He also stressed the importance of defending democracy and freedom of expression, both online and offline.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of MJF, said, "We believe that freedom of thought and expression is the bedrock of an inclusive and democratic society – where every individual, regardless of gender, class, religion, physical ability or ethnicity, has the right to access services and live with dignity and security."

She added that the Swadhinata project is based on the belief that democracy can only thrive when freedom of expression is actively protected.

Speaking as a special guest, Faruk Wasif, director general of the Press Institute Bangladesh (PIB), emphasised the need for a digital fact-checking database and the importance of equipping youth, women, and marginalised communities with the tools to access accurate information.

In her closing remarks, Kabita Bose, country director of Plan International Bangladesh, highlighted the need to counter misinformation and promote justice.

"We must shield ourselves from misinformation and have the courage to question injustice. Violence against women is not just a women's issue – it affects society as a whole. We must create more opportunities to empower youth, especially girls and women, and amplify their voices. Their participation is essential in shaping policies that ensure a better future for all," she said.

The event brought together representatives from women's rights organisations, youth networks, media professionals, and civil society groups from across the country.

A panel discussion on "Freedom of Expression" was a key part of the event, with speakers addressing issues of responsible digital behaviour, online safety, and equitable access to digital spaces.

Banasree Mitra Neogi, director (governance and rights programmes) at MJF; Mohammed Maheen Newaz Chowdhury, director – programmes at Plan International Bangladesh; and other senior representatives from the implementing organisations also attended the event.

PRAYER TIMING
JUNE 24
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-05 12-45 5-00 6-52 8-17
JAMAAT 4-40 1-15 5-15 6-55 8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Tarique invited

FROM PAGE 3
During the meeting, both sides talked about improving political relations, increasing party-to-party cooperation, and working together for peace and stability in the region, said the leaders.

The CPC expressed hope that the meeting would usher in a new chapter in China-Bangladesh ties. Fakhruul praised China's regional role and said the talks would deepen party and bilateral relations.

Earlier in the day at 2:00pm, a nine-member high-level BNP delegation, visited China Railway Group Limited, where they learned about China's progress in railway and infrastructure

development. The delegation included senior BNP leaders Mirza Abbas, Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, Selima Rahman, and Chairperson's Advisers Zahir Uddin Swapan, Ismail Zabiullah, Professor Sukomal Barua, party's media cell convener Moudud Hossain Alamgir Pavel and Chairperson's Personal Secretary ABM Abdus Sattar.

Party sources say this trip shows BNP's wish to build stronger ties with China, a major development partner for Bangladesh.

Earlier this year, on February 24, a group of leaders from eight political parties – including the BNP – visited China for 11 days.

Country moving

FROM PAGE 4
"BNP's stance against mobocracy is clear. We are firmly against it and will not retreat from that position," he said.

"Those who are involved in mobocracy – it's their personal responsibility. This is not BNP's problem," he added, noting that such incidents will be handled through legal means.

On Sunday night, former chief election commissioner Nurul Huda, who oversaw the 2018 national election, was assaulted by a mob at his Uttara residence. A video of the incident went viral, showing him with a garland of shoes around his neck and being hit in the face with a shoe, drawing widespread criticism.

During the meeting with BNP, Gono Forum leader SM

Altaf Hossain said a recent and memorable meeting in London had helped resolve uncertainty surrounding the upcoming elections and brought relief among the public and political parties.

Later, BNP also held a separate meeting with the National Democratic Movement. A five-member delegation led by NDM Chairman Bobby Hajjaj attended the meeting.

Afterwards, Bobby Hajjaj said, "We are now waiting for the election. Whatever we do from now on, we will do together. The promise that Tarique Rahman made to the people – to form a national government – we are united in our efforts to fulfil that promise, implement the 31-point agenda, and restore democracy."

BANGLADESH BANK
COMMON SERVICES DEPARTMENT-2
(CIVIL MAINTENANCE DIVISION)
HEAD OFFICE
DHAKA.
Website: www.bb.org.bd

Invitation for Tender Through Web

Tender No. CSD-2(CMD):03(02)/2025-59 Date: 22/06/2025

Tenders through Electronic Media (e-Tender) are invited from the bonafide Contractors/Construction firm(s) for Reconstruction of boundary wall at Bangladesh Bank Colony, Agrabad, Chattogram. Necessary information and terms & conditions are given below :-

