



"Ukraine belongs in the European Union... We must strengthen Ukraine. And we must weaken Russia."

Denmark PM
Mette Frederiksen

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Panic grips NBR officials

ACC opens investigations into five more officials over alleged graft

MID ASADUZ ZAMAN

The relief that followed the end of a disruptive strike by tax officials at the National Board of Revenue has quickly given way to anxiety and regret, as the government started a clampdown on those involved. Just days after business leaders mediated a resolution, authorities have begun forcing senior officials into retirement and expanding corruption probes.

In a flurry of actions on Wednesday, the finance ministry ordered the retirement of four senior NBR officials, invoking a provision in the public service law that permits such removals "in the public interest". A day earlier, a commissioner from the Chattogram Customs House was suspended for his alleged role in the shutdown that brought port operations to a standstill.

In parallel, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday launched investigations into five additional NBR officials over alleged corruption and irregularities, raising the total number of officials under the graft watchdog's scrutiny to 16. Most of those targeted are

linked to the NBR Reform Unity Council, the platform behind the recent protests.

These measures follow two months of intense turmoil at the tax authority. NBR officials, protesting an IMF-backed ordinance to restructure the powerful

revenue body and demanding the removal of NBR Chairman Abdur Rahman Khan, had enforced a shutdown of port and customs services on June 28-29. Their action stalled the port of Chattogram, the lifeblood of the nation's trade, a measure described by many as "extreme and unprecedented".

Alarmed by the economic haemorrhage, prominent business figures stepped in to

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Alarmed by the economic haemorrhage, prominent business figures stepped in to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

CONSENSUS TALKS Political parties agree on regulating presidential pardons

Decide to have HC benches in divisions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties yesterday agreed on two major reform proposals: setting up permanent High Court benches in every division and regulating the presidential clemency power through legislation.

The agreement came on the ninth day of the second phase of talks between the National Consensus Commission and political parties at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka.

All parties backed amending article 100 of the constitution to allow one or more permanent High Court benches at the divisional level, subject to consultation with the Supreme Court.

They also agreed to revise article 49 to mandate a new law for presidential pardons, with the consent of the victim's family as a key condition.

Prof Ali Riaz, vice-president of the consensus commission, said there was broad consensus on both issues.

"The power of presidential clemency has been widely abused in the past, especially in the last 16 years. All parties acknowledged the need to revise article 49 and ensure that any use of clemency follows a structured legal process, including input from victims' families," he said.

He noted that the Judicial Reform Commission had earlier made recommendations in this regard. The proposed changes aim to prevent political misuse by establishing clear standards, procedures, and a system of recommendations.

Article 49 currently allows the president to pardon, reprieve, and commute. The amendment would regulate this power through law.

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Mob beats 3 of a family dead in their own home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A mob beat three members of a family to death and left another injured in Cumilla's Muradnagar upazila yesterday.

The incident took place at Karaibari village, confirmed Mahfuzur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Bangabazar Police Station.

"Around 9:30am, a group of villagers attacked the family at their home," he said, adding that the family was involved in drug trade.

Tipped off, police rushed to the spot and found Rukhsana Akhter Rubi, 58; her son Md Russell, 35; and daughter Tasnia Akhter Happy, alias Jonaki, 28, lying dead inside the house.

Rubi's younger daughter, Ruma Akhter, 27, was critically injured and sent to Cumilla Medical College Hospital.

According to police, Rubi was accused in 16 cases, Russell in nine, and Jonaki in five -- most of them related to narcotics.

Speaking to The Daily Star

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US TARIFF TALKS First day ends without major decision

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

A high-level meeting between Bangladesh and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) ended in Washington, DC, yesterday without a major decision, despite the looming expiry of a 90-day negotiation window on July 9.

The meeting, held at the USTR headquarters, was led by Bangladesh's Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin and National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman. Brendan Lynch, assistant US trade representative for South and Central Asia, represented the US side.

The talks were described as "friendly" and "positive" by Bangladesh official familiar with the discussion. Bangladesh expects an agreement on the contentious reciprocal tariff issue, which has been under negotiation since early April following President Donald Trump's announcement of sweeping new tariffs.

A follow-up meeting

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Vehicles stuck on Kakrail road around 1:20pm yesterday as the city experienced heavy traffic due to the rush on the last working day of the week and HSC exams.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



A man transporting pineapples on his bicycle, from Jangalia to Jalchhatra Bazar at Madhupur, Tangail, to sell them yesterday. In one trip, a farmer or a hired cyclist carries 100 pineapples. The use of bicycles to transport the famous fruit of the upazila has declined in recent years amid the rise of battery-run auto-rickshaws.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

PUBLIC SERVICE ORDINANCE 'Insubordination' clause dropped

BAHARAM KHAN

The advisory council yesterday approved a draft amendment to the Public Service Ordinance by scrapping the provision for punishment on grounds of "insubordination" and dropping several other controversial clauses.

The existing ordinance, which took effect on May 25 amid huge uproar, allows for punishment without investigation within 14 working days in two stages.

Under the proposed amendment, a three-member inquiry committee will be formed, and the entire process must be completed within 28 working days.

The ordinance also requires that the inquiry committee complete its probe within a specified timeframe.

Failure to do so will be considered an act of inefficiency on the part of the committee members, and this will be reflected in their annual

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Sri Lanka:
A story of
resilience &
beauty
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Iran's nuke
program set
back by up to 2
years: Pentagon
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16 PAGES: TK 15.00

এনসিসি ব্যাংক-এর সিস্টেম আপগ্রেডেশন ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম সাময়িক বন্ধ থাকবে

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০৮ জুলাই ২০২৫ রাত ৮ টা

থেকে

১৩ জুলাই ২০২৫ সকাল ৮ টা পর্যন্ত

সাময়িক এ অসুবিধার জন্য আমরা আগ্রহিকভাবে দৃঢ়থিত। আপনার যেকোনো প্রয়োজনে আমাদের কল

সেন্টার নথুরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

এনসিসি ব্যাংক আপনার সাথে সব সময়।

এনসিসি ব্যাংক

কল সেন্টার

এনসিসি ব্যাংক
অধ্যোপস্থিতি সকল

Denied VIP access,
Jubo Dal leader
leads bar rampage
Assault women, loot cash;
BNP youth org expels him

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Jubo Dal leader and his men vandalised a restaurant and bar, assaulted women and staffers, and looted cash and liquor after the leader was denied access to a VIP room there in the capital's Mohakhali area.

The key accused is Monir Hossain, 42, convener of Jubo Dal's Banani Thana unit, said police.

The vandalism took place around 8:40pm on Tuesday at Zakkaria International Restaurant and Bar on AK Khanakter Road, said Emdadul Haque, a sub inspector of Banani Police Station.

Abu Bakar Siddique, assistant general manager of the establishment, filed a case with Banani Police Station on Wednesday, accusing Monir, five named, and 20-25 unidentified accused.

Meanwhile, Jubo Dal yesterday expelled Monir from the organisation for violating party discipline and engaging in activities contrary to its ideology and principles.

In a statement, the youth wing of the BNP said it will not take responsibility for any misconduct by expelled members and urged all leaders and activists to sever all organisational ties with them.

The statement also called upon law enforcement agencies to take appropriate legal actions against him.

According to the case statement, on June 30, Monir visited the restaurant and asked for a VIP room. As all rooms were occupied, the bar staff offered him a regular table. After dining and receiving a discounted bill, he allegedly left angrily, threatening retaliation. The following night, 20 to 25 others stormed the restaurant and began vandalising the establishment on Monir's orders, it said.

