



DHAKA WEDNESDAY JUNE 25, 2025

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 152

ASHAR II, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

ZILHAJJ 28, 1446 HJRI

16 PAGES: TK 15.00

Ceasefire takes hold after Trump rebukes

Iran says willing to resolve issues through talks; world cautiously welcomes truce after 12 days of fighting

AGENCIES

from further strikes.

Israel, in announcing it had agreed to Trump's plan, said it had achieved all its military objectives.

Later, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian announced the "end of the 12-day war" imposed by Israel, in a message to the nation carried by the official IRNA news agency.

After US President Donald Trump, who had first declared the ceasefire, angrily berated both sides for violating it, Iran announced it would respect the truce if Israel did, while Israel said it had refrained



"Israel, as soon as we made the deal, they came out and they dropped a load of bombs, the likes of which I've never seen before... I'm not happy with Israel."

DONALD TRUMP
US president

IRAN-ISRAEL WAR

- Iran claims 'victory' as Netanyahu says 'all objectives' achieved
- Trump says he does not want 'regime change' in Iran
- Calls for Gaza ceasefire grow
- Iran likely to exit NPT



A partially destroyed residential site in Israel's Be'er Sheva yesterday. At least four people were killed in the strike moments before a ceasefire -- announced by US President Donald Trump -- was due to come into effect.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Govt warns of strict action against mob attacks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday warned that mob attacks in any form will not be tolerated and vowed to bring all involved to justice regardless of whether civilians or law enforcement members are responsible.

Mob violence could not be stopped completely yet but it is being brought down, Home Affairs Adviser Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury told reporters at the Secretariat as he

Mob violence now alarmingly routine

Say rights activists, blame govt failure to match words with action

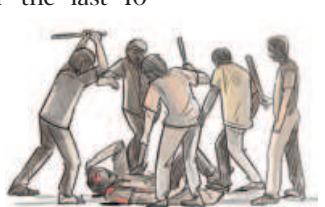
ARAFAT RAHMAN and
SAJJAD HOSSAIN

They also say the delayed or reactive policing tacitly signals tolerance for such acts.

In several cases, police intervention came too late to prevent harm and only after footage of violence triggered a social media outcry.

There are also instances where mobs went on the rampage while law enforcement looked on, the latest being the assault on former chief election commissioner KM Nurul Huda.

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পরিবেশবান্ধব ও টেকসই শিল্পচার অনন্য শীকৃতিপূর্ণ,
শতভাগ রঞ্জনিমুখী প্রতিষ্ঠান
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"গ্রীন ফ্যাক্টরি অ্যাওয়ার্ড ২০২৫"
প্রদান করায় জানাই

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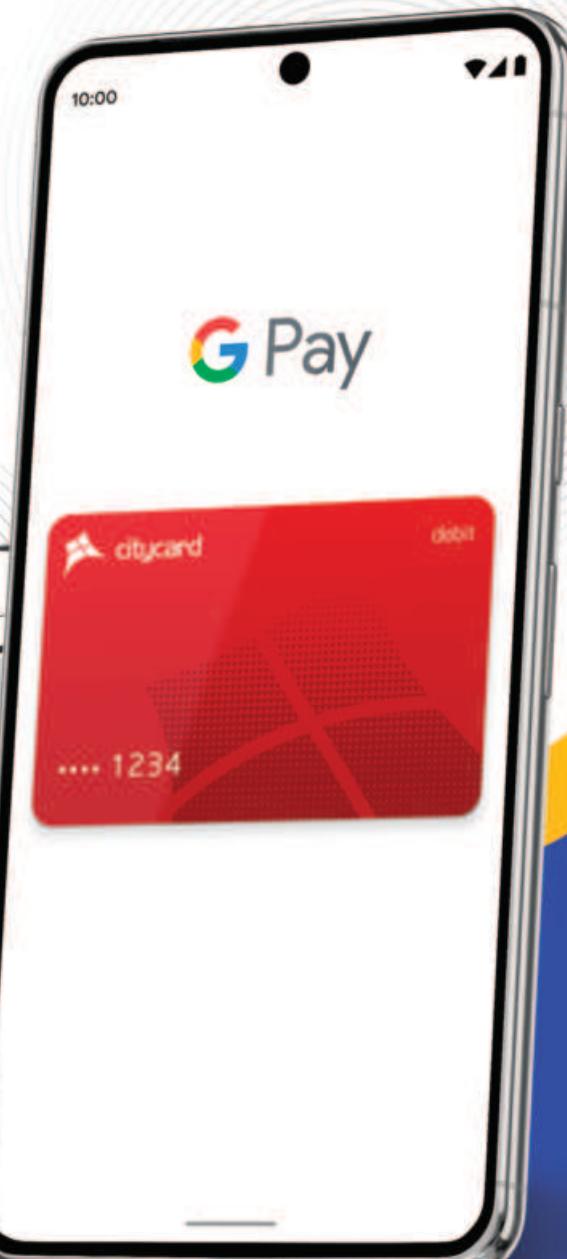
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Trump casts doubt on Nato mutual defence clause

REUTERS, the Hague

President Donald Trump yesterday cast doubt over the United States' commitment to defending its Nato partners, suggesting there were "numerous" definitions to the cornerstone of the alliance's mutual defence clause.

Trump was speaking to reporters en route to a Nato summit in the Netherlands, a two-day gathering which is intended to signal to Russian President Vladimir Putin that Nato is united, despite Trump's past criticism, and determined to expand and upgrade its defences to deter any attack from Moscow.

However, pressed by reporters on Air Force One over whether he remained committed to mutual defence among allies as set out by Nato's Article 5, Trump responded:

"I'm committed to saving lives. I'm committed to life and safety. And I'm going to give you an exact definition when I get there."

Trump also posted a screenshot of a message from Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte congratulating him on his "decisive action in Iran" and getting all Nato allies to agree to spend more on defence.



Piling work is underway at Anandabazar in Chattogram's North Halishahar as part of the Bay Terminal project. The terminal expected to serve as the country's key port for the next century. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Ceasefire takes hold after Trump rebukes

FROM PAGE 1
continue to "assert its legitimate rights" to the peaceful use of atomic power.

Meanwhile, Israel's chief of staff Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir said the country's focus will now shift back to its fight against Hamas in Gaza.

"Now the focus shifts back to Gaza -- to bring the hostages home and to dismantle the Hamas regime," chief of staff Lieutenant General Eyal Zamir said in a statement shared by the army.

The statement came as there were reports of violations of the ceasefire, hours after it went into effect.

Explosions rang out in Tehran from Israeli airstrikes hours after Trump said Israel had called off strikes at his command.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office acknowledged that Israel had struck a radar site near Tehran in what it said was retaliation for Iranian missiles fired three and a half hours after the ceasefire started.

Tehran denied it had launched any missiles after the ceasefire.

According to Israel, two Iranian ballistic missiles were launched toward Israel. At the White House, Trump later described it as "one rocket that didn't land -- that was shot -- perhaps by mistake, that didn't land."

Israel later said it decided to refrain from further attacks following a call between Netanyahu and Trump, but did not explicitly say whether the strike on the radar site took place before or after they spoke.

Oil prices fell and share markets were lifted around the world at the prospect of an end to the biggest ever confrontation between the Middle East foes, lifting a threat of disruption to Gulf oil supplies.

Trump, en route to a Nato summit in the Netherlands, had rebuked Israel with an obscenity in an extraordinary outburst at an ally whose military campaign he had joined two days earlier.

"All planes will turn around and head home, while doing a friendly 'Plane Wave' to Iran. Nobody will be hurt, the Ceasefire is in effect!" Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

That followed a post in which he had said: "Israel. Do not drop those bombs. If you do it, it is a major violation. Bring your pilots home, now!"

Before departing the White House, Trump told reporters he was unhappy with both sides for violating the ceasefire, but particularly unhappy with Israel, which he said had "unloaded" shortly after agreeing to the deal.

"We got to get Israel to calm down now," Trump said. Iran and Israel had

Govt warns of strict action against mob attacks

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emerged from a meeting of the law-and-order advisory council.

He assured of all necessary measures to prevent such incidents in the days to come.

A significant number of people involved in such incidents have already been brought under legal action, he said, without providing the exact number.

Referring to the recent assault on former Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda in Uttara, he said: "We are deeply saddened by the incident -- it is unacceptable."

One person has already been arrested.

"We are investigating to identify other possible perpetrators. If any member of law enforcement is found negligent, we will also take action against them," he said.

In response to questions about the perceived passivity of police, he said: "The police are now more humane

than before. They try to resolve issues through discussion first instead of using force immediately. Their capacity and morale have significantly improved."

Dr Md Sajid Ali, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, said: "We have sent a clear message by registering cases and taking legal steps. No one has the right to break down doors or confront suspects directly. Inform the police -- we will take legal action. If police personnel fail to act, we will take disciplinary steps against them," he added.

"We are not allowing any mob justice. In such incidents, we have filed cases under severe charges, including robbery and mugging," he told reporters at a road safety event organised under the Japan-supported Dhaka Road Traffic Safety Project.

"In some cases, I even suspended officers from my own force for their failure to respond properly," he said.

Referring to the incident involving Huda, he said a case was filed.

The frequency of such incidents has decreased significantly compared to three or four months ago, he said.

been fighting "so long and so hard that they don't know what the f*** they're doing."

A reporter for Axios said Netanyahu had told Trump that Israel would scale back the bombing mission rather than cancel it.

Media reports said that Qatar played a role in brokering the truce, despite being targeted by a "coordinated missile attack" by Iran on a US base in its territory.

Both Israel and Iran appeared to claim victory following the ceasefire.

The Israeli government said Netanyahu had convened his cabinet to "announce that Israel had achieved all the objectives of Operation Rising Lion and much more".

It added that it had removed "an immediate dual existential threat: nuclear and ballistic", while vowing to respond forcefully to any violations of the ceasefire.

Iran's top security body, meanwhile, said the Islamic republic's forces had "compelled" Israel to "unilaterally" stand down.

Its Revolutionary Guards also hailed a missile salvo fired at Israel "in the final moments before the ceasefire", saying it taught "a historic and unforgettable lesson to the Zionist enemy".

Meanwhile, Foad Izadi, a professor at the University of Tehran, told Al Jazeera that Iran has been cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) because it is a member of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, but this collaboration has not benefited Tehran.

So, Iran is likely to use Article 10 of the treaty, which allows countries to leave it, "in the coming days and weeks", he said. "You don't have to be a member of that treaty, there are many countries that are not members. Israel, for example, is not a member," Izadi noted.

Meanwhile, French President Emmanuel Macron warned there was an "increased" risk that Iran would attempt to enrich uranium secretly following the US and Israeli strikes on nuclear sites.

Some turned their sights to the ongoing fighting between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip, arguing it was time to bring an end to that war too.

Israel's opposition leader and the families of Israeli hostages held in Gaza yesterday called for an end to the war in the Palestinian territory after a ceasefire was announced with Iran.

"And now Gaza. It's time to finish it there too. Bring back the hostages, end the war," opposition leader Yair Lapid of the centre-right Yesh Atid party wrote on X.

"We have sent a clear message by registering cases and taking legal steps. No one has the right to break down doors or confront suspects directly. Inform the police -- we will take legal action. If police personnel fail to act, we will take disciplinary steps against them," he added.

Regarding the upcoming national election, Jahangir said ensuring peaceful and credible polls is a top priority.

"All the security force chiefs assured us that law and order will be maintained during the polls. But fair elections also depend on the political participants. We want a process where even a losing candidate accepts the result with dignity."

All security arrangements during the election period will be under the authority of the Election Commission, he said, adding that the government would provide all necessary support to the EC to conduct a peaceful and credible election.

Mob violence now alarmingly routine

FROM PAGE 1

Over the last 10 months, mobs had assaulted individuals, ransacked offices and homes, desecrated heritage sites, shrines, akhras, and even shut down women's football matches.

According to Ain o Salish Kendra, at least 174 people were killed in mob attacks between August 2024 last year and May this year.

"Even in the face of horrifying incidents, we are not seeing any visible action from the government that could send out a strong message," said human rights activist Nur Khan Litton.

Mob violence becomes frequent amid political unrest, he told The Daily Star. "But now these types of incidents are happening at an abnormal scale and frequency."

Those who are involved in such incidents must not feel that they can get away with it, he added.

He said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Dhamondi 32 residence was demolished following public announcements.

"The government did not take proper measures to prevent it. Rather, those who committed the act proudly celebrated what they had done."

"Such instances send out a kind of message that the government will not take any legal action. This is the message these people are receiving, because no action has been taken."

Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik in a statement last night said the wave of mob violence that began across the country after the mass uprising last year was now spiralling out of control.

Also yesterday, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury told reporters at the Secretariat that the government had not been able to stop mob violence, but the frequency of the incidents had been lowered.

Asked how many people faced action for mob violence, he said, "I don't know the exact number ... But action has been taken against a large number of people."

He added that law enforcement members would be punished if they were found negligent in curbing violence.

He made the comments amid widespread outrage stemming from the assault on former CEC Huda on June 22.

According to witnesses, a group of men entered Huda's home in the capital's Uttara and assaulted him. In viral video footage, some people are seen putting a garland of shoes around his neck and hitting him across the face with a shoe before handing him over to police who were at the scene.