01	Procuring Entity	: Common Services Department-2, Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka-1000.
02	Source of Funds	: Bangladesh Bank's own fund.
03	Invitation for Tender No.	: CSD-2(CMD):03(02)/2025-59
04	Method of Procurement.	: Open Tendering Method (OTM) (National)
05	Qualification of Tenderers	: This Invitation for Tender is open to all eligible Contractors/Construction Firms of Bangladesh who have : i) Business experience at least 10 (Ten) years and satisfactorily completed at least 01 (one) work of similar nature worth not less than Taka 4.00 Crore (Taka four crore only) in a single contract, in any Government/Semi-Government/Autonomous Organization of Bangladesh during the last 05 (five) years. The Tenderers shall have to furnish certificates in this respect from officer not below the rank of Executive Engineer or equivalent. ii) Minimum Average Annual Construction Turnover in the last 05 (five) years preceding the date of submission of the Tender shall not be less than Taka 5.75 Crore (Taka five crore seventy five lac only). iii) Minimum liquid assets/credit facilities shall be Taka 1.50 Crore (Taka one crore fifty lac only). In case of credit facilities Bank shall ensure that the above mentioned credit limits will be given if the said work is awarded to the contractor. iv) Tenderers shall have to fulfill the qualification criteria stipulated in the Tender Data Sheet & other Terms and Conditions of the Tender Documents.
06	Address of the Web Receiving Tender Document	: www.bb.org.bd (e-Tender)
07	Name & Address of the Offices Receiving Tender security & Other Documentary Evidence.	: Director (Engg. Civil), Common Services Department-2 (Civil Maintenance Division)(6 th floor of 30-storied Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka.
08	Last Date and Time for Submission of Tender Document through web.	: 22/07/2025 up to 2:30 p.m.
09	Last Date and Time for Receiving Original Tender security & Tender submission letter as per format PW3-1.	: 22/07/2025 within 2:30 p.m.
10	Date, Time and Place for Tender Opening	: 22/07/2025 at 3:00 p.m., Common Services Department-2 (6 th floor of 30-storied Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka. (Intending Tenderers or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend the tender opening with authorization letter).
11	Brief Description of Works	: Taking out old barbed wire fencing, dismantling of unserviceable/damaged brick works, RCC, earth work, brick flat soling, mass concrete, brickwork, RCC work, sand filling, barbed wire fencing, painting etc.
12	Time for completion of the works	: 18(Eighteen) months from the date of issue of Award of Contract.
13	Tender Security	: Tk. 15.00 lac (Taka fifteen lac only) in the form of P.O./B.D./B.G.
14	Special Instructions.	: i) Interested vendors are requested to collect token from concern officials by depositing in cash Tk.4,000.00 (Taka four thousand only) (Non-refundable) for participating the tender. ii) The Tenderer shall submit tender and scanned copy of documentary evidence through Bangladesh Bank Web site (e-Tender) & shall have valid e-mail address for participation through e-tendering. iii) Original P.O./B.D./Bank Guarantee as Tender Security along with Original Tender submission letter as per format PW3-1 shall reach at Director (Engineering-Civil), Common Services Department-2 (Civil Maintenance Division), within stipulated date and time mentioned in TDS. iv) Tenderer shall provide all documentary evidence (original or attested whichever necessary) when requested, failing which the Tender shall be considered as non-responsive. v) PW3-1, PW3-2, PW3-5, PW3-5A, PW3-5B form shall be completed and signed by the Authorized Signatory on the Letter-Head Pad attached by Scanning during submitting tender and original will be sent to the Director (Engineering-Civil), Common Services Department-2 (Civil Maintenance Division), within scheduled time as per TDS. vi) Furnishing of any false, misleading documents shall result in rejection of tender and shall lead to action under Rules 127 of PPR 2008. vii) All sorts of security & safety measures shall be carried out by the Contractor during execution of the work. viii) The work shall be done without interrupting the normal activities of the colony. ix) Bangladesh Bank reserves all rights to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever. No claim will be entertained in this regard.

DCP: 48/2025-1566
Date: 23/06/2025

(Md. Tafazzal Hossain)
Director (Engineering-Civil)
Phone: 88-02-9530099

ব্যার্থিক ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

GD-1449

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Public Works Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
Narail PWD Division, Narail.
ee_nrail@pwd.gov.bd

Reference No-25.36.6500.103.07.05-20-1028 Date: 23.06.2025

e-Tender Notice

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

SL No	Tender ID	Name of work	Closing date & time	Opening date & time
1	1119349	Construction of new circuit house at Narail District (Sub Head: Supply and installation of 500 KVA electrical sub station with its equipments).	17-07-2025 At 12.00	17-07-2025 At 12.00
2	1111462	Construction of new circuit house at Narail District (Sub-Head: Supply and installation of 200 KVA generator including ATS and canopy)	17-07-2025 At 12.00	17-07-2025 At 12.00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no off line/hard copies will be accepted. The fee for downloading the e-tender Document for the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System portal and for e-GP help desk.

