



Speakers at a roundtable, titled "Shock Responsive Social Protection and Anticipatory Action", at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Prioritise pre-disaster cash aid in flood-prone areas

Speakers say this will help reduce losses and damages

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It is crucial to identify the actual beneficiaries for pre-disaster cash support to reduce the loss and damage from natural calamities like floods, said speakers at a roundtable yesterday.

They also called for changes to key government policy instruments to expand the scope of pre-disaster relief initiatives based on forecast warnings.

The roundtable, titled "Shock Responsive Social Protection and Anticipatory Action", was organised by CARE, Concern Worldwide, Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES), Eco Social Development Organisation (ESDO), Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB), Peoples Oriented Program Implementation (POPI), and the SKS Foundation, along with The Daily Star.

It was held at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

At the event, discussants shared findings from a pilot project titled

"Scaling up Forecast-based Action and Learning in Bangladesh (SUFAL II)," which showed that timely pre-disaster cash support helped households in some flood-prone districts last year protect valuable assets like livestock, poultry, and agricultural infrastructure.

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humanitarian and resilient futures programme at CARE Bangladesh, said the main objective of SUFAL was to help people in flood-prone areas prepare ahead of disasters to reduce losses and damages.

However, he noted that there are certain challenges in the government's policy guidelines when implementing such anticipatory action.

In his presentation, Fazley Elahi Mahmud, a consultant on social protection, poverty reduction, and livelihood development, said the SUFAL project was based on forecasts from the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre.

He pointed out that while the government has at least five relevant social safety net schemes, the Gratuitous Relief (GR) scheme under the Disaster Management and Relief Ministry is best suited for pre-disaster cash support.

He recommended amending the Humanitarian Assistance Programme Implementation Guidelines (2012-2013), which currently state that "humanitarian aid will be provided 'during and immediately after' a disaster," and restrict GR cash assistance to only "post-disaster" situations.

AKM Shahriar, project field

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## Ishraque, Asif lock horns over mayoral deadlock

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP leader Ishraque Hossain has once again accused the government of violating the constitution by not administering his oath as the elected mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation.

He claimed a series of recent incidents were "orchestrated to divert attention" from this issue.

Speaking at a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday, Ishraque said, "In a private TV interview, Local Government Adviser Asif Mahmud alleged that I am being instigated by a senior BNP leader and described me as 'misguided'. Such remarks are offensive -- not just to me but to the voters who elected me."

He demanded an unconditional public apology from the adviser.

Referring to Asif's claim that a BNP leader from Cumilla had given him financial and logistical support for the movement, Ishraque said, "If he has any evidence, he should present it to the nation. Otherwise, he must apologise."



He also warned against any retaliation against DSCC officials and employees involved in the protest, saying such actions would escalate demonstrations beyond Nagar Bhaban and onto the streets.

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## ICT replaces counsel for Hasina in contempt case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday removed Advocate Md Aminul Ghani Tito as defence counsel for Sheikh Hasina in a contempt of court case filed against her.

The tribunal's decision came amid criticism over Aminul's appointment, following the resurfacing of a Facebook post he made on August 5 last year in which he called for Hasina's execution.

Advocate Md Aminul Hossain has replaced Aminul Ghani, as per the ICT's prosecution. The tribunal passed the order on Tuesday regarding this matter.

Amir Hossain confirmed to The Daily Star that he received the appointment letter yesterday.

He previously served as the Special Public Prosecutor of Dhaka's Special Judge Court-8 for around 14 and a half years during the Awami League tenure.

The tribunal also deferred yesterday's scheduled hearing to July 2. Senior Supreme Court lawyer

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## Over 90% women work at informal sector: study

UNB, Dhaka

Over 90 percent of working women in Bangladesh are employed in the informal sector, which was particularly hard hit during the pandemic, a new study has found.

The findings were shared at a seminar titled "Strengthening Systems for Pandemic Preparedness among Working Women Living in Informal Settlements in Urban Bangladesh" yesterday.

It was jointly organised by icddr,b, the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and SickKids, Canada, with funding support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

The event, held at the icddr,b in Dhaka, brought together key stakeholders to discuss the Women RISE study findings and their policy implications.

Led by Dr Sohana Shafique, the study assessed the experiences of working women in informal settlements and factories in Dhaka and Gazipur before and during the pandemic.

"I believe the results of this study will help all of us to prepare for any impending pandemic. We should be

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A couple loads newly bought plants and flowers from the National Tree Fair 2025 into the boot of their car. The fair, which was inaugurated by the chief adviser yesterday, will continue till July 24 at the field next to Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## IGP for urgent police reform Calls for independent commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Md Baharul Alam yesterday called for urgent structural reforms in Bangladesh's police force, emphasising the need for an independent commission to shield it from political interference and enhance accountability.

Speaking at a dialogue titled "Police Modernisation and Professionalisation", the IGP acknowledged sincere reform attempts but said key governance issues remain unaddressed.

He criticised informal power networks, stating that undue influence undermines morale and justice. "I'm inundated with informal requests from influential quarters. This reflects how governance is compromised," he remarked.

Referring to recent student-led protests, he noted a growing public demand for institutional reform and civic accountability.

The IGP advocated for a shift from force-based to service-oriented policing, focused on justice, human rights, and community engagement. "We

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