The joint forces yesterday arrested a suspect named Hanif Mia on charges of assaulting Huda.

On Sunday, a barber and his son were beaten up by a mob and

later detained by police allegedly for hurting religious sentiment in Lalmonirhat town.

Slating the attack, different rights bodies yesterday demanded thorough investigations into every such case to bring the perpetrators to justice and called for strict measures to ensure such incidents do not recur.

After the fall of the Awami League regime on August 5 last year, the police force virtually disappeared for around two weeks. Mob violence shot up at the time.

In September, former Chhatra League leaders Shamim Molla of Jahangirnagar University and Abdullah Al Masud of Rajshahi University were killed.

At Dhaka University, a mentally challenged man named Tofazzal Hossain was beaten to death by resident students who thought Tofazzal was a thief.

The DU authorities later expelled eight students, and six men were arrested in connection with the killing.

At least two were arrested in connection with the killing of Shamim.

According to The Daily Star's own findings, along with counts made in media reports, over 70 shrines and akhras across the country were attacked, vandalised, set ablaze or looted in August and September last year.

The Chief Adviser's Press Wing on January 18 said 23 suspects were arrested over the attacks on at least 40 shrines following August 5.

On March 6, a mob stormed and ransacked a flat in Gulshan, falsely claiming it belonged to Tanvir Imam, son of Sheikh Hasina's former adviser HT Imam, and alleging that illegal weapons and large sums of cash were hidden there.

Despite police presence, the mob broke open the door. Police and army personnel eventually intervened to restore order and arrested three.

In May, a group of men tried to break into the residence of Golam Mostafa, proprietor of Hakkani Publishers, accusing him of being a "fascist agent".

When police went to the scene, they asked officers to arrest the publisher. As police pointed out that there was no complaint against him, the men engaged in an argument with police.

The law enforcers then detained three men, including a now former leader of the Students Against Discrimination.

Police later released them after Abdul Hannan Masud, senior joint chief coordinator of the National Citizen Party, gave an undertaking that the men would not engage in such activities in the future.

On May 9, a man named Nehal Ahmed Jihad dragged two women

LALMONIRHAT MOB 4 rights groups slam assault on father, son

Family leaves town, fearing attacks

STAR REPORT

Four rights organisations have expressed deep concern over the incident in Lalmonirhat town, where a barber and his son were detained after being beaten up by a mob on Sunday for allegedly hurting religious sentiments.

In separate statements issued yesterday, the groups demanded that the culprits be brought to justice.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad said incidents of mob violence and communal provocation are occurring in different parts of the country, yet the state has failed to take any urgent or effective measures to hold the perpetrators accountable. The organisation called for an impartial investigation into the Lalmonirhat incident.

Ain o Salish Kendra described allegations of "hurting religious sentiments" or "blasphemy" as extremely sensitive and emphasised the need for transparent, impartial, and evidence-based investigations in such cases. It further said the prevailing culture of impunity poses a serious threat to social harmony and the rule of law.

Naripokkho expressed deep anger and frustration over the rise in mob violence, oppression, and torture across the country under various pretexts, including accusations of blasphemy.

The group stated that the government has taken no effective initiative to prevent such

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out of a launch cabin and whipped them with a belt in front of more than a hundred passengers at Munshiganj launch terminal.

Nehal was arrested but released on bail three weeks later. As he walked out of prison, a large group of men received him with garlands.

Three women's football matches in Rangpur, Dinajpur, and Joypurhat were stopped by groups claiming that such events were against religious norms.

These matches were eventually held after the authorities ensured safety.

MOB KILLINGS HIGHEST IN 10 YEARS

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), reports show that at least 179 people were killed in mob attacks between August 2024 and June 23 this year.

Over the last 10 months, the average mob killing, 17.9 each month, has been the highest in 10 years. In 2015, the monthly average was 11.25.

At least 51 people were killed by mobs in 2016; 50 in 2017; 39 in 2018; 65 in 2019; 35 in 2020; 28 in 2021; 36 in 2022; 51 in 2023; and 32 between January and July last year. From August to December last year, at least 96 people were killed by mobs, ASK data shows.

This year, at least 83 people had been beaten to death by mobs.

WARNINGS IN VAIN

Time and again, the advisory council members made statements against mob violence. But the warnings fell on deaf ears.

On September 19, 2024, Adviser Asif Nazrul said the government would not tolerate mob violence or extrajudicial killings.

The same day, Home Adviser Jahangir said, "If anyone commits any crimes, then the person should be handed over to the law enforcers. You have no right to take the law into your hands."

On March 6, he said, "The government is taking legal action against mob violence whenever and wherever it occurs."

On February 10, Mahfuj Alam said the government adopted a firm stance against "so-called movements and mob drills".

The following month, he said, "From now on, the government will take a strict stance against any form of 'mob justice'."

Contacted, Lawyer Sara Hossain said, "We see government inaction in every case. They say that they won't tolerate it. But what does non-tolerance even mean?"

"The home ministry should take a special initiative given that 179 people have been beaten to death by mobs. Those who were involved in these incidents must be identified. The government should take action

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Water has accumulated at the under-construction extension of Kaptan Bazar Wholesale Kitchen Market in Dhaka. Such a situation has remained for around four years. The stagnant water, now covered with water hyacinth, has become a potential mosquito breeding ground amid rising concerns over mosquito-borne diseases. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Mob violence erodes rule of law, human dignity

30 eminent citizens condemn attack on ex-CEC Nurul Huda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty eminent citizens yesterday strongly condemned the recent mob violence against former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) KM Nurul Huda and called on the government to take immediate legal action against those involved.

They also demanded a fair and transparent investigation into the allegations against Nurul Huda, ensuring justice in line with constitutional and international human rights standards.

In a joint statement, the 30 signatories expressed deep concern over the rising trend of mob violence in the country and urged the government, law enforcement agencies, and political parties to firmly oppose such acts of lawlessness.

They warned that these incidents undermine the rule of law, human rights, and individual dignity, regardless of the nature of the allegations.

Referring to the incident on June 22 in Dhaka's Uttara, the statement said a group of people forcibly entered Nurul Huda's residence, dragged him outside, and publicly humiliated him by placing a garland of shoes around his neck.

The incident followed a case filed against him by a

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'Bekar, Janata, Nagorik'

Parties seeking EC registration share common buzzwords; many bear unusual names

AHMED DEEPTO

Ahead of the upcoming 13th national parliamentary election, a total of 147 political parties have applied for registration with the Election Commission (EC), several of them with rather unusual names.

According to EC officials reviewing the submissions, this year's list includes names that are odd, whimsical, and difficult to interpret.

Among the applicants are parties with names such as Bangladesh Janapriyo Party (Popular Party), Nakful Bangladesh (Nosepin Bangladesh), Bangladesh Solution Party, Bangladesh Best Political Party, Bangladesh Sangrami Voter Party (Resilient Voter Party), and Bangladesh Bekar Shamaj – BABES (Bangladesh Unemployed Society).

"Some of these names are so weird and confusing, we're struggling to understand what they even mean," said an official involved in compiling the list.

One such example is a party named Bangladesh Pak Panjatan Party.

Several lesser-known political groups with unique and diverse names have also applied for registration,

Among the 147 parties that applied for registration in two phases, three have included the word 'Bekar' (Unemployed) in their names. 'Janata' (People) appears in the names of 17 parties, while 'Nagorik' (Citizen) features in six.

including Bangladesh Shangskarbadi Party (Reformist Party), Noitik Shomaj (Moral Society), Bangladesh Green Party, Bangladesh Public Action Party, Bangladesh Shantir Dal (Party of Peace), Desh Bachao Manush Bachao Andolan (Save the country, save the people

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RAPE CHARGES Two SUST students expelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Sylhet

Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) authorities have expelled two students for life over charges of raping a female student of the university and filming the incident.

The decision was made at an emergency syndicate meeting held yesterday. Syndicate member Abdul Quiyum Chowdhury confirmed the matter.

He said the university's disciplinary committee recommended the permanent expulsion of Shanto Tara Adnan and Swagato Dash Partha, both third-year students of the sociology department.

"The syndicate has approved the recommendation," he added.

The meeting also discussed the need for enhanced security measures on campus in light of the incident.

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9 hurt as pro-BNP factions clash at Nagar Bhaban

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least nine people were injured in a clash between two factions of pro-BNP Shramik Karmachari Union at the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) headquarters, Nagar Bhaban, yesterday.

The clash broke out around 12:00pm between supporters of Arifuzzaman Prince and Arif Chowdhury, president of another faction loyal to Ishraqe Hossain.

Tensions flared when a supporter of Prince was allegedly assaulted for being perceived as opposing the movement demanding BNP leader Ishraqe's swearing-in as DSCC mayor.

According to DMCH police camp in-charge Md Faruk, nine injured were taken to the hospital. Two – Monir Hossain and Mohidul Islam – were admitted with serious injuries.

Prince claimed they were holding a peaceful rally when they were attacked. Arif, however, accused Prince's group of launching an unprovoked attack, injuring at least five of his members.

Later, Ishraqe's supporters held a sit-in at Nagar Bhaban. He visited the injured at DMCH and blamed Prince and his supporters, calling them "collaborators of fascism" and "beneficiaries of the Awami League era."

Sources said internal rifts and competition over leadership in the pro-Ishraqe movement triggered the clash.

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A young woman splashes water on her head to get some relief amid the scorching heat. The photo was taken at the TSC on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

'July fighters' to receive allowance from next month Says liberation war affairs adviser

CATEGORY	CLASSIFICATION	MONTHLY ALLOWANCE	ONE-TIME GRANT
Martyrs' Families	Killed during the uprising	Tk 20,000	Tk 30 lakh
Category A FIGHTERS	Severely injured; can't live independently (e.g., blind, limb loss)	Tk 20,000	Tk 5 lakh
Category B FIGHTERS	Partially disabled (e.g., one eye/leg lost)	Tk 15,000	Tk 3 lakh
Category C FIGHTERS	Recovered fully after treatment	Tk 10,000	Tk 1 lakh

BSS, Dhaka

The July fighters of the student people uprising will get an allowance from next month, said Liberation War Affairs Adviser Faruk e Azam.

"In addition to the monthly allowance, fighters injured during the July uprising will receive lifelong free treatment at government hospitals," he told the Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) in an exclusive interview at the Secretariat on Monday.

He said it took 54 years to prepare the list of genuine freedom fighters of 1971,

but the current interim government finalised the list of martyrs and injured victims of the July uprising in just seven to eight months – a reflection of its sincerity and sense of responsibility.

The adviser said the government is also introducing rehabilitation programmes for injured fighters to help them find employment or start businesses based on their qualifications.

A separate department has been set up under the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs for this purpose, with 20 officials appointed and working under an

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China hopes for free, fair election in Bangladesh

Says the country's vice foreign minister during meeting with BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chinese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Sun Weidong yesterday expressed hope for a free and fair election in Bangladesh and conveyed its willingness to work with the country's future government.

The statement came during a meeting with a visiting Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) delegation at 11:00am (Bangladesh time).

Led by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, the delegation discussed various aspects of bilateral cooperation.

Fakhrul urged China to continue its support for Bangladesh in

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36-day programme announced for July uprising anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government has chalked up 36 days of events to commemorate the martyrs of the July Uprising as part of observing one year of the mass movement that toppled the Sheikh Hasina led Awami League government on August 5, 2024.

Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, during a briefing at the Chief Adviser's office yesterday, said the government will construct monuments in all district headquarters to commemorate those who sacrificed their lives during the mass uprising, with their names inscribed on the monument of the respective district.

Later, the chief adviser's press wing also announced a 36 day commemorative programme titled "July Remembrance Celebration", which will begin on July 1 and continue till August 5, with intermittent events held throughout this period.

On July 1, prayers will be held for the martyrs at mosques, temples, pagodas, churches, and other places of worship. Also, a July Calendar will be released, and a mass signature campaign will be launched on the same day, demanding justice for the martyrs and trials for those responsible for the killings.

A scholarship in memory of the July martyrs will also be introduced at the National University on July 1.

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'No one can take law into own hands'

Rizvi reiterates BNP's stance against mob violence

UNB, Dhaka

Reaffirming their party's stance against the culture of mob violence, BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday said no one has the right to take the law into their own hands.

"The case filed against three Election Commissions will proceed according to the law. But no one has the right to take the law into their own hands," he said.

The BNP leader made the remarks while talking to reporters after paying homage to party founder Ziaur Rahman by placing a wreath at his grave, along with the leaders of BNP's newly formed Brahmanbaria district unit committee.

He said BNP has filed a case against those who destroyed democracy and the electoral system, conducted votes at night and held a dummy election without



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New boats and fishing traps are being transported on a rickshaw-van over the Chalan Beel No-9 bridge in Tarash upazila of Sirajganj, along the Natore-Dhaka highway. With rainwater beginning to fill the beel, local fishermen are preparing for the fishing season by buying boats and traps. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

State-appointed lawyers must be capable, independent

Says Toby Cadman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Toby Cadman, special adviser to the chief prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT), yesterday said judges must ensure any state-appointed defence lawyer has the necessary experience and ability to represent an accused properly and independently.

He made the comment at a media briefing when asked about criticism over

the controversy began after Advocate Aminul was appointed on June 19

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Woman killed in elephant attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A woman was killed in an attack by wild elephant at Chhaiyarkhali in Chakaria upazila of Cox's Bazar on Monday night.