Md. Sarowar Hossain
Executive Engineer
Narail PWD Division, Narail
Phone: 02479925117

GD-1452

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts
(CRLIWM-CHT) Sector Project
Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council, Rangamati

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)(Firm/NGO) (National)
for

Consulting Services for Watershed Management Non-Government Organization (NGO) hiring for
Bandarban districts

Package No. CRLIWM/SD-38 (ADB Package-CHT/NGO-WSM/BAND/SD-06) for Bandarban District,

- The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) under the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs (MoCHTA), has been allocated public fund from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the "Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CRLIWM-CHT) Sector Project". A portion of the GoB and ADB fund is intended to be used for payments under the contract for Recruitment of Consulting Firm(s) for which this Request for Expression of interest (REOI) is being issued.
- The overall objective of the services: The WSM-INGO will support the rehabilitation and sustainable management of Bandarban watersheds in the CHT by mobilizing local communities, strengthening community-based organizations (e.g., Para Development Committees and Village Common Forest committees), and building their capacity in social, technical, agricultural, forestry, and water management practices. Working under the guidance of the PMO-CHTRC, PISC experts, and Bandarban DPMO- Bandarban HDC, the NGO will ensure participatory planning, implementation, and maintenance of watershed interventions. The goal is to enhance ecological resilience, improve livelihoods, and promote inclusive governance of natural resources in alignment with project objectives, as detailed in the Terms of Reference (ToR)
- The main scope of services is the contracted WSM-INGO will provide qualified staff, mobilize communities, and conduct social and technical assessments in prioritized sub-watersheds, ensuring alignment with project safeguards and participatory approaches. It will support implementation of watershed interventions, prepare annual plans and budgets, and coordinate with PMO, DPMO, and PISC for effective execution. The NGO will also handle financial management, reporting, grievance redress, and synergies with other project components while adhering to environmental and social safeguards. Regular progress reports, data collection, and compliance with project guidelines will be maintained to achieve sustainable watershed management outcomes.
- The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) now invites national eligible consulting firms (NGOs) to submit Expression of Interest (EOI) for providing the required services.
- The consulting firm(s) should be nationally reputed and may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications. No firm should form more than one association or joint venture (JV). If a firm submits more than one EOI forming more than one JV/association, all EOIs submitted by forming JV/association with that firm and also EOI submitted by that firm will be rejected.
- The Consultant will be selected under Consultant Qualitative selection (CQS) method in accordance with the procedures set out in the ADB Procurement Policy 2017 ("Policy") and the Procurement Regulations for ADB Borrowers 2017 ("Regulations"):

<https://www.adb.org/documents/adb-procurement-policy>
<https://www.adb.org/documents/procurement-regulations-ADB-borrowers>

'Short-listing' of the Consulting Firms submitting Expression of Interest (EOI) will be done by Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council (CHTRC) based on the complete information submitted in the Standard EOI form by the intending Consulting Firms through the Consultant Management System (CMS) as mentioned in sl. 8. Intending Consulting Firms shall have, but not limited to the following competences-

a) Management competence: Firm's management and organizational strength, financial strength, number and capabilities of permanent employees and key staff, etc.

b) Technical Competence:

- Firm's specialization compared with the sectoral focus of the assignment;
- Firm's specific experience the NGO or its consortium/JV must possess demonstrated experience in watershed management, village common forests (VCF), agriculture, and/or community infrastructure development within the specified Hill District, supported by a team proficient in all local ethnic languages to ensure effective communication. The partnership must include at least one women's NGO (unless the lead NGO specializes in gender work) and showcase a minimum of 10 years' development experience in the CHT region, including 5 years specifically in capacity-building projects related to these sectors. Additionally, the consortium must demonstrate the capability to recruit qualified technical professionals (engineers, watershed specialists, and agriculture/forestry experts) while ensuring that at least 70% of project staff are from CHT's ethnic communities, with equitable representation across different groups.;
- Firm's experience in ADB/World Bank funded similar projects will be given priority.

c) Geographic Competence: Experience in similar geographic area (i.e. country experience, regional experience).