The group allegedly smashed televisions, tables, chairs, crockery, CCTV monitors and cameras, laptops, and glassware, Abu Bakar said in the statement.

When staffers tried to intervene, some of them were assaulted. Before leaving, the attackers threatened to shut down the business if they informed the police, the case statement added. CCTV footage circulated on social media showed members of the group molesting and assaulting two women as they desperately tried to flee the restaurant.

Contacted, Banani SI Emdadul said they have also heard about the molestation and were looking into the matter. "We are investigating the matter. Police are trying to identify and arrest those involved," the SI added.

Panic grips NBR officials

FROM PAGE 1

mediate. They secured an agreement for the officials to return to work based on what they understood to be government assurances that there would be no reprisals.

But the government's swift steps have created a palpable sense of fear mixed with self-recrimination among protest leaders, with some officials privately conceding their strategy was a "failure of leadership". One senior official admitted they "rushed into the shutdown", which he said was a "tactical error that left them exposed".

"Everyone's now asking: what went wrong? Why did we go for a shutdown so quickly this time?" said the official who held a leadership role in the protest.

"Last time, the movement unfolded gradually. We kept the government informed every step of the way. But this time, it was different."

The official said a sense of "suffocation" now prevails as they struggle to understand why the government took "such an aggressive stance" instead of pursuing other disciplinary options. "No one knows who might be targeted next. The entire atmosphere has become deeply unsettling."

This internal crisis has practical consequences. The removal of seasoned officials has created what insiders describe as a "clear skills and leadership vacuum", raising concerns about the NBR's operational capacity at a critical time.

The episode highlights a tension in a vital area of Bangladesh's economy. The government is attempting to push through reforms to modernise revenue collection, but has met with fierce resistance from an influential bureaucratic cadre. Having faced down the protest, the government seems determined to reassert its authority. Yet, the heavy-handed approach came under criticism.

BUSINESS LEADERS

EMBARRASSED

Prominent business leaders who mediated an end to the crippling strike at the national tax authority on June 29 have expressed "embarrassment" after the government's action against protesters.

Syed Nasim Manzur, president of the Leathergoods and Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association of Bangladesh, emphasised the longstanding demand of the business community for a clear separation between tax policy formulation and tax



With "Quota or Merit? Merit, Merit" painted across his back, a protester waves the national flag as hundreds of university students gather at Dhaka's Shahbagh intersection on July 4, 2024.

FILE PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Protesters call for nationwide strike

FROM PAGE 1

the Supreme Court's Appellate Division declining to stay the High Court's verdict that reinstated the quota system. Instead, it advised the government to submit a formal leave to appeal petition after the full text of the High Court judgement is released. As the news spread swiftly across social media and campus networks, students took to the streets.

The protest began around 11:00am with students gathering in front of the Dhaka University's central library before marching to Shahbagh. Thousands of demonstrators, under the banner "Boishommodirodi Chhatra Andolon" (Students Against Discrimination), brought traffic to a halt from noon to evening.

Defying the rain, they sat on the streets, waving banners and shouting slogans such as "Quota na medha, medha medha," (Quota or merit, merit, merit), "Ekattorer Bangla boishommor thai nai" (There is no place for discrimination in 7's Bangla), and "Quotor kotor da" (Buy the quota), as they renewed their call for an end to what they termed an unjust system.

The protesters also announced fresh programmes: mass processions on July 6 from all universities and colleges and a countrywide student strike on July 7, boycotting classes and exams.

Nahid Islam, a key coordinator of the movement, addressed the gathering

before lifting the blockade at 6:00pm. "The executive branch still holds the authority to reissue the 2018 circular. We call on the government to act decisively, and we hope the court will also consider the voices of the youth.... This is not about opposing the freedom fighters; it is about upholding the spirit of the Liberation War; ensuring equal opportunity for all."

The presence of law enforcers was heavy across the city but they refrained from direct intervention. However, tensions flared briefly around 5:00pm when helmet-donning police officials appeared poised for action. Protesters formed a human shield but the situation de-escalated peacefully.

Beyond Shahbagh, the anti-quota wave intensified nationwide.

Students from Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University blocked the Agargaon road, while Jagannath University students staged sit-ins near Ray Sahib Bazar. Jahangirnagar University protesters took to the Dhaka-Aricha Highway, causing temporary traffic standstills.

Cumilla University students blocked the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway for three hours. The mobilisation spread further as Rajshahi University students braved heavy rain to occupy the Dhaka-Rajshahi Highway.

Similar blockades were reported from Chittagong University, where the

Chittogram-Khagrachhari Highway was blocked, and from Barishal University, where students blocked the Barishal-Kuakata Highway for five hours.

Protesters reiterated their demands: uphold the 2018 circular abolishing quotas, form a commission to review the quota system ensuring only constitutionally mandated reservations remain, stop multiple uses of quota privileges, fill vacant quota posts with merit-based candidates, and ensure a corruption-free, meritocratic civil service.

The political undercurrents were also visible on campus. Pro-government Chhatra League activists were seen positioned in various dormitories to discourage participation in the quota-protests.

At Dhaka University's Amar Ekushey Hall, protester Sarjis Alam was reportedly forced to vacate his dorm, prompting an overnight gathering of fellow students demanding justice.

Meanwhile, the strike by public university teachers and staffers against the government's new pension scheme continued, adding another layer of unrest to an already charged atmosphere.

As night fell over Shahbagh, the energy of the day's protests lingered. Students dispersed with renewed determination; eyes set on the upcoming mass demonstrations and the promised student strike.

Political parties agree

FROM PAGE 1

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed said, "We have seen repeated misuse of presidential clemency. We therefore agreed in principle that this power should be regulated by law."

He added, "We also discussed the formation of a legal advisory board and guidelines to govern the process. We want judicial services to reach people's doorsteps. That's why we support permanent High Court benches at the divisional level, subject to consultation with the Supreme Court."

Salahuddin also stressed that any constitutional amendment must be lasting and above party interests. "We cannot make changes that may not last. Our proposals are not partisan, but made in the best interests of the people and the state. There should be no political bias in this process."

The National Citizen Party (NCP) endorsed both proposals.

NCP Member Secretary Akhtar Hossain said, "Presidential clemency should not be absolute. It should be based on recommendations from a board."

He said the misuse of pardons for political gains in the past undermined justice. "Even top criminals were pardoned for political reasons. This eroded public trust," Akhtar said, calling for legal clarity on crimes ineligible for clemency.

Speaking about decentralisation of the judiciary, the NCP leader said permanent benches at the divisional level are essential due to the backlog of cases. Hundreds of thousands of cases are pending with the High Court, with only around 100 judges to handle those.

He recalled resistance during the eighth amendment to the constitution when attempts to decentralise the judiciary were criticised as threats to the unitary structure.

"This time, the law must avoid constitutional obstacles and reflect people's aspirations," he said.

Syed Abdullah Muhammad Taher, nayeb-e-ameer of the Jamaat-e-Islami, said, "We proposed that clemency must not be granted without the consent of the victim's family. In the past, convicted criminals were pardoned unilaterally..."

He added, "The proposed law would form a recommendation committee to advise the president. In cases like murder, clemency can only be granted with the victim's family's agreement."

On decentralisation, Taher said, "Establishing permanent High Court benches is a demand of the time. It will bring justice closer to the people."

He acknowledged concerns over the lack of experienced judges and lawyers outside Dhaka, but said this could be addressed with training, recruitment, and proper budget allocation.

"Just as doctors are posted in rural areas, similar efforts can attract lawyers to regional courts," he said. "Circuit benches are not a permanent solution. Establishing permanent ones is now a necessity."