The deceased is Ismat Ara Begum, 35, said Mehraj Uddin, range officer of Fashiakhali Range.

He said the couple, Ismat Ara and Mohammad Alamgir, lived in a makeshift hut surrounded by polythene and cloth. Around 11:30pm on Monday, a wild elephant suddenly entered their hut and attacked the housewife. Ismat Ara died on the spot.

Both of them -- Shahinur Rahman,

COX'S BAZAR SEA BEACH Recent drownings raise concern

Expose gaps in safety measures



Lifeguards in rescue operation at the beach recently.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

MOKAMMEL SHUVO, Cox's Bazar

In a shocking video that went viral recently, a tourist was seen struggling against strong waves to save his son from drowning in the sea in front of a beach resort in the Kolatoli area of Cox's Bazar.

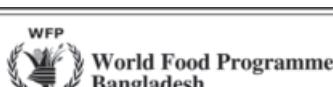
A jet-ski operator attempted several times to rescue them but failed. About five minutes later, lifeguards from the Sea Safe Lifeguard Project under the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh (CIPRB), said, "We need equipment like jet-skis and beach bikes to reach drowning spots quickly. In this case, it took five minutes to reach the victims, and every second counts in such an emergency scenario. There's also no medical centre along the beach to provide immediate first aid."

The jet-ski operator failed to save the victims due to strong waves, instability, and a lack of rescue training.

The incident was not an isolated

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

SALE NOTICE



World Food Programme
Bangladesh

The United Nations World Food Programme intends to sale old and obsolete items (Computer, Telecommunication and Office Equipment, Security & Safety Equipment, Temporary Building Materials and Workshop Tools" in several lots on "as is where is" basis. The items/materials will be on display between 09:00-16:00 hrs. during 29-30 June 2025 at the Madhu Chara Hub, Ukhia, under its Cox's Bazar Area Office. Interested bidder(s) are requested to either collect the necessary documents/forms in person or by sending an email request to bangladesh.tenders@wfp.org mentioning "Request for Documents Sealed Bid (PSB 25-0141)" in the subject line.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)



International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka is inviting interested & bona fide firms to submit proposal to conduct study about the state of play of collective bargaining in Bangladesh under LAWC cluster.

The RFP documents along with detail Terms of Reference can be downloaded from the *United Nations Global Market Place (UNGM)* at <https://www.unm.org/Public/Notice/270229>

The deadline for submission of proposal is **Tuesday, July 15, 2025, by 04:30 PM (BST time).**

রেজিস্ট্রার দণ্ডন
যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
যশোর-৭৪০৮, বাংলাদেশ



Office of the Registrar
Science and Technology
Jashore-7408, Bangladesh

স্মারক নং- যাবিদারি/মেজি/সন্দেশ/জনবল/১০০২(৮)-২০২৫-১১৭০

পুনৰ্গুণ্য বিজ্ঞপ্তি

যশোর বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ভেটেরিনারী মেডিসিন অনুষদের নিম্নলিখিত নির্মাণে বৰ্তিত শৰ্টসালেকে বাংলাদেশের হাতী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দৰখাত আহবান কৰা যাচ্ছে।

তাৰিখ: ১০ জুন, ২০২৫

মেজি কেন্দ্ৰ: ৫৫৫০০-৯৮৮০০/- (৮ৰ্থ প্রেছ)

সহকাৰী অধ্যাপক, ০১টি হাতী পদ (যোগ্য অধ্যাপক নিয়োগ দেওকাৰ হৈ)

মেজি কেন্দ্ৰ: ৫০০০০-৯১২০০/- (৮ৰ্থ প্রেছ)

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মেজি কেন্দ্ৰ: ৫০০০০-৬৭০১০/- (৮ৰ্থ প্রেছ)

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মেজি কেন্দ্ৰ: ২২০০০-৫০৬০/- (৮ৰ্থ প্রেছ)

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মেজি কেন্দ্ৰ: ২২০০০-৫০

Iran working to restore nuke programme Says the country's atomic energy chief

AGENCIES

Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, has said the country is evaluating the damage inflicted on its nuclear programme and planning to rehabilitate it.

"We have taken the necessary measures and are currently assessing the areas that were damaged," Eslami said in a statement carried by Iran's Mehr news.

"Preparations for recovery had already been anticipated, and our plan is to prevent any interruption in production or services," he said.

After President Donald Trump bragged US strikes had "obliterated" Iran's nuclear capabilities, officials cautioned it was still too soon to assess the impact on the country's nuclear programme.

Many questions remain after Sunday's strikes, especially about the whereabouts of Iran's sensitive stockpile of uranium

With 60pc enriched uranium and a few hundred advanced centrifuges, Iran still has the capability to pursue weaponisation

enriched to 60 percent -- a short step from the 90 percent required for a nuclear weapon, reports AFP.

Before the attacks, Iran had about 22,000 centrifuges -- the machines used to enrich uranium. Many of them were damaged when Natanz was hit, the IAEA head said.

With "60 percent enriched uranium and a few hundred advanced centrifuges, Iran still has the capability to weaponise, and now there is more political impetus to dash for a bomb," said Kelsey Davenport, an expert with the Arms Control Association, told AFP.

Before the conflict, the IAEA said it had "no indication" of the existence of a "systematic programme" in Iran to produce a nuclear weapon. But without access to nuclear sites, the agency no longer has oversight.



Mourners react during the funeral of Palestinians killed by Israeli fire while attempting to receive aid in central Gaza, at Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

ISRAEL-IRAN CONFLICT Trump claims a 'forever' peace in land of forever wars

CNN ONLINE

So much for the quagmire. Donald Trump seems to have emerged from the worst crisis in America's estrangement with Iran's Islamic Republic with a win.

The president leaped on Tehran's modest missile response Monday to the US pounding of its nuclear sites as a sign it wants to end escalations. "CONGRATULATIONS WORLD, IT'S TIME FOR PEACE!" he posted on Truth Social.

Trump's exuberance was a sign that he sees the US involvement in the conflict as over, at least for now.

And he followed up by announcing a ceasefire between Iran and Israel due to come into force later yesterday.

Ceasefires in the Middle East are often fragile and fleeting, as was underscored by attacks by both Israel and Iran in the hours before the truce was due to be established.

But the president was already trumpeting his chosen image as a peacemaker and consummate deal maker, only 48 hours after US stealth bombers slammed Iran.

"I think the ceasefire is unlimited. It's going to go forever," Trump told NBC News on Monday night, predicting that Israel and Iran will never "be shooting at each other again."

That's a bold claim given the Middle East's reputation as a graveyard of American presidencies.

And for all Trump's marketing skills, events will decide whether his breakthrough is for real or just another illusion, say analysts.

Has the United States, as Trump claimed, really ensured the "obliteration" of Iran's nuclear program, an existential threat to Israel? Or is it all a classic Trump mirage, and does the glaring unfinished business of this conflict -- an apparently missing stockpile of highly enriched uranium that can be quickly made into a bomb -- mean a deeper crisis looms?

A quick end to the fighting would shape Trump's presidency and legacy and boost a foreign policy previously marked by failures like the stalled peace effort in Ukraine.



Rescuers carry an injured woman at the site of a building damaged by a Russian missile strike in Dnipropetrovsk region, Ukraine yesterday. "The number of dead as a result of the attack has risen to nine. Around 70 people were wounded, including 10 children," the regional governor Sergiy Lysak announced on social media. PHOTO: REUTERS

4 rights groups slam assault on father and son

FROM PAGE 2

incidents. It demanded thorough investigations into every such case to bring the perpetrators to justice and called for immediate, strict measures to ensure such incidents do not recur.

Shujan (Shushashoner Jonno Nagarik), in its statement, expressed concern that the wave of mob violence across the country, which began after the July uprising last year, is now spiralling out of control. It said the June 22 incident in Lalmonirhat raises serious questions about the role of the police.

"We strongly condemn these incidents and urge the government to conduct impartial investigations, identify those responsible, and bring them to justice. If such actions are not taken, mob violence will gradually evolve into mob culture," it said.

Our Correspondent from Lalmonirhat reports: The family of the barber and his son left the town yesterday after hearing that a rally was being organised there and

fearing further attacks.

Bishnu's wife, Dipi Rani Shil, who visited the two in jail, said the incident stemmed from a dispute over payment.

"Nazmul paid Tk 10 less for a haircut and argued with my father-in-law [Paresh]. He left after threatening to 'teach him a lesson'. Two days later, false rumours of religious defamation started spreading, which led to the assault and their arrest.

"My father-in-law was beaten mercilessly. When my husband tried to protect him, he too was attacked. Both were later arrested. Now they're in jail, and my two daughters, mother-in-law, and I have left home in fear of further attacks."

On June 20, Nazmul Islam, 19, from Balatari village in Aditmari upazila, alleged that Paresh and Bishnu made remarks offending his religious sentiments while he was getting a haircut at their shop.

Meanwhile, a video circulating on social media since the arrests shows Mohammad Nurnabi, officer-in-charge of

Lalmonirhat Sadar Police Station, saying, "As the OC, it's my duty to maintain law and order. But this incident set my heart on fire. Like you, I had tears in my eyes too. How can someone act with such arrogance in this country? I give you my word, now that I've arrested them [Paresh and Bishnu], I will file a case that ensures either life imprisonment or the death penalty."

The footage has in the meantime sparked outrage among netizens who are questioning how a law enforcer can determine such punishment.

The OC yesterday told the Prothom Alo that he made the comments to bring the situation under control at that time and that there was no other motive behind his statement.

Speaking to The Daily Star, he said, "We are investigating the matter to uncover the facts. So far, the protests have been peaceful. Police are on alert to prevent any untoward incident, and ensure the safety of the accused's family."

US top court allows 3rd country deportations to resume

AFP, Washington

A divided US Supreme Court paved the way on Monday for the Trump administration to resume deportations of undocumented migrants to countries that are not their own.

The unsigned order from the conservative-dominated top court came in response to an emergency appeal by the Justice Department to lift a stay imposed by a lower court on so-called third country deportations.

The Supreme Court did not provide an explanation for the decision and the three liberal justices dissented. The original case challenging the third country deportations will now be heard by an appeals court but the Supreme Court's move allows the removals to proceed for now.

District Judge Brian Murphy had ordered a halt to third country deportations in April, saying migrants were not being given a "meaningful opportunity" to contest their expulsions.

Murphy said they should get at least 15 days to challenge their deportation and provide evidence of whether they may be at risk of torture or death if expelled.

US House bans WhatsApp service from staff devices

REUTERS, Washington

Meta Platforms' WhatsApp messaging service has been banned from all US House of Representatives devices, according to a memo sent to all House staff on Monday.

The notice said the "Office of Cybersecurity has deemed WhatsApp a high risk to users due to the lack of transparency in how it protects user data, absence of stored data encryption, and potential security risks involved with its use."

The memo, from the chief administrative officer, recommended using other messaging apps, including Microsoft Corp's Teams platform, Amazon.com's Wickr, Signal, and Apple's iMessage and FaceTime.

Meta disagreed with the move "in the strongest possible terms," a company spokesperson said, noting that the platform provides a higher level of security than the other approved apps.

 BANGLADESH KRIRA SHIKKHA PROTISHTHAN (BKSP) ZIRANI, SAVAR, DHAKA.																													
Date: 24 th June, 2025																													
REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REOI)																													
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J. 24.06.2025
Md. Rakibul Hassan
Executive Engineer, BKSP
Zirani, Savar, Dhaka.

No alternative to Israel-Iran ceasefire

As the side responsible for starting war, onus lies on Israel to end it

There is no denying that Israel, having started the war based on a false claim that Iran was on the verge of acquiring nuclear weapons, bears primary responsibility for ending it. Not only did it impose the war unilaterally, but it also manipulated the US into joining it. What followed then—with US bombers dropping 30,000 pound bunker-buster bombs on three Iranian nuclear facilities, and Iran responding by threatening to close the Strait of Hormuz and carrying out strikes on a US military base—had the world sitting on the edge of its seat. The dramatic announcement of a ceasefire early Tuesday only underscored how dangerously close the world came to a wider, multi-front, and far more impactful war. Donald Trump, despite having lost any credibility to be a moral voice in this crisis, has urged both sides not to violate the truce.

Moreover, both sides certainly cannot be held to the same standards of responsibility. Still, given the deaths, destruction, and disruptions the war has already caused, we do hope both will exercise the restraint now expected of them. Israel, with a perpetually battle-ready leadership, may be on the lookout for any excuse, real or manufactured, to derail the peace effort. Early signs show how fragile it can be. Soon after the ceasefire announcement, Israel's military accused Iran of breaking the truce by launching two ballistic missiles—an allegation the latter denied. But the Zionist state still vowed to retaliate. So, while we welcome the ceasefire initiative that both sides had agreed to, we must acknowledge the persistent lack of trust and goodwill that may undermine any chance of peace.

We don't need to remind anyone of the wider risks and costs associated with the war, not just in the countries it is being fought. Since June 13, Israeli attacks killed 606 people and wounded 5,332 in Iran as of Monday. Israel had far fewer but still significant losses. But as we have noted in this column before, the war has already left a trail of uncertainty across the global oil markets and supply chains which, should armed hostilities persist, would continue to ripple far beyond the Middle East, reaching even Bangladesh. Bangladesh's energy sector may come under significant threat if the war escalates and Iran follows through on its threat to block the Strait of Hormuz. Already, our LPG shipments have been reported to be stalled. Most developing countries will be similarly affected if the war continues.