- In addition to the above, the list of the experts along with their CVs are required for the Consultants' Qualifications Selection evaluation. For CQS selections, proposed experts during the EOI stage will be evaluated using the Personal Evaluation Sheet template, like (i) General Qualifications, (ii) Project-Related Experience, and (iii) Experiences with international/development partners organizations or in their projects.
- Only EOIs submitted electronically through ADB's CMS using ADB template will be evaluated. EOI submitted using other than ADB templates will not be evaluated. Incomplete EOI will also not be evaluated.
- Interested consulting firms are requested to submit the Expression of Interest (EOI) electronically, using standard EOI template available through ADB's CMS by 11:59 PM (Manila Local Time) and by 09:59 PM (Dhaka Local Time) on or before 22 July, 2025 through the link of <http://csm.adb.org> [Project Name: Climate Resilient Livelihoods Improvement and Watershed Management in the Chittagong Hill Tracts Sector Project, Package Name: Consultancy Service regarding "Watershed Management Implementation NGO" (Package No. : CRLIWM/SD-38(ADB Package-CHT/NGO-WSM/BAND/SD-06) for Bandarban District, Please note that only online submission of EOIs in ADB's CMS is allowed. Any offline or manual EOI submission is not permissible and will not be considered.
- Only the first ranked short-listed firm will be invited to submit a "Request for Proposal (RFP) for Technical & Financial Proposals which will be evaluated by the Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) of CHTRC.
- Under no circumstances will ADB or CHTRC, be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by the firm(s) in connection with the preparation or submission of the EOI. Interested consulting firm(s) is/are requested to submit relevant documentary evidences in support of their competence in EOI submission.
- Interested consulting firm(s) may obtain further information including Scope of Works and Terms of Reference (ToR) from the Consultant Management System on the ADB website at <http://csm.adb.org> or from the office of the undersigned during regular office hours on all working days before deadline of submission. The EOI notice will also be available at the following websites www.cptu.gov.bd.
- The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs received without assigning any reason thereof.

Paban Kumar Chakma
Project Director
CRLIWM-CHT Sector Project
Rani Tatu Roy Para, Public Health Area
Rangamati-4500
Phone: 0155611231
E-mail: pd.crliwght@gmail.com

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Department of Livestock Services Capacity
Strengthening Project (DLSSCP)
Department of Livestock Services (DLS)
Krishi Khamar Sarak, Farmgate, Dhaka-1215
E-mail: dlsscp@gmail.com

Memo No.: 33.01.0000.836.07.060.25- 447


Date: 23/06/2025

e-GP Tender Notice (Works)

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no hard copies will be accepted. To Submit e-tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Sl.	Tender ID and Reference no	Package no. & Name of Tender	Last selling date and time	Closing & Opening date and time
01	Tender ID: 1123810 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.060.25-420	WD-03, Lot-01 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Dinajpur, Panchagarh & Nilphamari under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 14:00 PM
02	Tender ID: 1123811 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.061.25-421	WD-03, Lot-02 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Lalmonirhat, Kurigram & Rangpur under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 14:05 PM
03	Tender ID: 1123812 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.062.25-422	WD-03, Lot-03 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Maymensingh, Sherpur & Netrokona under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 14:10 PM
04	Tender ID: 1123813 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.063.25-423	WD-03, Lot-04 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Nagaon, Bogura, Joypurhat & Sirajganj under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 14:20 PM
05	Tender ID: 1123814 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.064.25-424	WD-03, Lot-05 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Pabna & Natore under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 14:45 PM
06	Tender ID: 1123815 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.065.25-425	WD-03, Lot-06 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Bandarban, Khagrachari & Rangamati under DLSSCP, DLS.	14-July-2025 12:00 PM	14-July-2025 14:20 PM
07	Tender ID: 1123816 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.066.25-426	WD-03, Lot-07 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Feni, Chattogram & Cox's Bazar under DLSSCP, DLS.	14-July-2025 12:00 PM	14-July-2025 14:25 PM
08	Tender ID: 1123817 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.067.25-427	WD-03, Lot-08 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Cumilla, Noakhali, Lakhipur & Chandpur under DLSSCP, DLS.	14-July-2025 12:00 PM	14-July-2025 14:30 PM
09	Tender ID: 1123818 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.068.25-428	WD-03, Lot-09 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Narsinghdi, Bramanbaria, Kishoreganj & Habiganj under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 14:35 PM
10	Tender ID: 1123819 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.069.25-429	WD-03, Lot-10 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Moulvibazar, Sunamganj & Sylhet under DLSSCP, DLS.	14-July-2025 12:00 PM	14-July-2025 14:40 PM
11	Tender ID: 1123820 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.070.25-430	WD-03, Lot-11 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Gazipur, Narayanganj, Tangail under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 14:55 PM
12	Tender ID: 1123821 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.071.25-431	WD-03, Lot-12 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Gopalganj, Faridpur, Rajbari & Shariatpur under DLSSCP, DLS.	14-July-2025 12:00 PM	14-July-2025 15:00 PM
13	Tender ID: 1123822 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.072.25-432	WD-03, Lot-13 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Manikganj, Munshiganj & Madaripur under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:05 PM
14	Tender ID: 1123823 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.073.25-433	WD-03, Lot-14 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Barishal, Borguna & Naril under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:10 PM
15	Tender ID: 1123824 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.074.25-434	WD-03, Lot-15 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira & Magura under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:15 PM
16	Tender ID: 1123825 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.075.25-435	WD-03, Lot-16 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Patent Stone, Garage in District Livestock Office at Jesshore, Jhinaidha & Chuadanga under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:20 PM
17	Tender ID: 1123826 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.076.25-436	WD-04, Lot-01 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall & Paint, of Central Veterinary Hospital, Dhaka under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:25 PM
18	Tender ID: 1123827 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.077.25-437	WD-04, Lot-02 Construction of Rec Road, U Drain & Paint of VTI Mymensingh under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:30 PM
19	Tender ID: 1123828 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.078.25-438	WD-04, Lot-03 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain & Paint of VTI Alamdanga, Chuadanga under DLSSCP, DLS.	14-July-2025 12:00 PM	14-July-2025 15:30 PM
20	Tender ID: 1123829 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.079.25-439	WD-04, Lot-04 Construction of Main gate, Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain, Paint, Garage of Khagrachari DD AI Office under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:35 PM
21	Tender ID: 1123830 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.080.25-440	WD-04, Lot-05 Construction of Boundary Wall, Rec Road, U Drain of Noakhali DD AI office under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:40 PM
22	Tender ID: 1123831 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.081.25-441	WD-04, Lot-06 Renovation of Planning Section at Department of Livestock Service (DLS) under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:45 PM
23	Tender ID: 1123832 Ref No. 33.01.0000.836.07.082.25-445	WD-05, Lot-01 Land Development (District Livestock office khagrachari, Tangail & Bogura) under DLSSCP, DLS.	07-July-2025 12:00 PM	07-July-2025 15:50 PM