Briefing reporters, Prof Riaz said further progress is expected in the coming week.

"Besides, there was supposed to be a discussion on the state of emergency. But this issue was tied to the National Constitutional Council. Now that the NCC is no longer on the table, we will present the state of emergency issue to the political parties again in a new way," he said.

Noting the progress made, Riaz said further advancements on outstanding issues are likely by next week.

Insubordination

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confidential report.

The proposed ordinance also brings changes to the provisions regarding the punishment of guilty officials.

Under the existing ordinance, section 37(2)(b) provides the penalty of "dismissal from service". In contrast, the proposed ordinance replaces this with "compulsory retirement from service".

In cases of compulsory retirement, the employee concerned will be entitled to all retirement-related benefits as per the rules. However, in the case of dismissal from service, the employee is not entitled to any such benefits.

In cases where allegations are brought against a female government employee, the proposed ordinance makes it mandatory to include at least one female official in the probe committee.

Furthermore, no officer of a lower rank than the accused will be allowed to serve on the committee.

Additionally, punitive measures may be taken against them in accordance with government service rules.

"Our demands were more, but even so, we welcome the government's initiative as a 'lesser evil' step," Nazrul Islam, co-general secretary of the Bangladesh Secretariat Officers and Employees Unity Forum, told The Daily Star.

Mob beats 3 of a family dead

FROM PAGE 1

yesterday, Russell's wife Mim Akhter claimed the attack followed a long-standing feud with neighbours Bashir, Sharif, and others.

"On Tuesday, they beat up one of our relatives over an alleged mobile phone theft... Since then, there have been tensions between the families. Bashir even called my husband several times on Wednesday night and threatened to kill him."

When this correspondent visited the area, more than two dozen locals said a social arbitration took place around 7:00am yesterday to resolve the dispute. Local Union Parishad Chairman Shimul Billal and member Bachchu Miah were present, while Bashir and Sharif gathered people at the scene.

At one stage, Rubi became agitated and misbehaved with Shimul and others, which triggered a clash that escalated into the mob attack.

Shimul Billal, Bachchu, and Bashir could not be reached for comments.

The forum staged protests at the Secretariat after the government issued the Public Service (Amendment) Ordinance 2025 on May 25, amending the Public Service Act 2018.

"The current ordinance contained provisions that are unconstitutional, which is why we launched our movement," Nazrul said.

In response to the protests, the government formed a committee comprising the law adviser and the energy adviser to hold discussions with employee leaders regarding the ordinance and to submit necessary recommendations to the advisory council.

The committee recommended the latest amendment.

"It is the government's responsibility to ensure that there is no misuse of this law. At the same time, I sincerely thank all those who were involved in realising the just demands of the protesting employees," Nazrul added.

Public administration expert Firoz Mia told this newspaper, "As I see it, the government has included these provisions mainly to restrict the demonstrations of public employees. It would have been better if a separate law had been enacted to address employee agitation. There is a risk that these additions to the service law could be misused for other purposes against innocent employees."

Cumilla Superintendent of Police Nazir Ahmed Khan said, "If anyone commits a crime, it must be reported to law enforcement. Those who take the law into their own hands will face legal action."

Meanwhile, the killings have drawn condemnation from rights groups.

Ain o Salish Kendra expressed deep concern and called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. "The public killing of anyone based on suspicion is a human rights violation and goes against the rule of law," it said in a statement, urging a zero-tolerance policy against mob attacks.

In a separate statement, Manabadihikar Shongskriti Foundation termed the incident a form of extrajudicial killing. "It is the state's responsibility to bring those involved in the mob beating to justice."

BLAST (Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust) also called for a fair and speedy investigation and trial of those responsible.

'PR system a threat to democracy'

Says Rizvi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday said local leadership will not develop if elections are held under the Proportional Representation (PR) system.

"If elections are held under the PR system, the preferred candidate in the parliamentary constituency will not be able to become an MP. People will not be able to vote for their preferred candidate," he said at a programme in Rangpur.

Rizvi said under the PR system, the party, not the people, will choose MPs, which will pave the way for authoritarianism.

"Today, various things are being brought forward -- proportional voting. Why proportional voting? This will block the path to developing local leadership. If someone becomes a leader by staying in an area for a long time and maintaining contact with the people, even they could be excluded based on party decisions. This

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TAVELLA MURDER
3 get life term,
4 acquitted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced three people to life imprisonment for the 2015 murder of Italian national Cesare Tavella in the capital's Gulshan diplomatic zone.

The convicts -- Tamjid Ahmed Rubel alias "Mobile" Rubel, Russell Chowdhury alias "Bhagne" Russell, and Minhajul Arfin -- were also fined Tk 50,000 each. In default of payment, they will serve one additional year in jail.

Judge Sheikh Samidul Islam of the Third Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court delivered the verdict in the presence of five of the accused.

The court acquitted four others -- BNP leader MA Quayum, his brother Abdul Matin, Shakhawat Hossain Sharif, and Sohel alias "Bhangari" Sohel.

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With no designated waiting area nearby, guardians sit on the staircase of the Farmgate Metro Rail Station in the capital yesterday, waiting for their children to finish the HSC exams at nearby centres. The photo was taken around 12:45pm.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Dengue cases see sharp rise in early July

Over 1,160 hospitalised in first 3 days, total cases cross 11,000

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 1,160 dengue patients were hospitalised in the first three days of July, compared to a total of 5,951 cases in June, painting an alarming picture of the outbreak.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), one more dengue patient died and 358 others were hospitalised in the 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the latest deaths and cases, the total number of dengue infections this year has reached 11,456, while the death toll stands at 45, DGHS data shows.

Amid the rising numbers, Prof Dr Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the chief adviser for health ministry, warned that the situation could become more difficult if cases continue to rise.

He said the situation is still under control and the government is prepared to respond.

Dr Rahman made the remarks yesterday after a ceremony at the Directorate General of Health Services in Mohakhali, where China handed over a batch of "Dengue Combined Kits".

"In identified hotspots, we are providing all kinds of support. We are ready, but if dengue spreads further, it may become more challenging."

Prof Dr Sayedur Rahman

"Fogging should only be done in confirmed hotspot areas. The continued reliance on it is misguided," he said.

He recommended using Insect Growth Regulators (IGRs), which are effective for up to three months, alongside laricides. He

also urged people to clean and overturn water containers to prevent breeding.

Bashar emphasised the importance of public awareness. "Without community-level efforts to destroy breeding sites, dengue cannot be controlled," he said.

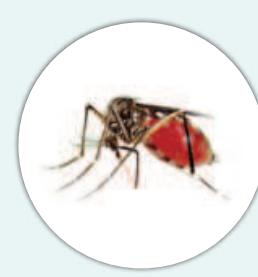
Warning that all 64 districts could face worse outbreaks than in previous years, Bashar said Aedes mosquitoes are now present across the country.

He called on the local government ministry to direct deputy commissioners, municipalities, and city corporations to urgently destroy mosquito larvae and breeding sites.

He also urged the ministry to supply IGRs or allow local bodies to procure and use them with proper guidance.

Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman echoed these concerns, saying the rapid growth of the Aedes population is driving a sharp rise in cases. "Once infected, mosquitoes can lay infected eggs, further worsening the outbreak," he said.

He called for a dedicated vector control department to scientifically manage mosquito-borne diseases. "Such a department should handle cluster identification, surveillance, and targeted interventions. Without a structured approach, current efforts will fall short," he warned.