There is no alternative to a permanent ceasefire then. This unjust war that two hegemonic, nuclear-armed states have imposed on Iran must stop, and civilians and the world in general must be shielded from its effects. The onus lies on Israel, and its enablers, to ensure the ceasefire remains firmly in place.

We must stop culture of domestic abuse

State's failure to stop intimate partner violence unacceptable

We are alarmed by the high rate of domestic violence that women in the country have to endure throughout their lives. According to a recent survey by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), about 82 percent of women in Barishal and 81 percent of women in Khulna have experienced at least one instance of physical, sexual, psychological, or economic violence by a partner or husband in their lifetime. While the rates are highest in these two divisions, women in other divisions are not in any better situation. Approximately 76 percent of women in Chattogram, 75 percent in Mymensingh, around 75 percent in Rajshahi, and 74 percent in Rangpur have also experienced such violence. In the two divisions—Dhaka and Sylhet—where such violence was found to be comparatively lower, the rate still stands at around 73 percent, highlighting how pervasive intimate partner violence has become.

One of the findings of the survey report—that the rate of domestic violence is higher in disaster-prone areas—deserves particular attention. According to an expert, in disaster-prone areas, men often leave home in search of work, and during their absence, women are burdened with increasing household responsibilities and caregiving duties for family members, yet their opinions are not valued in decision-making. This also increases abuse. Unfortunately, very few victims pursue legal action in such cases. For instance, although Barishal has the highest rate of domestic violence, legal action is taken in only 6 percent of the cases, as the survey reveals.

Over the years, multiple studies have been conducted to assess the extent of domestic violence in the country, all of which came up with similarly alarming results. Data rarely seems to influence policy responses or measures. Even society in general still seems not ready to acknowledge the incidence of domestic violence and the many damaging repercussions of rising levels of physical and sexual violence—including rape—both in homes and public spaces. Only the other day, we commented on how marriage is being used as a cover-up for rape. Such practices and vulnerabilities must end so that women can live with safety and dignity. We have the necessary laws and policies in place, which should be enforced effectively. The state should also take effective steps to inform and enable women about their legal rights in such cases.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Korean War begins



On this day in 1950, North Korea unleashed an attack southward across the 38th parallel, after which the UN Security Council (minus the Soviet delegate) passed a resolution calling on UN members to assist South Korea.

How do we avoid a debt trap?



Dr. Selim Raihan is a professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Dhaka and executive director at the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM). He can be reached at selim.raihan@condua.ac.bd

SELIM RAIHAN

Bangladesh's external debt has doubled since 2017, standing at approximately \$100 billion in 2024. This accelerated growth indicates a significant turn in the country's economic direction. Most of this borrowing has gone towards financing large-scale infrastructure projects, supported by bilateral and multilateral sources. However, the pace and magnitude of this debt increase are a cause for concern regarding long-term financial stability. There is apprehension about the country's ability to repay and service this debt, especially in the face of threats from the prevailing global economic environment, rising interest rates, dwindling concessional loans, and stressed domestic economic and political situations.

The country's development spending has also increased, mostly in transport, energy, and connectivity. The investment, however, has not yielded the desired returns due to a chain of inefficiencies. In the meantime, the global situation has worsened, further taxing the country's economy. These external pressures, in addition to internal problems, necessitate Bangladesh's shift towards a more strategic approach to debt management, where borrowed capital is employed effectively and efficiently to promote sustainable growth. Also, emphasis on avoiding mismanagement and corruption will be essential in maximising the economic dividend of foreign borrowings and placing the country's financial situation on a firm footing.

The debt bubble is ominous, given Bangladesh's narrow export base and heavy reliance on remittance inflows. The country's main foreign income source, garment exports, has not kept pace with rising import costs, further adding pressure on the current account deficit. With Bangladesh graduating from its least developed country (LDC) status, concessional finance will no longer be as readily available as before, and debt repayment will become that much harder. Dependence on one export sector also makes the economy perilously vulnerable to risk, particularly during uncertain global trading times. However, attempts at



FILE VISUAL: SHAIKH SULTANA JAHAN BADHON

export diversification have so far yielded nothing spectacular, and the economy remains vulnerable to external shocks. The remittance flows, as large as they have been, have also been unstable and unpredictable, which has helped push the financial scene into volatility. Strategic policy measures for dealing with such issues entail reinforcing export diversification, improving investment efficiency, and tapping alternative sources of foreign funding to achieve sustainable economic growth and stability.

The accumulation of debt can badly hinder the government from withstanding economic shocks and confronting crises. With foreign debt amounting to nearly \$100 billion now, the necessity for thorough tracking and risk evaluation cannot be overemphasised. The country needs a strategic roadmap to ensure that borrowed resources, when wisely invested, generate sustainable returns. Good debt management requires transparent methods, prudent investment decisions, and continuous

overspending, and mismanagement were reported in some of the costly development projects. Corruption not only squanders borrowed capital but also undermines project quality and economic return. Such misdoings erode debt sustainability even further as they divert resources away from productive employment. Consolidation of control and the introduction of a proper monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework into future initiatives are vital to re-establish trust and gain maximum benefit from foreign lending.

The misplacement of borrowed capital through corrupt means in Bangladesh's development is highly distressing. Abuse of borrowed capital deprives the country of economic growth, which is essential for repaying loans. This forms a vicious circle of debt growth with no economic return, increasing fiscal weakness. Fighting corruption requires a comprehensive framework consisting of robust legal measures, oversight, and a vibrant civil society. These

long term stable growth.

Bangladesh's escalating external debt, while primarily channelled into infrastructure, presents a multifaceted challenge to the country's financial outlook. Navigating this complex landscape requires a concerted effort to fortify the economic bedrock, ensuring that foreign capital genuinely underpins resilient growth rather than perpetuating vulnerabilities. A robust framework centred on prudent fiscal stewardship, diversification beyond narrow export sectors, and unwavering commitment to governance will be paramount for Bangladesh to convert its borrowings into sustained prosperity and secure its long term financial health. Additionally, addressing inefficiencies in development expenditure and enhancing transparency in project management are crucial steps. Effective use of borrowed funds, coupled with strategic policy reforms, is essential for Bangladesh to avoid falling into a debt trap and to achieve stable, sustainable growth.

The human cost of Bangladesh's dangerous roads



Nafeew Sajed Joy is a writer, researcher, and environmentalist. He can be reached at nafeew.sajed@gmail.com.

NAFEW SAJED JOY

Eid-ul-Azha, a festival of family unity and sacrifice, was marred this year—as it has been for many years—by a tragic undercurrent: avoidable deaths on the road. One story stands out among the growing number of casualties. A teenager, from a remote area, was travelling to Dhaka with his father to sell their sacrificial cow. A road accident claimed his father's life. Devastated and alone, the teenager buried his father, then continued his journey to sell the cow. This story reflects not just one individual's tragedy, but deep societal failures, where survival has taken precedence over mourning and road safety is consistently neglected. It highlights a profound national dysfunction: the economy of survival outweighs the right to grieve, while the failure of road safety continues to claim lives with alarming frequency.

According to the Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity's Road Accident Monitoring Cell, 379 road accidents claimed 390 lives and left 1,182 others injured this year. This marks a sharp rise compared to 2024, which saw 309 accidents, 336 deaths, and 762 injuries—a 22.65 percent increase in accidents, a 16.07 percent rise in fatalities, and a 55.11 percent surge in injuries. Motorcycles were the most vulnerable, accounting for 35.35

percent of all crashes. In 2023, 312 road accidents during Eid-ul-Azha resulted in 340 deaths and 569 injuries. Eid-ul-Fitr this year was similarly tragic, with 315 accidents, 322 fatalities, and 826 injuries. Rail and water routes also saw fatalities, bringing the total to 340 accidents, 352 deaths, and 835 injuries across all transport routes.

The surge in motorcycle use highlights the country's road safety crisis. A decade ago, there were about 1.5 million motorcycles. Today, over 6 million crowd the streets. Alongside them, 6 million battery-powered rickshaws operate largely unregulated. This increase has overwhelmed both infrastructure and oversight. Many motorcycles are driven by unlicensed, untrained youths—some even teenagers. In 2021, students made up 13 percent of road fatalities, highlighting a dangerous lack of safety education.

The Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), responsible for regulating this chaos, faces criticism for inefficiency and corruption. Its focus remains on revenue, registrations, taxes, and renewals, rather than enforcing road safety. Traffic police, often underpaid and overstretched, view fines as income rather than a deterrent. Highways lack pedestrian safety features, and road

audits are infrequent.

Despite the student-led road safety protests in 2018, which subsequently brought the passage of the Road Transport Act, 2018, enforcement remains inconsistent. The act introduced stricter penalties and a point-based licensing system for repeat offenders. However, under pressure from transport unions and political lobbies, implementation has been weak. Laws may exist on paper, but the streets of Bangladesh still operate under a kind of informal lawlessness.

This issue is more than just transport; it's symptomatic of deep governance failure. According to the World Bank (2023), Bangladesh has South Asia's highest road fatality rate, with 102 deaths per 10,000 vehicles, compared to India's 13 and Sri Lanka's 7. What makes this particularly alarming is that Bangladesh has only 18 vehicles per 1,000 people, indicating that the problem lies not in the volume of vehicles, but in how transport is managed. The economic cost is equally grave: the WHO estimates that road crashes cost developing countries up to 3 percent of GDP. For Bangladesh, a country aiming to graduate from least developed country status, this burden is unsustainable.

Moreover, these accidents erode public trust in institutions. When citizens see that road laws are ignored, reckless drivers go unpunished, and victims rarely receive compensation, a culture of impunity develops. The system seems to protect powerful transport owners and syndicates more than ordinary citizens.

What must be done? The first step is firm and transparent enforcement of the

Road Transport Act, 2018, free from political interference. The BRTA must undergo rapid digitisation to eliminate corruption and increase transparency in licensing and vehicle fitness certification. Its primary focus should shift from revenue generation to regulation.

Unlicensed drivers, especially motorcyclists, must be swiftly identified and removed from the roads. The government should invest in short-term awareness campaigns, particularly among young drivers, and enforce the use of helmets and safety gear.

Additionally, the country must invest in safer road infrastructure, such as dedicated lanes for motorcycles, more pedestrian crossings, and separate corridors for heavy and light vehicles. Public transport systems must be revitalised to reduce reliance on dangerous motorcycles and unregulated battery rickshaws.

In the long term, Bangladesh should establish an independent National Road Safety Authority to coordinate across ministries, hold agencies accountable, and create a cohesive national strategy for road safety that extends to 2030 and beyond. Road safety education should be mandatory in schools, and regular road audits must be conducted—not just before Eid or in response to political pressure.

Bangladesh has demonstrated time and again that it can overcome enormous challenges when the political will exists. The road safety crisis demands that same urgency and determination. Until then, the roads will continue to run red—not from traffic lights, but from the blood of its citizens.

Israel, Iran and the US: A game of war and peace



Ramisa Rob
is Geopolitical Insights Editor at The Daily Star.

RAMISA ROB

After a historic, unprecedented direct bombing by the US on Iranian nuclear sites, including Fordow, on June 21, the world awaited Iran's response. On June 23, Iran responded by striking the largest US military base in the Middle East, Al-Udeid, in Qatar, with prior warning given to Qatar to minimise casualties. Satellite images captured by Planet Labs, a San Francisco-based Earth imaging company, further corroborated that the base was nearly empty of aircraft ahead of the attack. While the US used Massive Ordnance Penetrator bunker busters and Tomahawk cruise missiles, Iran's reprisal was limited in scope. Trump thanked Iran in a post on Truth Social after the strikes for giving early warning, and hours after, Trump announced a ceasefire between Israel and Iran. The world sitting at the edge of its seat as Iran hit US base, witnessed panic of wider war turn into a path for peace within hours.

Iran's limited retaliation echoes their previous response to the US assassination of Maj Gen Qassem Suleimani in 2020. The country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei vowed a "forceful revenge." But days later, when Iran fired a series of ballistic missiles at US troops in Iraq, it gave Iraq's prime minister at the time, Adel Abdul Mahdi, prior notice of the impending attack.

But whether the current course of events will follow the course of 2020, cannot be said

Since Trump's announcement of a ceasefire with a 24-hour deadline, Israel said it identified missiles launched from Iran in the early morning of June 24 with one slamming into a residential building in the southern region that left three dead. Iranian state media also reported Israel launched fresh attacks on Iran's capital Tehran overnight.

with certainty.

Iran's retaliation came a day after Trump took a turn from war on Iran's nuclear programme, to confusingly embracing the regime change rhetoric pursued by Israel in its actions. An audio recording obtained



Traces are seen in the sky after Iran's armed forces say they targeted the Al-Udeid base in a missile attack, as seen from Doha, Qatar on June 23, 2025.