The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the National e-GP portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


(Dr. MD. Anamul Kabir)
Project Director
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LITTON'S LITMUS TEST on form and new role

ABDULLAH AL MEHIDI

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday announced a 16-member squad for the upcoming ODI series against Sri Lanka, beginning on July 2. While the inclusion of Mohammad Naim Sheikh in place of Soumya Sarkar drew initial attention, it is Litton Das who finds himself under the spotlight for a different reason.

The upcoming 50-over contests could mark a turning point for Litton, who appears set for a new role in the team.

Although Litton had showed a glimpse of his old self in the recently concluded Galle Test, striking a fluent 90, his struggles across formats have been well-documented. The right-hander endured a dismal ODI World Cup in India and, in the eight matches following it up to the West Indies series last December, managed only 35 runs. He was then dropped from the ICC Champions Trophy squad.

Called back into the squad, the 30-year-old returns with greater responsibilities to bear.

"Litton wasn't included in the last series [Champions Trophy]. He was in a bad patch. Time is the best healer. He is now the T20 captain so we can think that he is there until the T20 World Cup in the team. We, the selectors, feel that one-day cricket is a good place

BANGLADESH ODI SQUAD

Mehidy Hasan Miraz (captain), Tanzid Hasan, Parvez Hossain Emon, Naim Sheikh, Najmul Hossain Shanto, Towhid Hridoy, Litton Das, Jaker Ali Anik, Shamim Hossain, Rishad Hossain, Tanvir Islam, Mustafizur Rahman, Tanzim Hasan Sakib, Taskin Ahmed, Nahid Rana and Hasan Mahmud.

to get back someone's form," chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu said at yesterday's press conference.

But Litton's challenges are manifold, goes beyond form. With Mushfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah Riyad retiring – the former from ODIs and the latter from international cricket – Litton is expected to shoulder more responsibility.

The squad includes three designated openers in Tanzid Hasan, Parvez Hossain Emon and Naim. However, the chief selector did not name Litton among the openers, suggesting a shift down the order.

While the final batting order remains at the discretion of the captain and coaching staff, all signs point to Litton stepping into Mushfiqur's shoes – both as wicketkeeper and in the middle order.

"We were thinking differently since Mushfiqur and Mahmudullah have retired. So, experience is missing. Our thinking is that he will bat where experience is missing in the middle order. I see him at number five or six," Lipu told The Daily Star yesterday, clarifying Litton's role.

Litton was dropped earlier for struggling against the new ball as an opener, despite scoring all five of his centuries in that role across 68 of his 94 ODIs (average 32.76). His returns dip at other positions – averaging 17 at No. 3, just over 20 at No. 4 – with a notable unbeaten 94 at No. 5 against the West Indies in the 2019 World Cup.

Now, returning in a lean patch and tasked with a potentially unfamiliar role combining wicketkeeping duties and middle-order responsibility, Litton's ability to embrace the challenge may define the next phase of his white-ball career.