In identified hotspots, we are providing all kinds of support. We are ready, but if dengue spreads further, it may become more challenging.

Prof Dr Sayedur Rahman

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A wheel of an SUV got stuck in an open manhole on the capital's busy Kakrail Road yesterday and was freed after a half-hour effort. Locals said the manhole had been left uncovered for the past three days, posing a serious risk of accidents. However, the authorities concerned have not taken any visible steps to this effect so far.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Yunus urges Japan to enhance support in key sectors

BSS, Dhaka

JICA is focusing on supporting reforms in Bangladesh's judiciary, public administration, local government, and health sector as the country prepares for its graduation from LDC status in 2026.

Miyazaki Katsura, executive senior vice president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency, said this at a meeting with Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the state guest house Jamuna in the capital yesterday.

At the meeting, Yunus urged Japan to further strengthen its cooperation with Bangladesh in areas such as investment, fisheries, the Rohingya humanitarian response, and youth development, including education and sports.

"Japan has always been a trusted friend. I recently visited your country, and I was deeply touched by the warmth and hospitality extended to me and my delegation," said Prof Yunus.

Miyazaki noted that Bangladesh remains one

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Dhaka to continue efforts for Hasina's extradition: Touhid

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain yesterday said the government would continue to pursue the extradition of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who has reportedly been in India since August 5 last year.

"I don't know who regrets how much, but we see the matter this way -- if necessary, the matter will be followed up," he told reporters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when asked whether there was any regret over the government's failure to bring Hasina back nearly a year after the formal request.

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JULY CHANKHARPOOL CASE
ICT to decide on charge framing on July 14

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday set July 14 to decide whether charges will be framed against eight accused in a case filed over crimes against humanity in the capital's Chankharpool during the July uprising.

On that day, the three-member tribunal will also decide whether to discharge the accused, as defence lawyers have pleaded for their release, claiming the charges are baseless.

The prosecution argued that the accused were involved in the killing of six people on August 5 last year and that charges should be framed against them.

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PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Credit Rating of Bank Asia PLC.

This is for information of all concerned that Credit Rating Information and Services Limited (CRISL) rated Bank Asia PLC. **AA+** for long term and **ST-1** for short term based on the financials of 2024. The rating will remain valid up to 01 July 2026.

The information will also be available on the website of the Bank at www.bankasia-bd.com

Ratings

2025

Long Term

AA+

Short Term

ST-1

AA+ : High quality, higher safety and sound credit profile with modest risk

ST-1 : Highest certainty of timely payment of obligations and very strong liquidity

Dated: 03 July 2025
Dhaka

Bank Asia PLC.
Corporate Office

Bank Asia Tower, 32 & 34, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue
Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215

Ahmed Raihan Nizam passes away

CITY DESK

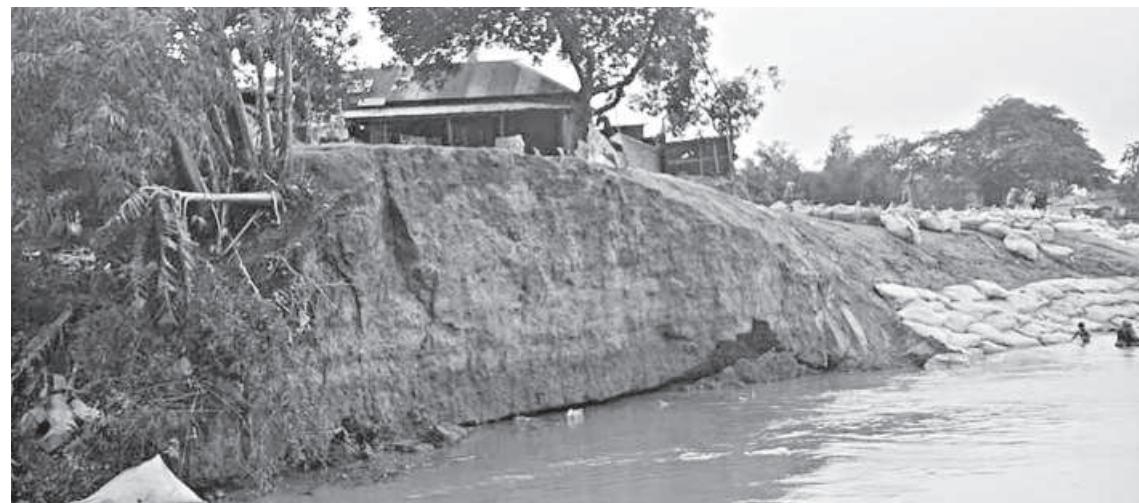
Ahmed Raihan Nizam, a former cricketer, and businessman, died in New York on June 29 after a yearlong battle with lung cancer. He was 68.

He is survived by his wife, Dr Nazneen Anwar of the World Health Organization, and their children – Omar Rasman Nizam and his wife Jennifer Rehana, Amer Razi Nizam and his wife Fariba Ali; and Faria Samreen Nizam, wife of Ikram Mayeen Choudhury and their daughter Inara.

Ahmed Raihan attended Faujdarhat Cadet College before moving to the United States to complete his MBA from Rochester University and later Scranton University.

He was the youngest son of late OR Nizam, former vice-chairman of the Chittagong Municipality in pre-independence Bangladesh. Raihan returned to Bangladesh to join his family business, Turner Grahams (Bangladesh) founded by his father.

PRAYER TIMING
JULY 4
Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-10 12-30 5-00 6-55 8-17
JAMAAT 4-45 1-15 5-15 7-00 8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Jamuna erosion displaces hundreds

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Jamuna river erosion has taken a devastating turn over the past month in Chowhali, Shahzadpur, and Sadar upazilas of Sirajganj, devouring at least 100 homes, two primary schools, several hundred acres of cropland, and portions of riverbank protection infrastructure.

Locals now live in constant fear of losing their remaining homesteads and croplands as the erosion continues to intensify with the onset of monsoon.

In Chowhali upazila, over 50 homesteads, two primary schools, and large stretches of cropland have already been lost in Ompurpur, Baghutia, and Sthol unions, according to locals.

"When people elsewhere were celebrating Eid-ul-Azha, we were busy shifting our houses and school from the riverbank," said Md Solaiman Hossain, a teacher of Agbipur Government Primary

School and a resident of Chowhali upazila.

Agbipur village has been the hardest hit, with 40 to 50 residents left homeless as erosion worsened, he added.

Md Abu Daud, headteacher of Agbipur Government Primary School, said the tin shed school has been shifted half a kilometre away, but most students are unable to attend classes due to the relocation.

Md Jahangir Hossain, assistant primary education officer in Chowhali upazila, said Agbipur Government Primary School in Ompurpur union and Langolmora Government Primary School in Sthol union were devoured by the river over the past month and had to be relocated.

Chowhali UNO Md Mostafizur Rahman said, "The upazila administration has allocated four tonnes of rice for erosion victims."

UNO Md Kamruzzaman said dozens of houses and several hundred acres of cropland in Shahzadpur upazila have been lost

as erosion has taken a serious turn in around 10 spots.

A similar situation prevails in Chongachha and Khokshabari unions of Sadar upazila.

Md Mokhlesur Rahman, executive engineer of the Water Development Board in Sirajganj, said geo-bags have been dumped in erosion-hit areas.

"Jamuna's water level has been rising over the last 11 days, causing erosion at various points. However, there is no damage within the flood-protected areas," he said.

He said the BWDB is working in Sirajganj Sadar and Shahzadpur upazilas, but the erosion-hit shoal areas under Chowhali upazila remain outside the flood protection coverage.