PHOTO: REUTERS

by *The Washington Post* revealed the covert campaign—carried out alongside its strikes—by Israeli intelligence to divide Iranian military officials and push for regime change. The audio recording shows an Israeli intelligence official threatening an unnamed Iranian general on June 13, when Israel began the strikes: "I can advise you now, you have 12 hours to escape with your wife and child." The overall operation, dubbed "Rising Lion" by the Israeli government, relied on the activation of clandestine intelligence teams, pre-positioned weapons caches and other capabilities that had lain dormant inside Iranian territory for weeks or even months, Israeli officials told *The Washington Post*.

After joining Israel's strikes and directly involving the US, Trump posted on Truth Social on June 22, stating, "It's not politically correct to use the term 'Regime Change.' He added, "But if the current Iranian Regime is unable to MAKE IRAN GREAT AGAIN,

been pushing for. Yet, according to *Time* magazine, a statement—by advocates of a democratic Iran that answers to its people—condemned the attack on Iran and voiced "serious opposition to foreign interference." Twice-jailed Isa Saharkhiz, referring to Israel's military assault, said, "it's exactly what the hardliners wanted. Trump's withdrawal from Obama's negotiation pact had emboldened Iranian hardliners who in April alone carried out at least 110 executions, and crowded Evin Prison with political prisoners—some of whom were reportedly injured by Israel's strike on the facility.

Since Trump's announcement of a ceasefire with a 24-hour deadline, Israel said it identified missiles launched from Iran in the early morning of June 24 with one slamming into a residential building in the southern region that left three dead. Iranian state media also reported Israel launched fresh attacks on Iran's capital Tehran overnight. The deputy

its response to Israel, provided it "stops its illegal aggression against the Iranian people." Hours later, on June 24, Israel agreed to the ceasefire. Netanyahu claimed to have achieved "all aims" of its campaign against Iran, according to an official statement, which also mentioned that all "imminent threats" of a nuclear Iran have been removed. And nearly minutes after the world breathed a sigh of relief, Israel's Defense Minister Katz announced that Israel had detected Iranian strikes—though it's unclear which strikes he refers to—and said he instructed the Israel Defense Forces to "respond forcefully to Iran's violation of the ceasefire with intense strikes against regime targets in the heart of Tehran." Iranian state media has refuted such allegations, saying that Iran has not violated the ceasefire.

Things are changing rapidly, from extreme war and peace, like a dizzying game of chess. It's unclear what Israel's aims were in the first

place—as there was no evidence of "imminent" nuclear threats, and Israel deployed a great deal to weaken the Iranian regime. The exact damages to Iran's nuclear sites, by the US, are also not confirmed. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth had said that the US bombs "obliterated" Iran's nuclear ambitions, while Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen Dan Caine said that it will "take some time" to assess how much damage has been done. A high-level European weapons systems and ballistics expert told ABC News that it seems "highly unlikely" that the bombs detonated in close vicinity to Fordow's underground structure, based on the calculated performance of the GBU-57, or the "bunker buster" bomb, as the bomb cannot penetrate more than 65 feet while Fordow enrichment site was up to nearly 300 feet beneath the ground.

The exact terms of the ceasefire deal, brokered by Qatar and the US, are not known, so "peace and harmony," as Donald Trump claims, stands on ice. For Iran to come to the negotiating table, a lot more damage has to be repaired. And if the ceasefire has already collapsed, they're back to square one. The tense situation calls into question: can peace be achieved with war in the first place? The past 12 days have significantly blemished international diplomacy and it cannot be fixed within minutes after the full-blown unprecedented violent exchanges within two nations, that have been in a shadow war for over a year.

The Islamic Republic is weakened, but Iran still holds a range of cards in its own target deck. Middle East security expert Burcu Ozcelik at the UK's Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) told CBS News, "Unlike Iran's targeting of Israel, which is far more difficult geographically due to the distance, Iran's stockpile of arsenals of short-range ballistic missiles makes American military installations in the Gulf more vulnerable. They're softer targets in that sense." Iraq, which shares a nearly 1,000 mile porous border with Iran to the east, "tends to be seen as the next potential frontline in where the conflict can escalate," she said, because of "a number of Iran-linked Shia paramilitary groups" that may act independently from the Iranian government. Such groups have in the past attacked the US Al Asad Air Base in Iraq and the US embassy in Baghdad.

Before US airstrikes, Iran had warned Trump that it might activate terrorist "sleeper cells" inside the US if it were attacked, sources said. Major cities in the US remain on high alert. The New York Police Department, the nation's largest municipal police force, issued security advisories and increased patrols around religious, cultural and diplomatic sites the night of US airstrikes. The Department of Homeland Security issued warnings all across the nation. The dangers are high; and each nation's civilians are at risk from further military activity. What remains urgent is a strong call-to-action by the international community to de-escalate; any sort of cessation of violence will likely be temporary.

Israel manipulated the US into war

And why it's a long-term loss for the US



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is associate professor in the Department of English and Modern Languages at the International University of Business Agriculture and Technology (IUBAT).

MD KAWSAR UDDIN

On June 21, 2025, the US attacked three major nuclear sites of Iran. With these targeted strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities, the US formally joined Israel in its war against Iran. The decision, authorised by Donald Trump, may have been justified publicly under the banner of "national security," but make no mistake, it wasn't America's war. It was Israel's war, and Trump was pulled into it.

US President Trump, financially and politically tied to a foreign power, allowed that power to use American military might to settle its own scores. Though he has claimed to have achieved a ceasefire on June 24, 2025, there is long-term damage such entanglements will inflict not just on US credibility, but on its economy, military, and domestic cohesion.

Donald Trump has long branded himself as the most pro-Israel president in US history and this wasn't merely out of ideological conviction. His alignment with Israeli leadership, particularly Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, has always been both strategic and transactional. Behind the scenes, wealthy pro-Israeli donors including figures like businessman and casino owner Sheldon Adelson and other major contributors to Trump-aligned Super PACs have bankrolled his political campaigns. Miriam Adelson's Preserve America PAC is claimed to be the biggest pro-Israeli spender, pouring over \$215 million into US presidential elections to help Trump. These donations didn't come without expectations. In politics,

influence is the return on investment.

Trump's past gestures to Israel went beyond symbolic diplomacy. During his first term, Trump moved the US embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv. He recognised the annexation of the Golan Heights, and brokered the Abraham Accords to push for Israel's normalisation with Arab nations, sidelining Palestinians. He went against his Western allies and pulled the US out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, where Iran agreed to dismantle most of its nuclear programme in exchange for the relief of economic sanctions. Trump's basis was Netanyahu's presentation, claiming he obtained secret Iranian documents that showed "Iran had lied about the extent of its past nuclear weapons programme." Trump bent over backward to align US foreign policy with Netanyahu's interests that often diverged from the US.

So, when Israel launched its first strikes against Iranian targets this year, it wasn't surprising that Netanyahu backhandedly called on Trump to finish the job. The Israeli military lacked the bunker-buster bombs to strike Iran's underground nuclear facility at Fordow. Only the US could do that. It's no secret that Israel's survival strategy relies heavily on military pre-emption. What's new is how explicitly and effectively it has outsourced parts of that strategy to the US military. Israel doesn't just share intelligence with the US; it filters it. Trump's view of Iranian nuclear capabilities was shaped by Israeli briefings, crafted to create a sense of urgency

and fear. Israel's strikes on Iranian military leaders reportedly also killed Ali Shamkhani, a nuclear adviser who was part of the committee for US-Iran nuclear negotiations. Israel's targets were designed not just to disable, but also to derail diplomacy.

This war wasn't inevitable, it was orchestrated. Netanyahu's public support has been collapsing dramatically with polls showing that approximately 60 percent

Prime Minister Modi, who contradicted Trump's claims that he mediated the ceasefire with Pakistan. Netanyahu fed Trump's insatiable hunger to show his power at the right time. Striking Iran gave Trump something to brag about, a short-term "win" that MAGA media could spin.

Trump's base, primarily working-class, anti-interventionist Americans, has tolerated his "shock and awe" tactics in the past. They

how "America First" somehow became "Israel First."

The costs will rise quickly. Oil prices are already climbing. A blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, even temporary, could tip the global economy into recession. Regional allies like Saudi Arabia and the UAE are nervous, not out of sympathy for Iran, but out of fear that their infrastructure could become collateral damage.

This war, if it escalates further, will not bring about regime change in Iran. If anything, US and Israeli strikes are consolidating nationalist sentiment within Iran, making diplomacy even more difficult.

Moreover, this entanglement is exposing the limits of US control. Israel continued assassinating Iranian officials, striking infrastructure, and still pushing for regime change, goals that Trump publicly denied and then embraced. It is Israel pulling him, not the other way around. The tail is wagging the dog. The war is being driven by Tel Aviv, not Washington—the superpower.

And what does the US gain? Nothing but the privilege of paying the bill.

The US is hemorrhaging its moral capital, dragging itself into another endless back-and-forth conflict, and stretching its military thin, all at the request of a "partner" who appears far more committed to its own survival than to US stability or interests. China and Russia, meanwhile, watch gleefully from the sidelines as US credibility burns.

The biggest tragedy in all this is the loss of strategic independence. The US no longer dictates the terms; Netanyahu's Israel does. In the months ahead, we may see a temporary resolution, but we may also witness more attacks, more casualties, and more pressure on Trump to "finish the job." The damage has already begun. The US is no longer acting with calculated self-interest. It is being used. If history teaches us anything, it's that wars built on manipulation don't end well for anyone.



VISUAL: MONOROM POLOK

of Israelis want him to resign. The Israeli leader saw the war with Iran as a way to shift attention and regain control. He has spent most of his political career obsessed with the threat he believes Iran poses to Israel. He has spent much of the last 15 years attempting to persuade the US that only military action could destroy Iran's nuclear weapons programme.

Trump, meanwhile, sought a win. He hadn't succeeded in ending the war in Ukraine, hadn't brokered lasting peace in Gaza, and had been humiliated by Indian

cheered when he took out General Qassem Soleimani. They rallied behind the idea of a quick, decisive strike. But this time is different.

This isn't a one-time strike war. This is a brewing conflict with a state that has powerful proxies, advanced missiles, and real capacity for asymmetric retaliation. Already, 40,000 US service members in the region are vulnerable. And if American blood is spilled—not in a surgical drone strike, but in missile attacks on bases or retaliatory assaults by militias in Iraq—Trump will have more than a public relations problem. He'll have to explain



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

The return of the original OTT & Digital Content Awards

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

GG
This award celebrates the bold and brilliant minds reshaping Bangladeshi entertainment. We're not just awarding talent — we're championing a movement.

Blender's Choice – The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards is back, ready to honour the talents of Bangladesh's dynamic digital entertainment landscape. Presented by Ispaniani and The Daily Star, this year's edition features an expanded and more inclusive lineup of 29 categories, reflecting the growing diversity of content across OTT and digital platforms. Nominations opened yesterday and will remain open until July 20.

A press conference announcing the event was held on Tuesday (June 24). Omar Hannan, General Manager, Ispaniani Tea Ltd; Ajoy Kumar Kundu, CEO, Mediacom Ltd; and Imran Kadir, Head of Marketing, The Daily Star, spearheaded the event. Adding to the excitement, TikTok returns as the Entertainment Partner.

Celebrities, including Azmeri Haque Badhan, Rafaith Rashid Mithila, Yash Rohan, Sharif Siraj, Aditi Rahman Dola, Sarika Sabah, Partho Sheikh, Jahid Nirob, Parsha Mahjabeen Purnee, Masha Islam, Rizvi Rizu, and Saad Salmi Naovi were present at the event.

The award categories include: 9 Popular Choice Awards in Film, Drama, and Series; 4 music categories recognizing originality and impact; 12 jury-selected awards for critical and industry acclaim; 3 content creator awards; and 1 People's Choice Award, voted entirely by the audience.



(From left) Omar Hannan, Ajoy Kumar Kundu and Imran Kadir.

Tajdin Hassan, Chief Business Officer at The Daily Star, stated: "These awards celebrate the bold and brilliant minds reshaping Bangladeshi entertainment. We're not just awarding talent — we're championing a movement."

Echoing this, Omar Hannan of Ispaniani added: "We're proud to support platforms that drive the cultural narrative of Bangladesh forward."

Umais Naveed from TikTok noted: "This partnership reflects our commitment to spotlighting Bangladesh's most innovative digital voices and amplifying their reach."

"OTT has made a significant impact on our entertainment industry. Many actors, especially character artists, struggled to find work in television due to low budgets," shared Azmeri Haque. "OTT platforms have

opened up opportunities for a wider range of roles and given visibility to talented actors who were previously sidelined. As an actor, I see this as a positive shift. Directors now have more creative freedom to explore diverse stories, which has brought a refreshing change to our industry."

Rafath Rashid Mithila also weighed in: "Traditionally, most stories have been told from a male perspective, and women's participation in directing has remained limited. But OTT has started to change that. We're seeing more female-centric characters and narratives told from a woman's point of view, which is crucial," she maintained. "Genres like thrillers and dramas are now exploring these stories in more depth. In *Myself Allen Swapan*, while the plot centers around Allen Swapan, the character Shaita plays a vital role in driving the narrative."

Popular musician Jahid Nirob expressed his excitement about the awards' inclusion of music categories: "This is a really exciting time for musicians in Bangladesh. The introduction of a category for digital music releases in The Blender's Choice – The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards is a big encouragement. It gives recognition to artists like us who work behind the scenes—whether it's composing background scores or releasing fewer songs. Last year, I received several nominations, and this year I'm hopeful again (laughs). It's truly inspiring."