Injury scare for SHANTO

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh suffered an injury scare ahead of the series-deciding second Test against Sri Lanka as skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto sustained a finger injury while attending a slip-catching session in Colombo yesterday.

Shanto, who had earlier sustained a separate finger injury before Galle Test in which he eventually scored twin centuries, didn't attend any fielding or batting drills following the latest injury.

The Bangladesh skipper is likely to remain under observation for 24 hours ahead of the second Test, which starts at the Sinhalese Sports Club on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, all-rounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz returned to practice after recovering from fever which had ruled him out of the drawn Galle Test.

Shanto, who addressed the media before Bangladesh's first practice session in Colombo yesterday, expected Miraz to perform with both bat and ball, just the way he did against Zimbabwe and Pakistan over the last one year.

"Miraz is a very important player for our team. The way he contributes with both bat and ball; he had impactful performances with both in each match. I think the balance of the team will be better following his return to the side. I hope he can contribute well in this match," Shanto told reporters.



Sri Lanka recall Wellalage, Vishwa for Colombo Test

AGENCIES

Sri Lanka have added left-arm spinner Dunieth Wellalage and pacer Vishwa Fernando to their squad for the second Test against Bangladesh, starting Wednesday in Colombo.

Wellalage, 21, returns to the Test fold after making his debut in 2022 against Pakistan, where he scored 29 runs but went wicketless. He replaces veteran Angelo Mathews, who announced his retirement from the longest format following the drawn Galle Test.

Vishwa Fernando, a seasoned campaigner with 79 wickets in 27 Tests, steps in for Milan Rathnayake. Rathnayake impressed in Galle with four wickets and a valuable 39-run knock but was ruled out due to a left-side strain sustained during the match.

The changes mark a blend of youth and experience as Sri Lanka aim to clinch the series in Colombo. With the spin-friendly SSC surface on offer, Wellalage's inclusion could prove crucial, while Fernando's return bolsters the pace attack in Mathews' absence.

SCC's track record demands bold approach

EKUSH TAPADER

As the Sinhalese Sports Club (SCC) Cricket Ground in Colombo is known for producing results, the big question is: can Najmul Hossain Shanto's Bangladesh rewrite history after a creditable draw in Galle?

While the visitors were largely content with their body language after the first Test, criticism arose over their cautious approach – particularly the timing of their declaration and the captain's own batting

Of the 45 Tests held there, 31 have produced results. Drawn matches have become rare in recent years -- the last one occurred due to rain in 2014, and excluding such interruptions, no Test has ended in a draw since 2010.

mindset. Nevertheless, the draw in Galle has given them a confidence boost heading into the second and final Test, starting tomorrow.

Unlike Galle's batter-friendly surface, SCC has a reputation for decisive outcomes. Of the 45 Tests held there, 31 have produced results. Drawn matches have become rare in recent years -- the last one occurred



due to rain in 2014, and excluding such interruptions, no Test has ended in a draw since 2010.

Bangladesh have played three Tests there, losing all of them by hefty margins. Their last appearance was 18 years ago. Yet, the ground holds a cherished memory: in 2001, Mohammad Ashraful scored a stunning century on debut to become the youngest Test centurion. Despite Bangladesh losing by an innings, Ashraful was named Player of the Match – an exceptional feat for a player from the losing side.

This time, Shanto's team will hope for a reversal of fortunes. The pitch historically assists spinners slightly more, with spinners taking 51.92 percent of the wickets and pacers 48.08. Sri Lankan spin legend

Muthiah Muralitharan tops the wicket tally at this venue with 166.

However, seamers have also made an impact over the years.

Recent matches reinforce the spin factor – Prabath Jayasuriya claimed eight wickets in Sri Lanka's 10-wicket win over Afghanistan last year, while Pakistan's spin duo Abrar Ahmed and Nauman Ali dismantled the hosts in 2022.

Both teams have spin options capable of thriving in supportive conditions. For Bangladesh, the return of Mehidy Hasan Miraz from illness is a timely boost, strengthening their spin department.

Early in the match, batting is generally easier. A commanding first-innings total could prove crucial. Bangladesh will look to capitalise early, as Sri Lanka, playing at home, are expected to play aggressive cricket in search of full World Test Championship points.

Bangladesh last played a Test in Colombo in 2017 – at the P Sara Oval – celebrating their 100th Test with a historic win over Sri Lanka. Now, at a different Colombo venue, they aim to showcase a winning mentality and script a first-ever Test series victory against the Island nation.



India batters Rishabh Pant and KL Rahul celebrate their centuries in style on the fourth day of their first Test against England at Headingley in Leeds yesterday. Pant, with his blazing 118, became the second wicketkeeper-batter in history to hit two tons in the same match against England.