Contacted, Md Abdul Basset, relief and rehabilitation officer in Sirajganj district, said, "We are observing the situation and waiting for reports from upazila administrations. Once we get the reports, we will take steps for the erosion victims."

Five to die for murder

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced five men to death for the murder of a Shariatpur youth eight years ago.

Among the convicts, Salmun Sardar and Aminul Sardar are behind bars while Ismail Sardar, Rezaul Sardar and Jewel Sardar absconding.

Judge Mohammad Halim Ullah Chowdhury of Dhaka's Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 delivered the verdict, Mizanur Rahman, the tribunal's bench assistant, told The Daily Star.

Twelve other accused -- Mojibur Sardar, Fazlur Sardar, Malek Sardar, Mokhles Sardar, Mahbub Sardar, Tota Sardar, Tipu Sardar alias Parvez Sardar, Salam Sardar, Pavel Sardar, Nurul Haque Sardar, Parul Begum, and Shirin Akter -- were acquitted as the charges against them could not be proven.

The victim, Delwar Hossain Sardar, was a resident of West Charosundi village in Shariatpur Sadar upazila.

According to the case statement, on July 12, 2017, Delwar and his brother Dulal Sardar were returning home from Subochon Bazar by auto-rickshaw when the accused intercepted them over previous enmity.

Delwar and his brother were beaten and attacked with a sharp weapon. Delwar later died at the DMCH.

On July 14, Delwar's father, Salam Sardar, filed a murder case with Palong Model Police Station, naming 31 people.

'BNP men' storm residence of AK Azad in Faridpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A group of BNP leaders and activists of the Faridpur metropolitan unit allegedly stormed the residence of Hamid Group Managing Director AK Azad, also former lawmaker of Faridpur-3 constituency, in the town's Jheeluli yesterday, alleging that Awami League leaders were holding a "secret meeting" there.

The incident occurred around 3:45pm, led by Golam Mostafa Miraj, member secretary of the BNP unit, said locals.

Hamid Group's land officer Md Rafizul Khan, project engineer Md Sulaiman Hossain, security guard Mehedi Hasan, and cleaner Hannan Mia were present at the house.

Rafizul said several BNP men banged on the gate, prompting the guard to open it. Golam Mostafa, along with Metropolitan Jubo Dal organiser secretary Nahidul Islam Nahid and a few others, entered the premises.

Inside, they asked the guard if any AL meeting was being held. Upon receiving a negative reply, they left. While departing, they allegedly threatened, "If such incidents happen..., we will set fire to this house."

Locals said the BNP activists later gathered near the Faridpur Sadar Upazila Land Office, where about 100 supporters joined them. The group brought out a procession and marched towards Onather Intersection, circled back past Azad's house, and proceeded westward.

The procession ended at the BNP district office at Kathpatti, where a brief rally was held. Party leaders warned that no attempt to "rehabilitate Awami League's collaborators" in Faridpur would be tolerated.

Asked about the incident, Golam Mostafa said, "We received information that Awami League and its allies were holding a meeting at that house in Jheeluli to create unrest in the country. That's why we went there."

He said Nayab Yusuf, daughter of late BNP vice chairman and former minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, is conducting public outreach as BNP's potential candidate for the Faridpur-3 in the upcoming election. "We are working towards that goal," he said.

Witnesses claimed the BNP activists who entered Azad's house were all supporters of Nayab.

Contacted, Nayab said AK Azad owns several houses in the town. "A BNP procession took place today, but I am not aware of any incident involving BNP activists storming one of his houses."

District BNP convener Syed Modarres Ali said he is currently in Dhaka and has no knowledge of the incident.

Md Asaduzzaman, officer-in-charge of Faridpur Kotwali Police Station, said police went to the scene on information around 4:00pm, but did not find anyone there.

ACC sues Saiful Alam PR system a threat

FROM PAGE 3

According to the second case, a loan of Tk 104.2 crore was sanctioned and disbursed in the name of M/S A M Trading. The money was then routed via various bank accounts using fraudulent means and ultimately deposited into the account of S Alam Super Edible Oil Ltd.

In the third case, Tk 71.5 crore was loaned in the name of M/S Saiful & Co and was similarly funneled into the account of S Alam Super Edible Oil Ltd.

The other accused in the case include S Alam Group Vice Chairman Abdus Samad, directors

Mohammad Abdullah Hasan and Shahan Ferdous, former executive VP and head of risk management at Reliance Finance Rashedul Haque, former corporate finance manager Nahida Runai, SVP and credit committee member Kazi Ahmed Jamal, former deputy manager of corporate finance Jumaratul Banna, former MD of Marine Vegetable Oils Ltd Zahid Ahmed, directors Tipu Sultan and Md Ishaq, Mostafa & Co proprietor Md Golam Mostafa, AM Trading proprietor Md Abdullah Al Mamun, Saiful & Co proprietor Saiful.

Meanwhile, Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Susan Ryle has said her country is keen to support Bangladesh in holding a free and fair national election.

"There has been discussion on the election in Bangladesh with importance. Australia is providing significant assistance in this regard, particularly to the Election Commission, and they are continuing with that support," said BNP Standing Committee member Amir Khosru

Mahmud Chowdhury. Khosru made the remarks while briefing reporters after Australian High Commissioner Susan Ryle paid a courtesy call on BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Responding to a journalist's question, the BNP leader said voter turnout in the upcoming national polls will be very good, and that people will go to polling centres with great enthusiasm and interest.

"Male and female voters of all ages will participate, and there will be a good election. A government will be elected via a neutral and acceptable election. This will help advance the democratic transition," he said.

Addendum-02 to Invitation to Bid for Worldwide Media Rights

(of Bilateral (T20i) Home Series between Bangladesh National Cricket Team (Men) and Pakistan National Cricket Team (Men) from 17 July 2025 to 25 July 2025 and All Other Bilateral Home Series(s) Involving Bangladesh National Cricket Team (Men) from 26 August 2025 to 15 June 2027)

Ref: BCB/ World Media Rights / 2025/435

United Nations Development Programme

জাতিসংঘ উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচী



Procurement Notice: Invitation to Bid

Quantum Reference number: UNDP-BGD-00890

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bangladesh is seeking bids from interested firms for the following requirement:

Supply, install, and commission of solar system for the GCA Project, UNDP Bangladesh

Deadline for submission of quotation is at 4:30 p.m. (Bangladesh Local Time), 23-Jul-2025

Quotation may be submitted on or before the deadline indicated by UNDP in the procurement notice. For learning more against ITB, pre-bid meeting link & submission documents through quantum platform, please visit the below link: https://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_negotiation.cfm?nego_id=35314

For any technical query, please write to us through bd.procurement@undp.org mentioning the reference no: UNDP-BGD-00890 in the email subject line within 23rd July 2025.

ADDENDUM-02

With reference to the advertisements published in the national dailies i.e., the Daily Star, Prothom Alo and Bangladesh Protidin on 12th of June 2025 under the heading: 'Invitation to Bid for Worldwide Media Rights of All Bilateral Home Series(s) Involving Bangladesh National Cricket Team (Men) from 12 July 2025 to 15 June 2027' (Ref: BCB/World Media Rights/2025/365) and also the Addendum-01 as published in the Daily Star on 23rd of June 2025 under the heading 'Addendum-01 to Invitation to Bid for Worldwide Media Rights of All Bilateral Home Series(s) Involving Bangladesh National Cricket Team (Men) from 12 July 2025 to 15 June 2027' (Ref: BCB/ World Media Rights / 2025/389). The following modifications and clarifications shall be deemed as part of the aforesaid advertisements and are hereby issued as an official Addendum-02:

BCB has resolved to keep the 'important deadlines' for Bid Document Collection, Technical Offer Submission, Security Deposit Submission & Opening of Bidding Process, as unchanged (same as those mentioned in the Invitation to Bid dated 12th June 2025 and the Addendum-01 dated 23rd June 2025) so long as it relates to Bid(s) for Worldwide Media Rights of Bilateral (T20i) Home Series between Bangladesh National Cricket Team (Men) and Pakistan National Cricket Team (Men) from 17th July 2025 to 25th July 2025.