Blackpink to reunite with new track after three-year break

Global K-pop sensation Blackpink will debut a new song during their concert in Goyang on July 5 (KST), launching their *Deadline World Tour*.

YG Entertainment, the group's label, confirmed the track's release, stating, "There were many discussions about how to release this new song. We decided to debut it first at the Goyang concert, which holds significance as the starting point of the *Deadline* tour."

This marks the group's first release since their 2022 hit *Shut Down*. Members Lisa, Jennie, Rosé, and Jisoo have since focused on solo careers.

Recently, Rosé made history by becoming the first female solo artiste to win Bonsang at the Seoul Music Awards and received the World Best Artist Award for her album *Rosé*.



Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt reunite at 'F1' premiere after decades



Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt reunited on the red carpet at the London premiere of *F1*, marking their first public appearance together in 31 years since *Interview with the Vampire* (1994).

Directed by *Top Gun: Maverick's* Joseph Kosinski, *F1* is Pitt's latest racing drama. Kosinski revealed he once pitched a *Ford v Ferrari* film starring both actors, but it was shelved due to budget constraints. Pitt joked he's open to working with Cruise again— "as long as it's on the ground."

Meanwhile, Cruise's *Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning* has grossed over \$540 million worldwide ahead of *F1*'s June 27 release.

NEWS

Court orders seizure of S Alam couple's foreign assets

FROM PAGE 12

residential building in Cyprus, shares of 19 companies in the British Virgin Islands, and shares of six companies in the Jersey Islands.

Of the 19 companies in the British Virgin Islands, Hazel International PTE Limited is owned by S Alam and his wife Farzana, and its market value stands at \$5,95,000.

They also have another company named Peacock Property Holdings Limited, whose market price is not mentioned.

Besides, the couple owns six other companies in the Jersey Islands, whose market value is not mentioned in the ACC applications. Jersey is a self-governing dependency of the

British Crown.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Tahasin Monabil Had, who leads the inquiry team, submitted three applications in this regard.

In the applications, the ACC official said during the inquiry of money laundering by the ACC, credible evidence has emerged indicating that the couple have acquired several moveable and immovable assets (shares in companies) through proceeds of crime, especially utilising funds obtained by illegal means.

"The ACC official came to know from credible sources that the couple was trying to transfer their properties

elsewhere. So, an order is needed to prevent them from doing so," said the ACC in the applications.

The court ordered the authorities to send the copies of the order to the relevant authorities in those countries for the next course of action.

On June 17, the same court ordered the anti graft body to confiscate 200.26 acres of immovable properties owned by S Alam, his family members, and their beneficiaries over corruption allegations.

The market price of the properties is Tk 180.61 crore.

On April 23, the same court ordered the ACC to confiscate 9,646.04 kathas of immovable properties of S Alam, his family members, and their

beneficiaries over graft allegations. The market value of the properties stands at Tk 407.21 crore.

On April 17, the same court directed the graft watchdog to freeze 1,360 bank accounts of them over graft allegations. The accounts have Tk 2,619 crore deposited in them.

It also asked the ACC to confiscate 7,919.52 kathas of immovable properties of S Alam, his family members, and their beneficiaries over April 9.

Besides, on January 30, the court ordered the ACC to confiscate 58 acres of immovable properties belonging to S Alam and his family members in connection with corruption allegations.

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Hearing on charge framing

FROM PAGE 12
and Asaduzzaman, who are currently on the run.

Hasina has been in India since August 5. Police had earlier informed the tribunal, citing newspaper reports, that Asaduzzaman is also believed to be there.

Meanwhile, Mamun's family has appointed Jaiad Bin Amjad as his defence lawyer.

Jaiad began his legal career as an intern under Mohammad Shishir Manir, a former member of the defence team for top Jamaat-e-Islami leaders executed for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War. When Mamun was produced before the tribunal yesterday, his lawyer was present.

The ICT prosecution pressed formal charges against the three on June 1. The tribunal took cognisance of the charges the same day.

They face five counts of crimes against humanity.

The first charge relates to murder, torture, and inhumane acts for allegedly aiding, abetting, and failing to prevent violent attacks by law enforcers and Awami League cadres on unarmed student protesters.

The second accuses them of ordering the use of lethal weapons, including those used from helicopters and drones, to subdue protesters. The prosecution says the trio are guilty by way of superior command responsibility, complicity, and conspiracy.

Meanwhile, the tribunal extended by two months the deadline for submitting the probe report against Hasina and 10 others, including forcibly retired Maj Gen Ziaul Ahsan, in a separate enforced disappearance case.

Also yesterday, the prosecution informed the tribunal that the ICT's investigation agency on June 19 submitted a probe report in the case filed over the burning of five dead bodies and setting another protester on fire in Ashulia.

The report named 16 individuals, including several police officials, as accused. Eight have been arrested so far.

Seven of them were produced before the tribunal during yesterday's hearing.

Aedes larvae found
FROM PAGE 12
However, government establishments were out of the study preview.

Arifur Rahman, who works in a voluntary organisation that conducts cleaning and sanitation activities in Barguna town, said, "We think the cleaning and sanitation works have not been done properly since the political changeover on August 5 last year. That is why the dengue situation has worsened here."

Chittaranjan Shil, president of Barguna Citizens' Committee, a civil society body, claimed the lack of a proper sewerage system, poor hygiene, and inadequate sanitation for the surge of Aedes.

"This is not just fuelling the spread of dengue but also other infectious diseases. We call for urgent and extensive sanitation measures by the authorities," he said.

In the absence of elected government representatives, the Local Government Division's Deputy Director Animesh Biswas is currently overseeing the cleaning operations of Barguna municipality.

"We have already cleaned 30 canals and ponds. Every day, mosquito control and sanitation teams are working," he told The Daily Star.

He also blamed the public apathy for the deteriorating dengue situation in the town.

"Most of the people here store rainwater in earthen pots for cooking. These pots have turned into the breeding spots of Aedes mosquitoes," said Animesh.

Meanwhile, the dengue situation may very well be even worse at the union level, as the IEDCR study also found Aedes mosquito larvae in over 75 percent of the samples collected from 46 houses visited in one "high endemic union" of Barguna Sadar upazila.

According to data from the Barishal Divisional Health Office, 3,962 dengue cases were recorded in the division between January and June 24 this year.

Alarmingly, 60 percent of those cases were reported in Barguna alone. Of the nine dengue-related deaths reported in the division so far, six were from Barguna.

Gazi Zahid Hossain, convener of the Barishal Citizens' Awareness Committee, said, "Healthcare facilities must be strengthened in this region. Hospitals must be equipped to conduct dengue testing, perform platelet transfusions, and provide adequate intensive care support."

Jamaat gets registration with EC, polls symbol back

FROM PAGE 12

in national elections.

On June 1 of this year, the Appellate Division cleared the way for the Jamaat to get back its party registration and asked the Election Commission to decide on the next steps.

Three days later, the EC announced that it would restore Jamaat's registration and reinstate the "balance scale" as its official electoral symbol.

In December 2016, the Supreme Court decided that the "balance scale" symbol would be reserved

exclusively for the judiciary as a symbol of justice.

This led the EC to drop the symbol from the official list through a gazette issued in March 2017.

Jamaat lost the right to contest parliamentary elections after the HC declared its registration with the EC illegal on August 1, 2013, following a writ petition.

Maulana Syed Rezaul Haque Chandpuri, secretary general of the Bangladesh Tariq Federation, along with 24 others, filed the petition on January 25, 2009, seeking a court order declaring the party's

registration illegal.

The EC subsequently scrapped Jamaat's registration in October 2018 ahead of the 11th national election.

Jamaat later filed an appeal with the Appellate Division, challenging the HC verdict. The Appellate Division began hearing the appeal on December 3 last year.

On August 1 last year, four days before its ouster, the Awami League government banned Jamaat, Shibir, and all of Jamaat's affiliated organisations.

Jamaat was first banned in the newly independent Bangladesh in 1972 over their anti-liberation role under a new constitutional provision that banned politics based on religion.

In 1976, the then-military regime repealed the restriction by issuing a martial law proclamation, allowing the formation and functioning of organisations based on religion.

"We have already cleaned 30 canals and ponds. Every day, mosquito control and sanitation teams are working," he told The Daily Star.

No one can

FROM PAGE 4
ensuring a proper atmosphere for the opposition parties to join the polls.

Rizvi, however, said their party does not support any unruly activities or incidents of mob justice.

He called upon the interim government to remain alert and take steps to prevent the incidents of mob violence in the country.

The BNP leader also criticised the inaction of law enforcers in preventing such incidents.

He said the police stand silently on the court premises when unruly people attack detainees. "How can an accused be attacked there? The responsibility of providing security to the accused lies with the government."

Rizvi questioned whether the police are not properly carrying out their duties. "Are there still cohorts of fascism within the police who want to defame the Professor Muhammad Yunus-led interim government?"

He urged the interim government to address the matter with urgency and take decisive action.

The BNP leader also expressed concern over the spread of Covid-19, as both cases and deaths are gradually increasing.

He called upon the government to take necessary preventative measures.

State-appointed

FROM PAGE 4
to defend Sheikh Hasina and former Gobindaganj Upazila Parishad Chairman Shakil Akanda Bulbul.

Social media users quickly pointed out a Facebook post Aminul had made on August 5 last year, shortly after Hasina was removed from office.

In the post, he called for her hanging, saying, "Want death by hanging of the destroyer of the spirit of the Liberation War, killer and liar Sheikh Hasina."

When asked by The Daily Star if he felt embarrassed to defend Hasina after making such a post, Aminul said he would still carry out his duty as a lawyer.

He claimed the contempt case was separate from the main allegations against her. "The prosecution is suggesting that during a certain conversation, there was an attempt to intimidate witnesses or obstruct justice. I will respond to that allegation," he said.

Regarding the controversial post, he added, "On August 5, 2024, the whole country was against Sheikh Hasina -- and so was I."

However, he insisted that he would now defend her professionally, adding, "I've been working with integrity for 36 years."

The case relates to a leaked phone call from last year in which Hasina was allegedly heard saying, "I have had 227 cases filed against me, so I have received a licence to kill 227 people." The audio clip circulated on social media and was later covered by mainstream media. The ICT considered the remark contemptuous.

The tribunal filed a contempt petition on April 30, accusing Hasina of making a statement that could obstruct justice. The hearing is scheduled for June 25.

'Bekar, Janata, Ngorik'

FROM PAGE 3
movement), Jatiya Bhumihin Party (National Landless Party), and Forward Party.

Among the parties that have applied for registration with the EC in two phases, three have included the word 'Bekar' (Unemployed) in their names -- Bangladesh Bekar Mukti Parishad, Bangladesh Bekar Shamaj, and Bangladesh Bekar Shamaj-BABES.

The term "Chhatra-Janata" (Student People) has gained popularity since last year's July uprising led by students and the masses that toppled the Awami League-led government. However, only one party has used "Chhatra" in

its name -- Bangladesh Chhatra Janata Party.

The word "Janata" (People) appears in the names of 17 parties, including -- Jatiya Janata Party, Bangladesh Janata Party-BJP, Bangladesh Muktijuddha Janata Party, Janata Party of Bangladesh (JPB), Janata Dal, Janata Party Bangladesh, Bangladesh Janata Party, Bangladesh Chhatra Janata Party, Muslim Janata Party, Janata Congress Party, Bangladesh Trinamul Janata Party, Janata Kotha Bole, Shadhin Janata Party, AmJanata Dal, Bangladesh Janata Oikya, Shadharon Janata Party, and Janata Party of

Bangladesh.

Six parties have used the word "Ngorik" (Citizen) in their names. These are -- National Citizen Party (NCP), Bangladesh Ngorik Party, Bangladesh Ngorik Command, Bangladesh Ngorik Dal, Bangladesh Ngorik Andolan Party, and Ganatantrik (Democratic) Ngorik Shakti-DCP.

Other applicants for EC registration also include parties like -- Nucleus Party, Islami Ganatantrik Party, Bangladesh Ekator Party, Bangladesh Deshpremik Prajanna (Patriotic Generation), and Bangladesh Prabashi Kallyan Party (Expatriate Welfare Party).

The commission

Mob violence erodes

FROM PAGE 3
political party and was captured on video and widely circulated on social media. Later, police took Nurul Huda into custody and formally arrested him in connection with the case.

The citizens criticised the inaction and leniency shown by law enforcement officers present during the incident and warned that if such acts go unpunished, they will pose serious threats to public safety and the constitutional rights.

They also stressed that normalising mob violence will further weaken the rule of law.

The signatories include Sultana Kamal, chairperson of Manababdhikar Sangskritik Foundation; Zi Khan Panna, senior lawyer; Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori; Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh; Barrister Sara Hossain, honorary executive director of BLAST; Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director of CAMPE; Shamsul Huda, executive director of ALRD; Shireen Huq, member of Naripokkho; Shaheen Anam, executive

director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; and Samina Luthfa, professor at the University of Dhaka.

Meanwhile, in a separate statement, Shujan yesterday said it is deeply concerned about the wave of mob violence that began after the July uprising last year, which it said is now "spiralling out of control".