PHOTO: REUTERS



PHOTO: REUTERS

COURTOIS WALL KEEPS REAL MADRID ALIVE

Thibaut Courtois produced a Club World Cup record 10 saves to anchor 10-man Real Madrid's gritty 3-1 win over Pachuca in steamy Charlotte on Sunday. Jude Bellingham and Arda Guler scored before the break, Federico Valverde volleyed in a third, and only a deflected Elias Montiel strike beat Courtois. The win marked Xabi Alonso's first as Madrid boss and revived their campaign.

City's 'Little Devil' makes a statement

AGENCIES

Claudio Echeverri's dedication on the training ground paid off in spectacular fashion as the 19-year-old Argentine scored his first goal for Manchester City in style – a stunning free-kick – during their 6-0 rout of Al Ain in the Club World Cup on Sunday.

Nicknamed the 'Little Devil', Echeverri made his first start for City and wasted no time in making it memorable. With City already 1-0 up, the attacking midfielder stepped up confidently over a free-kick on the edge of the area and curled a sublime shot over the wall and into the top corner.

Echeverri, who joined City from River Plate in January, is already drawing comparisons to Argentine legends Lionel Messi and Diego Maradona due to his low centre of gravity, close control, and creative flair – attributes that have marked him as one of Argentina's brightest young prospects.

City boss Pep Guardiola was full of praise for the teenager's work ethic, revealing that Echeverri has been relentlessly honing his free-kick skills behind the scenes.

"Since he arrived, for the last three or four months, he's been staying after training to practise free-kicks – alone, with the 'keeper, with the wall," Guardiola said. "Work pays off. At the end, he had the courage and quality. It's like golf or basketball – the more you practise, the better your chances."

Echeverri made his City debut in the FA Cup final defeat to Crystal Palace in May but looked far more assured this time before being subbed at half-time due to a minor ankle issue.

"It was a fantastic goal. He's incredible in tight spaces," Guardiola added. "It's a shame he couldn't continue, but he showed how good he is."

Late strikes from Oscar Bobb and Rayan Cherki added gloss to the scoreline, bringing City level on points with Juventus at the top of Group G. However, Guardiola's men trail the Italians on goals scored, meaning they must beat Juve on Thursday in Orlando to avoid a likely clash with Real Madrid in the next round.

Still, Guardiola remained unfazed: "Sooner or later, we'll face top teams. We're in the next phase – that's what matters



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Outrage after mob attack on ex-CEC Huda

Home boss, BNP, rights groups, eminent citizens slam the assault

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three rights organisations and 23 eminent citizens yesterday condemned the mob assault and humiliation of former chief election commissioner KM Nurul Huda at his Uttara home on Sunday and demanded bringing those responsible to justice.

Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury and BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed in separate programmes said if any member of the law enforcement agencies and party activists were found involved, action will be taken after investigation.

Huda was arrested hours after the BNP filed a case against him and 23 others,

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2
RELATED STORY ON PAGE 2



Officials examining a metre gauge rail coach, one of 15 carriages newly imported from South Korea, at a workshop of Bangladesh Railway in Chattogram yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

Hasina found to be 'fully complicit'

Commission says in 2nd interim report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances has said it found proof that deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina was complicit in extrajudicial crimes.

These findings, directly implicating Hasina in enforced disappearances, were outlined in the commission's second interim report, submitted to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on June 6.

The CA office circulated a chapter of the report among journalists yesterday.

Lt Gen Md Akbar Hussain, former head of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), informed the commission that he directly discussed with Hasina the case of Humam Quader Chowdhury, who was detained in the Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC).

Akbar served as DGFI director general between August 8, 2013, and February 1, 2017. BNP leader Humam was forcibly disappeared from August 2016 to March 2017.

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ASSAULT ON EX-CEC HUDA

Swechchhasebak Dal leader held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A leader of Swechchhasebak Dal was detained in the capital's Uttara area for his alleged involvement in assaulting former chief election commissioner KM Nurul Huda in front of his house.

Hanif Mia, member secretary of Uttara West unit of Swechchhasebak Dal, was handed over to police after an army team apprehended him, Md Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Uttara West Police Station, said without providing more details.

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BANGLADESH'S ENERGY SECURITY

Iran-Israel war stalls LPG shipments

MD NAZRUL ISLAM, Ctg

Bangladesh's energy sector may come under significant threat if the Iran-Israel war escalates and Iran follows through on its threat to block the Strait of Hormuz, a vital maritime trade route through which one-fifth of the world's oil supply is shipped every day.

The Strait of Hormuz lies between Oman and the UAE on one side and Iran

on the other. It links the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea beyond.