BCB has further resolved to change the 'important deadlines' for Bid Document Collection, Technical Offer Submission, Security Deposit Submission & Opening of Bidding Process to extend the same for a period of 1.5 month (45 days) in addition to those mentioned in the Invitation to Bid dated 12th June 2025 and the Addendum-01 dated 23rd June 2025, so long as it relates to Bid(s) for Worldwide Media Rights of All Other Bilateral Home Series(s) Involving Bangladesh National Cricket Team (Men) from 26th August 2025 to 15th June 2027'.

- Bid Document Collection via email: 15 June 2025 - 6 July 2025
- Technical Offer Submission Deadline: 7 July 2025 (by 5:00 PM BST)
- Security Deposit Submission Deadline: 8 July 2025 (by 12:00 PM BST)
- Open Bidding Process: 10 July 2025 (commencing at 12:00 PM BST)

2. Important Deadlines (changed)

As regards Bid(s) for Worldwide Media Rights of All Other Bilateral Home Series(s) Involving Bangladesh National Cricket Team (Men) from 26th August 2025 to 15th June 2027:

- Bid Document Collection via email: 15th July 2025 - 20th August 2025
- Technical Offer Submission Deadline: 21 August 2025 (by 5:00 PM BST)
- Security Deposit Submission Deadline: 24 August 2025 (by 12:00 PM BST)
- Open Bidding Process: 25 August 2025 (commencing at 12:00 PM BST)

For further clarification or detailed allocation sheet, bidders may contact: sponsorship.rights@ccb-cricket.com

The BCB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids at its sole discretion at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever. The BCB also reserves the right to amend, postpone or cancel this Addendum-02 at any time prior to commencement of the Open Bidding Process on July 10, 2025 at BST 1200 hrs and / or modify, add or alter the terms of this document and/ or the conditions for bidding process by issuing further addendum(s) at any time prior to the submission of the bid.

Authority
Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)

Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka-1216, Bangladesh

Norwegian Embassy
Dhaka

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Dhaka is seeking a Programme Officer to manage projects within development cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

Requirements:

- A higher university degree in relevant field
- 3+ years in project management
- Fluency in English
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills

Details of the position and application process are available on the Norwegian Embassy website: <https://www.norway.no/en/bangladesh/norway-bangladesh/vacancies/>
Interested applicants should apply by sending their application to: recruitment.emb.dhaka@mfa.no

Application deadline: 15 July 2025. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Time to end the carnage on our roads

RSF data on June road fatalities raises fresh alarm

Despite countless lives being lost in road crashes across the country year after year, it is astounding that the crisis continues to be met with a shocking level of indifference or ineffectiveness from those responsible for road safety. According to the latest data from Road Safety Foundation (RSF), at least 696 people were killed in June. That is, mind you, an average of over 23 lives lost every day. For context, as per Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, 614 people were killed in May and 583 in April. While the June data was likely influenced by increased road trips during the extended Eid-ul-Azha holiday, the overall trend points to a chronic problem that cannot be blamed on seasonal home rush alone.

These persistently grim statistics should have jolted us into decisive interventions long ago. The question is, why didn't they? A closer look at the June data reveals just how pervasive and multidimensional the crisis has become. Motorcycles—which are proving increasingly hard to regulate—alone accounted for over 37 percent of total crashes and nearly 33 percent of fatalities. Pedestrians made up more than 17 percent of the deaths, while another 15 percent were drivers and their assistants. The RSF has identified excessive speeding as the leading cause of most accidents. Other long-standing factors include unfit vehicles, poorly designed and maintained roads, unskilled and overworked drivers, weak traffic enforcement, and the widespread disregard for traffic laws.

This deadly mix has created an environment of near-total anarchy on our roads, and unless it is systematically addressed, road casualties will continue to claim lives. In this context, the government's ongoing effort to draft a new road safety law based on the UN-endorsed Safe System Approach seems like a positive step. Reportedly, a preliminary draft is currently under review. Structured around five key pillars—safer people, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer speeds, and post-crash care—the draft law promises to address core issues that the current Road Transport Act, 2018, has failed to tackle adequately.

But let us be clear: legislation alone cannot save lives. The Road Transport Act, for all its flaws, has provisions that could have improved road safety if implemented properly. Unfortunately, it has remained largely toothless due to a lack of political will, institutional coordination, and enforcement. The same fate must not befall the new law. If passed, it must be enforced without fear or favour, and accompanied by serious investments in traffic management, public awareness, driver training, and post-crash response systems.

Given the persistent fatalities, we urge the interim government to take the crisis of road safety with the urgency it deserves. The authorities must do everything necessary to finally break the cycle of neglect and lack of accountability that has allowed so many lives to be lost in vain. There is no excuse left for inaction.

JU's greenery must be preserved

Protect the campus from unplanned development

It is truly shocking that Jahangirnagar University, known for its tranquil, green campus, is gradually losing its greenery to various development projects. Recently, around 50 trees were felled in front of the Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) building to make way for an extension under the Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences. After this sparked outrage among students and environmental activists, both the VC and the director of the university's "Further Development Project" said they had no clue about the incident. The director stressed that he did not give permission to cut the trees, while the VC insisted that he was not informed about the removal of so many trees. The question is, how can a contractor firm fell trees without prior permission from the authorities concerned? Who, then, is really responsible for this violation?

Unfortunately, this episode comes after the JU administration's earlier assurance that no construction involving tree felling would proceed without the visible development of a master plan. JU has already lost its vast greenery and water bodies due to such construction works. A recent land use study—analysing data from 1988 to 2023—revealed that the campus has lost nearly 40 percent of its water bodies over the past three and a half decades. The study also found that the university's original master plan, designed in 1968 by the eminent architect Mazarul Islam, has been largely neglected in subsequent development projects. Despite repeated protests from students and environmentalists, tree felling has continued unabated. In the latest case, the manager of the contractor firm said that his workers went to fell the trees as the students of the mathematics department told him to do so. This raises another question: can the students authorise such a task without the authorities' approval?

Such environmentally harmful activities pose a serious threat to the campus's biodiversity and ecological balance. Too often, development projects are carried out without any prior biodiversity assessment. A university biodiversity team has warned that the proposed "Further Development Project" could result in the loss of 2,055 plants from 28 species. We, therefore, call on the authorities to immediately halt all environmentally destructive projects and activities. It is imperative that a comprehensive master plan is developed for the JU to protect its greenery and water bodies. As for the latest violation, the administration must conduct a transparent investigation and hold those responsible accountable. Indiscriminate cutting of trees must stop.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



Republic of the Philippines proclaimed

On this day in 1946, the Republic of the Philippines was proclaimed, and Manuel Roxas became its first president.

EDITORIAL

When the state thinks like a man



Symhe Wadud
teaches law at the University of
Dhaka and is in charge of Law &
Our Rights at The Daily Star.