Referring to the assault on Nurul Huda, Shujan said even if someone is accused of a crime, physically attacking them is a criminal offence under the penal code and a clear violation of the Constitution.

published the list of applicants in two phases on Monday.

On March 10, the EC invited applications from new political parties. By the April 20 deadline, 65 parties had submitted applications.

The EC has been registering political parties since 2008 under the Representation of the People Order, 1972.

A party must meet at least one of the three criteria to qualify for registration. They are -- winning at least one seat with its electoral symbol in any parliamentary election; securing at least five percent of the total votes cast in a constituency in a national election; or

having a functional central office, a central committee, and offices in at least one-third of the districts or 100 upazilas/metropolitan areas, with a minimum of 200 voters as members in each upazila.

Ahead of the 12th national election in January 2024, 93 parties applied for registration. After initial screening, the EC conducted field verification for 12 of them, including the Gono Odhikar Parishad and AB Party.

Of those 12, only two -- Bangladesh Nationalist Movement (BNM) and Bangladesh Supreme Party (BSP) -- were granted registration after resolving several objections.

Govt to amend CrPC

Franceschi is leading a Commonwealth delegation in Dhaka to engage with the interim government of Bangladesh.

China hopes

FROM PAGE 3
key sectors including agriculture, industry, garments, healthcare, and infrastructure development.

He also sought China's assistance in narrowing the trade gap, adopting modern technology, and providing training for Bangladeshi workers.

BNP leaders said the meeting was held in a cordial and respectful atmosphere.

This was the second day of the BNP delegation's ongoing visit to China.

Two SUST

FROM PAGE 3
Officials said that the event schedule includes planned gaps between programmes.

Further events are scheduled for July 5, July 7, and July 14.

The final day of the programme, August 5 -- referred to as the "36th of July" in the official schedule -- will feature the launching of a video titled "36 July", floral tributes at July Martyrs' Memorials in 36 district centres, a meeting between Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus and the families of the martyrs.

According to a complaint filed by the victim, on May 2, the accused took her to a mess in the Surma residential area, where they drugged and raped her.

Later on, June 19, she complained to the SUST proctor's office, and that evening, police detained both the accused. On June 20, she filed the case with Kotwali Police Station accusing the two and five unnamed others.

A 200-year-old hub

FROM PAGE 4
Zahed Chowdhury, 65, a jackfruit trader with over 20 years of experience, spoke about the cyclical nature of the trade.

Sajjadur Rahman, 35, from Cumilla, recalled visiting the market with his father and grandfather. "They always said this is a 200-year old market."

"Despite challenges like fluctuating prices, shifting crop yields, and the growing trend of home gardening, the market continues to preserve a deep-rooted sense of community and tradition that has lasted for centuries," he added.

Zahed observed a trend

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Food
Directorate General of Food
Procurement Division
16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka
Website: www.dgfood.gov.bd

Date: 24/06/2025

International Tender Notice to Import Milling Wheat
(Package-02, FY: 2025-2026)

International tenders in sealed cover are invited from bona fide traders to supply 50,000 (Fifty thousand) (+5%) Metric Ton of Milling Wheat. The particulars and terms & conditions are given below:

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh	
Ministry of Food	
Directorate General of Food	
Procurement Division	
16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka	
Website: www.dgfood.gov.bd	
No. 13.01.0000.093.46.024.25-580	
Date: 24/06/2025	

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International Tender Notice to Import Milling Wheat</div



RIGHTS ADVOCACY

ILLUSTRATION: JACK BROUHAM

LEGAL REFORMS

for workers of the gig economy

While countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, and India have made strides in recognising gig workers' rights, Bangladesh has yet to take steps to ensure the legal protection of its platform workers. A comparative discussion on this matter will be helpful.

MD. FAHMEDUL ISLAM DEWAN

The gig economy, notably via platforms such as Uber, Pathao, and Foodpanda, has created new possibilities and constraints in the labour markets across various countries, including Bangladesh. However, Bangladesh's primary labour law—Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 (BLA), was enacted before the rise of these digital and platform-based employment. This dated law ignores gig workers' working circumstances, denying them the essential rights and protections afforded to conventional employees.

The BLA governs workers' rights but does not include protection for gig workers. According to section 2(65) of the Act, a worker is any person, including apprentices, irrespective of whether the terms of his employment are expressed or implied, who works in any institution or industry, directly or through contractor, in exchange of wages or money for any skilled, unskilled, physical, technical, etc. Workers in the gig economy, such as ride-hailing drivers, delivery drivers, and freelancers, do not fall under this categorisation since there is no official employer-employee relationship. Without such a connection, gig workers are arguably ineligible for basic protections such as minimum wage, sick leave, health insurance, and employment security.

The Fairwork report "State of Work in the Bangladesh Gig Economy: Bangladesh Ratings 2022" by the Oxford Internet Institute has shown that many gig workers in Bangladesh earn less than the minimum wage after subtracting fuel and maintenance costs. As a result, these platforms have

drawn criticisms for providing substandard working conditions and low compensation. This concerning situation needs to change urgently.

While countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, and India have made strides in recognising gig workers' rights, Bangladesh has yet to take steps to ensure the legal protection of its platform workers. A comparative discussion on this matter will be helpful.

The Code on Social Security 2020 in India promotes the recognition of gig workers. This law recognises gig workers as participants in the platform economy and offers a variety of advantages, including welfare programs. However, the practical conditions of gig workers in India are still quite concerning. In the UK, the Supreme Court recently has ruled that Uber drivers should be considered "workers" under UK law, providing them with limited employment rights. Uber drivers were classed as employees since they rely on the platform for employment rather than being independent contractors. Additionally, Australia's attitude to gig employment is also evolving. According to the latest developments, the gig workers, being deemed as employee-like workers, are granted certain rights, and the Commission has recently announced a 3.5% increase to minimum wages starting 1 July 2025. Unfortunately, Bangladesh is yet to take any steps in this regard.

The exploitative tactics prevalent in the gig economy in general worsen the situation. For instance, in an article published in The Guardian on 11 January 2025, many gig

workers must pay significant fees to access their earnings quickly. Similar exploitative practices are present in Bangladesh as well. Workers often face financial difficulty due to fees connected with obtaining their pay since they lack essential job rights such as paid sick leave, insurance, and minimum wage.

Bangladeshi gig workers have often complained about their compensation and revenue access fees, calling for better legal protections. However, the legal uncertainty surrounding the status of gig workers in Bangladesh impedes their protection. Bangladesh's disregard for these legal loopholes has also had negative consequences, with gig workers experiencing the most severe unfair working conditions.

According to a World Bank study from 2023, Bangladesh's gig economy generated 5% of GDP in 2020 and would continue to double by 2025. Legal changes that acknowledge gig workers' rights may increase productivity and attract new enterprises. Hence, Bangladesh must update its labour legislation to reflect the reality of the gig economy. A third legal categorisation for workers, known as dependent contractors or flexi workers may be formed, with separate rights and benefits from those of ordinary employees. Fundamental safeguards such as a minimum wage, healthcare, social security, and accident insurance may guarantee that gig workers are not left vulnerable in a society increasingly dependent on their labour.

The writer is lecturer at the Department of Law, World University of Bangladesh.

LAW VISION

Urgency of comprehensive AI regulation in Bangladesh

SATIRTHA CHAKMA

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer the future—it is the present. From global finance to health, surveillance to academics, and the legal profession, AI systems are now integrated into many aspects of our everyday life. While countries all over the world are debating how to best deal with the problems created by AI by improving their legal framework, Bangladesh is a long way off. Such questions are important to deal with situations where an AI malfunctions. If an AI misidentifies a face, makes a wrongful or unintended transaction, or leaks personal data, who would be accountable? The user or the AI itself? Without clarified legal framework, the question of liability simply weighs heavily on the use and the usefulness of AI.

Recently, New Zealand's MP Laura McLaren illustrated the threat of deepfake technology by showing a manipulated, naked photograph of herself in the parliament. The UK's High Court has lately issued a warning to the lawyers to prohibit misusing AI after finding fake case-law citations. Similarly, the recent rise of Ghibli-style trends generated through ChatGPT has raised concerns over copyright and intellectual property rights.

Unethical use of AI poses unprecedented risks upon the user. Deepfakes, misinformation, or identity theft all are facilitated by the AI-powered tools. In Bangladesh, although the use of AI is limited, it often appears in connection with cybercrimes. Sadly, our laws have not caught up efficiently to prevent AI-related cybercrimes as well. The CyberSecurity Act 2023, the Information and Communication Act 2006, and the newly enacted Cyber Protection Ordinance 2025 address cyber offences but they are not tailored to address the complexities of AI. Even the 2025 Ordinance offers minimal guidance on AI generated content or algorithmic decision making. The cyber tribunals, meanwhile, are overwhelmed and under-resourced and mostly dealing with defamation and digital harassment cases. The draft of the National Artificial Intelligence Policy 2024 is a positive step, but it, too, lacks

clarity on fundamental issues such as transparency, ethical use, and human supervision. Moreover, it does little to recommend crime prevention strategies ranging from harassment-like cybercrimes to organised crimes such as the Bangladesh Bank Heist of 2016.

Bangladesh ranked 75th out of 83 countries in the Global AI Index. This is not only about technology, but it also reflects a broader failure to prepare our legal, educational, and social institutions for the future. In contrast, countries such as the UAE are using AI to predict and prevent disasters, e.g., fire-related disasters, before they can occur by feeding the AI with vast data and training models. Sadly, we are still struggling with digital literacy and addressing digital divides.

What can we do? First, Bangladesh must enact a comprehensive AI law evaluating global best practices. It may follow the EU Artificial Intelligence Act, for example, which proposes a risk-based approach and mandates transparency, ethical use, and human supervision. Second, we need an independent AI regulatory authority to ensure accountability and investigate misuse. Third, we must include professional experts—technologists, academicians, lawyers, etc. in framing our AI policy.

And finally, we must treat data protection as a core fundamental human right. The public should be aware of who collects their data, how it is stored, and whether they can opt out from subscription. Without such enforcement, digital rights will continue to remain as a myth.

The writer is an official contributor for the Law Desk and law student at the Bangladesh University of Professionals.

LAW REVIEW

An assessment of the Supreme Court Judges' Appointment Ordinance 2025

ATIQUR RAHMAN

The newly enacted Supreme Court Judges' Appointment Ordinance 2025 marks a potentially significant move toward a fairer and more transparent judicial appointment process in Bangladesh. This initiative comes at a time when discussions and anxieties surrounding the selection of judges for the higher courts are prevalent. Hence, the details of the Ordinance need to be carefully assessed.

First, section 3 of the Ordinance establishes the Supreme Judicial Appointment Council, a newly formed permanent body that will assist the Chief Justice to advise to the President potential names for the appointment of Supreme Court judges. This council will consist of the senior-most serving judge of the Appellate Division (AD), the senior-most serving judge of the High Court Division (appointed from beyond the judicial service), the senior-most serving judge of the High Court

Division (HCD) appointed from the judicial service, a retired judge of the AD of the Supreme Court nominated by the Chairperson, the Attorney-General, and a law professor or legal expert nominated by Chairperson.

However, section 4 of the Ordinance creates a potential conflict of interest by making the Supreme Court Registrar General (and if he is a candidate, the next senior-most officer who is not a candidate) as the Council's ex-officio Secretary. The problem here is that the officers of the Supreme Court Registry, including the Registrar General, are often themselves potential candidates for the post of Judges of the Supreme Court. Although the provision avoids direct conflict of interest by disqualifying the candidate himself, indirect conflict may still exist as the Secretary of the Council and the candidate would work in the same office. Moreover, the Ordinance's imposition of a minimum age limit of 45 for judges creates further problems, as Article 95 of the Constitution does not have

any such age limit, and currently, there are reportedly at least ten judges in the HCD who are below 45. It is argued that the imposition of such an arbitrary age limit potentially excludes many qualified individuals who meet the constitutionally mandated experience requirements.

Additionally, the author argues that section 9 of the Ordinance introduces another significant conflict of interest concerning the

appointment of senior HCD judges to the Appellate Division. The provision that favours the senior-most judge creates a situation where a member of the Supreme Judicial Appointment Council, who is also the senior-most HCD judge, can profit directly from this rule.

Again, the simultaneous involvement of the Chief Justice in both the search committee and the final consultation process for

judicial appointments potentially gives rise to another major concern regarding immense power being vested upon the Chief Justice's office. Consequently, to mitigate the risk of bias allegations and to meticulously preserve the integrity of the appointment procedure, the Chief Justice's participation could be limited to either of the two stages. Furthermore, including the Attorney-General may raise concerns about potential political qua executive influence in the council's decision-making.

It needs to be mentioned that recently, a public interest writ petition was filed with the HCD challenging the constitutional validity of sections 3, 4, 6, and 9 of the Ordinance. The petition argued that these sections are inconsistent with the Constitution. On 28 April 2025, the HCD decided to summarily dispose of the petition. The Court observed that the Ordinance is desirable for Bangladesh's national interest, particularly because the parliament

is currently non-existent; it further noted that the next Parliament would have the opportunity to discuss it and that it is too early to do so. The court analogised the law with similar laws in the UK and Nepal, and distinguished its context from that of India, where the judge appointment Act was declared unconstitutional due to the long-standing "collegium system".