Bangladesh imports essential fuels, such as crude oil, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), and liquefied natural gas (LNG), primarily from Middle Eastern countries, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Iraq, and Bahrain.

"Our LPG-laden vessels are waiting at loading ports in Iraq, UAE, Qatar

and Oman," said Mohammad Amirul Haque, president of the LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh.

But due to the Iran-Israel war, none of them could pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

"This could trigger an LPG shortage in the country. Despite being a neutral party, we may end up suffering from the consequences of the war," he said.

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Govt turns to AI for faster delivery of projects

Plans Tk 316cr reform programme

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh plans to launch a Tk 316 crore reform programme aimed at significantly speeding up project planning, approval, and implementation through the use of artificial intelligence for the first time.

Backed by the World Bank, the initiative to digitise and streamline the management of government spending is likely to be cleared at today's meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC).

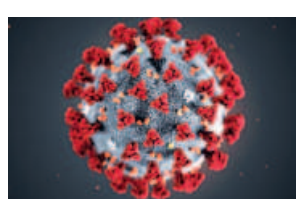
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PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Dismissed members of the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), now Border Guard Bangladesh, stage a sit-in blocking the city's Shahbagh intersection around 1:00pm yesterday after being stopped by police from marching towards the chief adviser's residence Jamuna. The demonstrators demand reinstatement to their jobs.

Three die of Covid in 24 hours



STAR REPORT

At least three people died from Covid-19 in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, taking the total number of deaths from the viral disease to 19 since January.

Two of the victims are from Chattogram division, while the other from Dhaka division, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The victims were aged between 61 and 70, 71-80, and 91-100.

In the same period, 19 new infections were reported after a total of 406 people were tested.

Trilateral talks and geopolitical questions

Experts warn of implications after high officials of Bangladesh, China, Pakistan meet

PORIMOL PALMA

The recent meeting aimed at boosting trilateral cooperation among China, Pakistan, and Bangladesh might have deeper geopolitical implications, foreign policy experts here said, urging Dhaka to move cautiously considering the regional and global geopolitical dynamics.

They also questioned the rationale for the trilateral meeting given that Bangladesh is under an interim administration and already maintains bilateral relations with China and Pakistan.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the 9th China-South Asia Exposition and the 6th China-South Asia Cooperation meeting in Kunming, Yunnan province of China, on June 19.

Bangladesh's acting foreign secretary Ruhul Alam Siddique, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun

Weidong, and Pakistani Additional Secretary (Asia Pacific) Imran Ahmed Siddiqui attended the meeting in person.

Pakistan Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch joined via video link.

Following the trilateral meeting, each of the three nations issued separate statements.

While Bangladesh called it an "informal meeting", Pakistan termed it as "the inaugural meeting of the trilateral mechanism".

In their statements, China and Pakistan said the three sides agreed to explore and implement cooperation projects in such areas as trade, maritime affairs, climate change, agriculture, human resources, education, and culture.

Three countries agreed to establish a joint working group to implement the understandings reached during the meeting, their statements added.

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JOINT FORCES RAID

Man found dead after a 'gunfight'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The bullet-hit body of a man was found after a reported gunfight between security personnel and suspected criminals during a joint forces drive led by the army in Sunamganj's Jagannathpur upazila.

The deceased has been identified as Abu Sayeed, 35, a mason from Tarapasha village in nearby Dirai upazila.

He reportedly came to Gadalia village of Jagannathpur, where the "gunfight" took place on Sunday night, to work at the construction site of a new house, police said.

The body was sent to Sunamganj District Hospital for autopsy after it was recovered around 3:00am yesterday, said Mahfuz Imtiaz Bhuiyan,

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GOVT EMPLOYEES

Minimum special allowance raised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has increased the minimum special allowances for government staff, employees of state-owned enterprises and financial institutions, members of all security forces, Bangladesh Judicial Service Commission staff, and Monthly Pay Order (MPO)-listed teachers.

The Finance Division yesterday issued six separate notifications in this regard, saying that the new minimum special allowance will be Tk 1,500, up from the previous Tk 1,000.

Pensions for retired

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

পরিকল্পিত বনায়ন করি
সবুজ বাংলাদেশ গড়ি

জাতীয় বৃক্ষরোপণ অভিযান ও বৃক্ষমেলা ২০২৫

শুভ উদ্বোধন

২৫ জুন ২০২৫, বুধবার

উদ্বোধন করবেন

ড. মুহাম্মদ ইউনূস

মাননীয় প্রধান উপদেষ্টা, গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

স্থান : বাংলাদেশ চীন মৈত্রী সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র, ঢাকা

বন অধিদপ্তর
পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়