PSYMHE WADUD

A woman was tortured, disrobed, subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment in Muradnagar, Cumilla. She was filmed against her will, without her consent, and her shame was widely publicised, auctioned, and politicised. She, as a woman, does not inhabit the vacuum, and represents no one identity—she is a woman, has a non-dominant identity, and is socioeconomically vulnerable. These identities shape her lived reality and her movement across multiple axes of power, oppression, and dominance. Certainly, her sex was the most prominent at the time she was brutalised, tortured, and sexualised both physically and online, but other identities also contributed at varying degrees to the treatment she sustained.

The woman's body was lewdly relevant on social media, and so was the age-old vernaculars of gender politics. On one end, there were men (and women too) claiming there was no rape, but an extramarital affair, in a way justifying the act of gender-based torture and abuse. Then there were men sexualising the victim's body, aggravating her physical-sexual violence and reproducing her trauma. Even those who apparently were in favour of the victim, albeit unknowingly, were against victims of similar other crimes. "The door was broken, and this proves rape" or "there was force and force is a constituent element of rape," some argued. They were perhaps well-meaning, yet oblivious that there could have still been rape without the door being broken, without signs of physical force being visible, and without a perfect victim. Whether there was consent or not, legally speaking, is the fact in issue in a rape case, and is to be proven or disproven in a court of law within a criminal justice system of adequate standard. As it transpires, the victim will likely withdraw her case and our social media judges will likely hand down the final verdict against her, with

and policies have historically been skewed, disproportionately impacting and marginalising women. Years of research-based advocacy has failed to bring in meaningful reforms in the rape laws (we have yet to change the 1860 Penal Code definition of rape, rather bringing in new confusions with few peripheral contestations such as criminalising sexual intercourse upon promise of marriage in the Nari o Shishu Nirjaton Domon (Shongshodhon) Ordinance, 2025. Our

courts, too, have operated on a narrow domain of defining rape, and have largely been obsessed with evidence of physical force, with presumption of an ideal versus imperfect victim, and with uncalled for virtue-signalling every now and then. Our legal institutions and criminal justice actors all reflect a perverse lack of gender sensitivity, if not always blatant misogyny. Careful research on the laws and judgements clearly reveal how the state and its institutions have always thought like a man without leaving inches at all for intersectional storytelling on part of the victim, who is almost always a woman or a child.

The nation-building in the post-independence context did not have an explicit "woman question" in mind. The

conversation with the woman question. Even the agenda on women's reserved seats in parliament sounds hollow when major political parties speak in the language of formal and formulaic equality without accounting for what lies in the substance.

An individual woman sustains the crudest of what is decided by powerful men for women as a collective. The rather benign jokes about women being subservient to men, thoughtless abuses hurled at women demanding equality, acts of physical violence against women simply for dressing differently (and celebrations surrounding such acts of violence)—all undergird such gender-based torture. It is the appositional norms of compulsion and compliance, dominance and subservience, within



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

which such gender-based violence takes place, and with such violence, we see why the private is in fact political, and how simply gender-based inequalities get compounded and exacerbated.

The incident unmasked, yet again, the cruel face of the state as a male homologue, with all its male institutions, built political environment and infrastructures. Indeed, the state is a male, and "it adopts the standpoint of male power" on the relation between woman and the state, always.

The climate budget for FY26 is disappointing



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(ULAB). He can be reached at hmrfanullah@
outlook.com

HASEEB MD IRFANULLAH

Since the 2015-16 fiscal year, alongside the national budgets, the Finance Division of the government has commendably produced "climate budgets." These modest sized documents outline the expenditure of 25 ministries and government agencies on climate change. Per the climate budget of FY2025-26, these agencies have been allocated Tk 41,208.97 crore to spend on climate action in the new fiscal year. This represents 10.07 percent of their total budget, 5.2 percent of the national budget, and 0.66 percent of GDP—figures similar to those seen in recent years. However, the new climate budget disappoints me for three reasons.

First, There is little to no structural improvement in the 136-page document compared to the previous versions. For instance, in January 2019, the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP, 2009), a revolutionary policy instrument, became obsolete after its 10-year tenure. Since then, not updating it in the five and a half years until July 2024 was a failure of the previous regime. But how can the current reform-mandated interim government, with capable and dynamic advisers in charge of finance and environment, present the new climate budget based on the outdated six pillars of the BCCSAP? The themes are: i) food security, social protection, and health; ii) comprehensive disaster management; iii) infrastructure; iv) research and knowledge management; v) mitigation and low-carbon

development; and vi) capacity-building and institutional strengthening.

The world is fast shifting towards new directions in climate action. The new climate budget of Bangladesh should have allocated funds under the Just Transition theme—not just for emission reduction, but also for ensuring workers' rights during such transitions. Another emerging theme is Locally Led Adaptation (LLA), which shifts responsibility for adaptation to local communities and actors, supported by external stakeholders. Where adaptation fails, we face

This apathy towards the climate budget mirrors another alarming trend: no political party in Bangladesh—new or old, young or established—addresses climate change in any meaningful way.

"loss and damage"—an area beyond conventional disaster response, and particularly relevant to Bangladesh.

Over the past six years, approaches like nature-based solutions (NbS) have been mainstreamed into our development and climate agenda, and the climate budget should have recognised that. It's time we understood that knowledge creation and management, capacity-building, and technology transfer cannot

remain standalone themes; they must cut across all major areas. Yet, we remain stuck with the philosophies of 2009 for another year.

Second, the allocations are still

made across 25 government agencies,

as has been the practice for the past

nine years. It has been repeatedly

suggested to include local-level

allocations in the climate budget, as

similarly, it is perplexing why the ministries of religious affairs and information have no place in the climate budget. Given the influence of religious leaders in shaping beliefs, social systems, and politics, shouldn't they be part of climate action? The information ministry's role has also been largely ignored, except for one Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) project. Media houses working on climate do so largely due to the personal commitment of senior leaders, not government facilitation.

Many of these issues could have been addressed if the relevant ministries had held consultations with stakeholders before drafting the climate budget.

Indeed, the failure of the Finance Division and the environment ministry to reform the climate budget is disappointing. Equally disheartening is the relative silence of NGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs), which used to be more vocal about such shortcomings. That said, over the next few months, we will likely witness a flurry of activity within ministries and NGO/CSO offices as they prepare for COP30 in Belém, Brazil in November this year.

This apathy towards the climate budget mirrors another alarming trend: no political party in Bangladesh—new or old, young or established—addresses climate change in any meaningful way. Unless this changes, the upcoming election manifestos will likely have nothing significant on climate change—the most pressing, transgenerational crisis of our lifetime. And if that happens, it would truly be a disappointment.

we now have a robust understanding of location-specific climate vulnerabilities. Bangladesh's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) for 2023-2050 exemplifies such assessments. So, it would not have been difficult for the Finance Division to make geographically focused climate budget estimates—specifically for districts, upazilas, and unions—based on project locations already mentioned in public- and donor-funded project documents. That would have been a fundamental shift, but the opportunity was missed.

Third, for reasons unknown, the Finance Division remains fixated on 25 ministries, departments, and divisions when considering the climate budget. I have long advocated for expanding this boundary. A clear candidate for inclusion is the youth ministry, especially after the youth-led movement in July last year. The interim government seems more

inclined to engage young people in national politics than in climate action. That's why the enthusiasm sparked by the chief adviser at COP29 in Baku last year, where he engaged with the Bangladeshi youth, failed to be reflected in this crucial annual climate finance exercise.

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Why reforming the NHRC as per the Paris Principles matters



Farhana Syead
is deputy director at the National
Human Rights Commission
Bangladesh.