While intending to enhance transparency, the Ordinance may have paradoxically introduced new loopholes. It is submitted that implementing this Ordinance in its current form risks exacerbating the problems it seeks to address. As the HCD observed, more discussions on this matter can be done in the new parliament. At this historic moment when the whole nation is looking forward to seeing meaningful reforms, a carefully drafted law is imperative.

The writer is columnist, legal researcher, and a human rights activist.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Butler's Bangladesh 'underdogs' with a plan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh head coach Peter Butler struck a note of cautious optimism ahead of the team's departure for Myanmar, where they will contest Group C of the AFC Women's Asia Cup Qualifiers.

With higher-ranked opponents and only the group winners advancing to the final round, Butler was careful not to make bold promises, instead reminding that his side have shown notable growth in recent times.

Ranked 128th, Bangladesh face a daunting challenge in a group that includes hosts Myanmar (55th), Bahrain (92nd), and Turkmenistan (141st). Although expectations have risen following spirited showings against stronger teams like Jordan and Indonesia, the Bangladesh coach acknowledged the scale of the task at hand.

"We probably are underdogs," Butler told reporters at a press conference at the BFF House yesterday, on the eve of their Myanmar flight in the early hours of today.

He added that belief and adaptability would be key. "Sometimes you've got to flick systems... be flexible."

Butler credited the side's progress, pointing to a marked improvement in their work ethic and tactical understanding, especially out of possession. He believes Bangladesh now have the tools to make life difficult for more established teams through "energy, tactical nous" and discipline.

Having lost 5-0 to Myanmar in 2018, Bangladesh's record in the group is not inspiring, but Butler dismissed past results as irrelevant. He is more focused on the present squad, which he described as "exciting" and filled with emerging talent.

Although the English coach had limited preparation time, he praised the players' effort and openness to new ideas.

"I'm not an old-school coach, [but someone] who actually embraces new ideas," he said, underlining his confidence in captain Afeda Khandokar and the group she leads.

Afeda, meanwhile, spoke of her ambition to make it out of the group. "We didn't get much time after coming back from Jordan," said the 18-year-old rock-solid defender. "But we trained the way the coach instructed us."

The squad sees three changes from the one that played in Jordan, with goalkeepers Swarna Mandol and Mile Akter added, while seasoned defender Nilufar Yasmin Nila returns in place of Shanti Mardi.

Goalkeepers: Rupna Chakma, Mile Akter, Swarna Rani

Defenders: Sheuli Azim, Joynob Bibi, Shamsunnahar Sr, Afeda Khandokar, Nilufa Yasmin

Midfielders: Monika Chakma, Maria Manda, Sapna Rani, Kohati Kisku, Halima Akter, Munki Akter

Forwards: Ritu Porna, Tohura Khatun, Shamsunnahar Jr, Mosammatt Sagorika, Sauravi Akanda, Shaheda Akter, Mosammatt Sultana, Nabiran Khatun, Umehla Marma

FIXTURES

June 29: Myanmar vs Turkmenistan, Bangladesh vs Bahrain

July 2: Turkmenistan vs Bahrain, Bangladesh vs Myanmar

July 5: Myanmar vs Bahrain, Bangladesh vs Turkmenistan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will aim for a rare slice of history when they take on Sri Lanka in the second and final Test at the Sinhalese Sports Club Cricket Ground in Colombo today, hoping to seal their first ever Test series victory over the hosts.

Although the Galle Test ended in a draw, the Tigers largely dictated terms, only to miss out on a golden chance to win after opting for a cautious declaration on the final day.

Still, the positives from Galle were plenty. Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto struck twin centuries, while Mushfiqur Rahim and Litton Das showed signs of form after lean patches. Nayem Hasan's maiden overseas five-wicket haul also stood out, offering a much-needed lift at a time when interest in the team had waned following poor performances across formats in recent months.

The visitors will be hoping that the Galle Test performance doesn't only remain as a one-off, as on previous many occasions, Bangladesh wasted opportunities of winning series through their poor showings in the series-deciding matches due to their lack of consistency in this format.

In 2022, they drew the opening Test against Sri Lanka in Chattogram but suffered a crushing 10-wicket defeat in the series decider to lose the series 1-0 after demonstrating a woeful batting performance in their second innings in Mirpur.

Bangladesh also squandered their lead against New Zealand twice – once at home and once away – in the last three and a half years, as they conceded defeats in the second Test and lost the opportunity to clinch series victories. On both occasions, they failed to replicate their first Test performances, especially their batters, and the onus will be on them again to avoid such a situation.

what to WATCH

T SPORTS

Bangladesh vs Sri Lanka
Second Test, Day 1
Live from 10:00 am
DAZN WEBSITE AND APP
Club World Cup

Chelsea vs Tunis
Live from 7:00 am
LAFC vs Flamengo
Live from 7:00 am
Dortmund vs Ulsan
Live from 1:00 am
(Thursday)

Fluminense vs Sundowns
Live from 1:00 am
(Thursday)

Tigers look to break pattern in Colombo

"The home team have been playing good cricket. It's not going to be an easy match to win," head coach Phil Simmons told reporters on the eve of the Colombo Test yesterday.

"We will try to do the same thing we tried to do in Galle. I'm looking to win and find the best way to win."

Bangladesh, who will be completing 25 years in Test cricket on June 26, will be looking to register their 24th win in the format in the second game against Sri Lanka in Colombo.

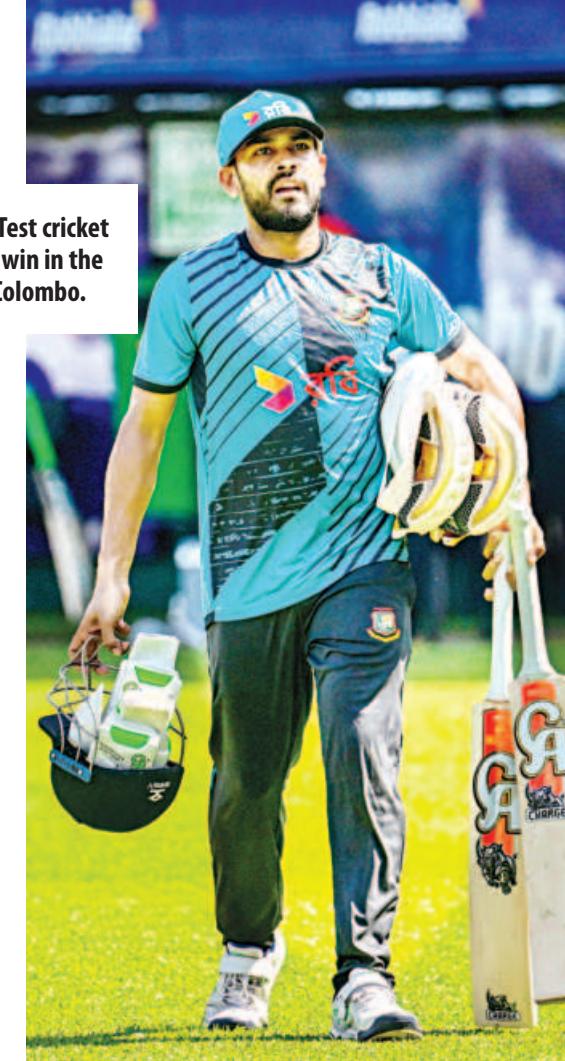
Ahead of the Colombo Test, Bangladesh team management are also having a hard time selecting their playing eleven. All-rounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz, who couldn't feature in the series opener due to fever, is expected to return to the side for the all-important game. To accommodate him, however, in-form off-spinner Nayem could be left out or a specialised batter sacrificed.

Simmons insisted that they would pick their playing eleven based on the wicket and conditions, although he also didn't deny the fact that they would have a tough time deciding on the matter.

"First thing, we have come here and we will assess what the wicket looks like and the conditions here. Then we will decide which way we want to go -- whether three spinners would play," said Simmons.

"Nayem had a fantastic game in Galle. It's tough to leave someone out after such a performance. But everyone understands the team requirements," Simmons added.

He confirmed Shanto had recovered from a finger injury sustained during slip catching practice on Monday and also threw his support behind opener Anamul Haque Bijoy, who scored just four runs on a flat Galle pitch.



Dhananjaya wants strong showing in first innings

SPORTS REPORTER

Sri Lanka skipper Dhananjaya de Silva wanted to set the tone with the bat in the second Test against Bangladesh in Colombo, starting on Wednesday.

The hosts batted comfortably at the top end of their first innings in the Galle Test but saw their advantage slip, conceding a 10-run first innings lead to Bangladesh. On Day 5, they struggled in the few remaining overs, losing four wickets.

On a good batting surface, the Lankan skipper urged his team to put on a strong showing in the first innings.

"We always talk about big first-innings runs. If we can post a strong total, the pressure shifts to the opposition. Then it's about taking 20 wickets to win the match," Dhananjaya was quoted as saying by media.

Galle Test was expected to provide sharp turn but eventually provided little assistance to bowlers.

"It's going to be a batting wicket. Normally, these kind of wickets tend to take turn in the last couple of days," he added.

Sri Lanka have three uncapped players in the squad for the match and Dhananjaya said that left-arm spinner, Sonal Dinusha, fits the bill given the conditions that will be on offer in Colombo.

CWC clash rekindles Barca bonds

AGENCIES

Lionel Messi will spearhead a Barcelona reunion like no other when Inter Miami face Paris Saint-Germain in a tantalising last-16 showdown at the Club World Cup in Atlanta on Sunday.

The Argentine great will be joined by ex-Barca teammates Luis Suárez, Jordi Alba and Sergio Busquets – all of whom once flourished under current PSG boss Luis Enrique.

It's a fixture dripping with history and emotional subplots. The four Miami stars famously featured in the 2016-17 Champions League campaign that saw Barcelona pull off a miraculous 6-1 second-leg comeback to knock PSG out, overturning a 4-0 first-leg deficit in what remains one of football's most jaw-dropping nights.

Now, years later, the stage is set for a reunion – but with loyalties shifted and stakes just as high. PSG, finally Champions League winners this season under Enrique's guidance, arrive as heavy favourites.

Yet Miami, runners-up in Group A after a dramatic 2-2 draw with Palmeiras, are not short on belief or pedigree.

Luis Suárez, who scored in that match and was named man of the match, acknowledged the challenge ahead: "If we make these mistakes against PSG we



will pay a heavy price. We're facing the European champions, but we must take our chances."

The 38-year-old striker remains a threat, and with Messi pulling the strings, anything feels possible.

Miami coach Javier Mascherano, another former Barça man, summed it up with a fighter's spirit: "They are probably better than us, but in football you never know. Maybe Sunday will be our day."

For Luis Enrique, it's not just a tactical battle – it's a reunion with players he once molded into legends. "He made me even more competitive," Suárez said of the Spanish tactician.

'Step by step to the Olympics' ALIF'S MEASURED MARCH

Teenager **Abdur Rahman Alif** stole the spotlight by winning gold at the Asia Cup Archery Stage-2, especially after senior archers Ruman Sana and Abdur Hakim Rubel migrated to the USA. Alif first made headlines in 2021 as a ninth-grader by winning the national recurve title. Despite early promise, the BKSP student from Pabna struggled for years before regaining form with a silver at last year's Asian Youth Archery Championship. He spoke to **The Daily Star's Anisur Rahman** on success, setbacks, migration, and Olympic dreams. Below are excerpts from the interview:

DS: How does it feel to win your maiden gold medal in your first Asia Cup Archery final?

recited a Surah from the Quran, kept calm, and focused on my shots.

DS: Did Ruman and Rubel's US migration help you break into the team?

ARA: My performance wasn't bad; others just had better averages at the time. Now my scores have improved. When key players leave, the team needs time to rebuild, but with juniors like

Sagor [Islam], Rakib [Mia], Mishad [Prodhan] and me, we'll get results soon.

DS: What do you consider your biggest strength?

ARA: My self-belief. I never give up. Anyone who knows me knows I'll fight till my last breath.

DS: The final saw momentum shift to your opponent before the deciding fifth set. What was on your mind then?

ARA: I stayed confident. I believed Allah was testing my patience. I

third attempt in 2024. I've just won the Asia Cup. Next are the Asian Championship, World Cup, World Championship, and then the Olympics. I'll try to deliver step by step.

DS: You shot perfect 30s in elimination rounds. How do you rate your average score?

ARA: Averages vary by match and tournament. I won gold with my current form, but I aim to improve further with time.

DS: Many are hoping you and Sagor will win an Olympic medal in 2028. How confident are you of qualifying?

ARA: It's a big ask.

Even world no. 1 Kim

Woo-Jin [South Korea]

won Olympic gold in his

moves of Ruman, Rubel, Diya, and Ashim to the USA discourage or motivate you?

ARA: It's their choice. They did what they felt was best. But I want to build my career in archery, become known in this sport, and win for Bangladesh.

DS: How did you start your archery journey?

ARA: I always loved sports, especially football, though my family wasn't supportive at first. My mother eventually convinced my father, who is a college professor, to let me attend a trial at BKSP. I was selected for football, but on the suggestion of one of my father's friends, I also tried out for archery. I got selected and joined BKSP in class six in 2018. Since then, archery has been my path, and I'll continue as long as I can represent the nation.



third attempt in 2024. I've just won the Asia Cup. Next are the Asian Championship, World Cup, World Championship, and then the Olympics. I'll try to deliver step by step.