FARHANA SYEAD

On August 29, 2024, Bangladesh signed the UN convention on enforced disappearance, hence completing signing all nine core international human rights treaties. This step by the interim government symbolises our respect towards international human rights norms and commitment to uphold those. On several occasions, the chief adviser emphasised his government's commitment to upholding human rights and freedom of speech in the country. Among many important initiatives required to fulfil this commitment is reforming the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of Bangladesh, which needs immediate attention.

Due to widespread criticism of the NHRC, particularly in terms of civil and political rights, one may question the importance of the commission. However, it cannot be denied that the success or effectiveness of such an institution depends on political will, enabling environment, and the institution's leadership.

Considering discussions about crucial reforms, the NHRC staff now see a light of hope to make the organisation stronger and credible at home and abroad.

First, we need to realise the importance of an independent and credible national human rights institution (NHRI). Over the last five decades, most countries, including Bangladesh, have signed, ratified, or acceded to the major human rights treaties. When it comes to honouring their commitments to implementing the rights embodied in these instruments, many states have conspicuously failed in important respects. Moreover, development assistance has, since the end of the Cold War, increasingly been conditioned by both multilateral and bilateral donors based on respect for human rights and reforms designed to enhance good governance. NHRI have been recognised by them as an important element in this regard.

As a matter of fact, as of April 2025, 118 countries have established NHRI, among which 91 have A status while 27 hold B

status. This accreditation is crucial for such an institution as it enhances the image of a country in the international arena, and also, fully compliant A status NHRI enjoy several rights and powers, such as voting power in the annual meeting of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) and Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and the opportunity to become a bureau member of GANHRI.

However, it is unfortunate to note that only two NHRI in South Asia—Bangladesh and Maldives—were awarded B status while those of India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka were awarded A status from the Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA) of GANHRI. SCA accredits the status to an NHRI based on compliance with the Paris Principles, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993. The Paris Principles provide a broad normative framework for the status, structure, mandate, composition, power, and methods of operation of the principal domestic human rights mechanism.

The Paris Principles require NHRI to have as wide a role as possible, with two main responsibilities: human rights promotion and human rights protection.

Human rights promotion includes creating a national culture of human rights where tolerance, equality, and mutual respect thrive. Human rights protection, on the other hand, means helping to identify and investigate human rights abuses, bringing those responsible for human rights violations to justice, and providing a remedy and redress for victims. Core protection activities should focus primarily on the prevention of torture, arbitrary detention, disappearances, and the protection of human rights defenders. Linked to this is the role of NHRI as watchdogs, reviewing conditions in detention facilities, visiting facilities unannounced and requesting private interviews with detainees. The inability to directly investigate law enforcement agencies is a critical flaw that is preventing the

NHRC in Bangladesh from getting an A status, regardless of how broad its general mandate might seem on paper.

The Paris Principles require that an NHRI be provided with an appropriate level of funding in order to guarantee its independence and ability to freely determine its priorities and activities. They also require that government funding be allocated to a separate budget line item applicable only to the NHRI. India and Pakistan's NHRI have complied with this requirement, and these NHRI receive a parliament approved grant. Although the NHRC Bangladesh has overcome dependency on donor budget and now fully operates with funds from the government, financial independence is still to be achieved as the commission does not receive its budget directly from parliament.

Another crucial criterion for an NHRI to be fully compliant with the Paris Principles is related to the selection and appointment of NHRI leadership. It requires the selection process to be transparent, through broad advertisement, maximising the number of potential candidates from a wide range of societal groups. The SCA recommends that NHRI advertise vacancies and establish clear and uniform criteria upon which to assess the merit of eligible applicants. Another vital point is the long term vacancy of NHRI leadership. In this matter, incorporating a provision in the NHRC Act on appointing alternate commissioners during the period following the resignation of a commissioner may be considered.

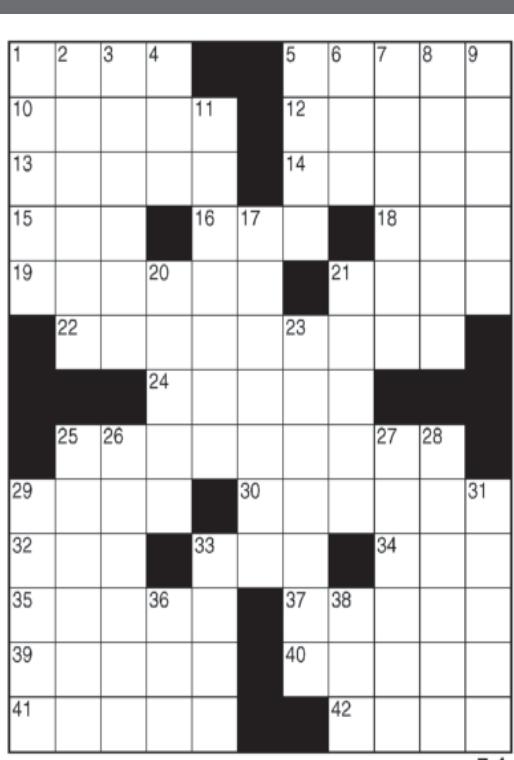
To move forward, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the importance of NHRC in a civilised, democratic country is undeniable. Kofi Annan in 2002 said that building strong human rights institutions at the country level is what, in the long run, will ensure that human rights are protected and advanced in a sustained manner. For long now, the NHRC and human rights defenders have been advocating for amending the NHRC Act as per the Paris Principles, arranging for a permanent space, increasing its budget, and providing lucrative service benefits to the staff. We hope that the interim government will consider reforming the commission as per the Paris Principles to make a stronger and credible NHRC that will pave the way for promoting and protecting human rights in Bangladesh, and will enhance the country's dignity in the international arena as well.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Card collection
5 Burglar's crime
10 Verdi pieces
12 TV sound
13 Skater Harding
14 Nursery resident
15 Summer in Paris
16 Tick off
18 Pot fill
19 "Cold as ice," e.g.
21 Thatcher, for one
22 Kitchen containers
24 Composer
Bruckner
25 Capone's cohorts
29 Steamed
30 Capital north of
Syracuse
32 Lobbying org.
33 Low digit
34 Big shot
35 Tony or Oscar
37 Monsoon weather
39 In shape
40 Burn a bit
41 Goes downhill

42 Base meal

DOWN
1 Sees socially
2 Steamy
3 Film
4 Bandleader Kyser
5 Carpet fastener
6 "What was that?"
7 Book worker
8 1040 users
9 The present
11 Regatta activity
17 Uses for support
20 Foolish
21 Precept
23 Walks unsteadily
25 Leave base,
perhaps
26 Secret
27 Deep chasm
28 Playground fixtures
29 Minor arguments
31 Church areas
33 Casino figure
36 Sunburned
38 Target



WEDNESDAY'S ANSWERS



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The war that Israel lost



SHAMSHER M CHOWDHURY

Shamsher M Chowdhury,
Bir Bikram
is a former foreign secretary
of Bangladesh.

Since its highly contentious and controversial founding in 1948, Israel, backed by its all-weather ironclad ally across the Atlantic and exploiting Europe's collective guilt, has gotten used to flexing its military muscle on the people of Palestine and illegally occupying their lands with impunity. The ongoing genocide in Gaza is only the latest episode of this brutality and its total disregard for international law and human lives.

Emboldened by his "success" in the most gruesome and uninterrupted genocide in Gaza and its unarmed population, Israel's murderous Prime Minister Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu and the extreme hardline Zionist partners in his government believed that they could carry out a repeat act on Iran using mid-to long-range missiles, ostensibly targeting Iran's nuclear facilities. Only this time, Bibi met his match. After Iran retaliated in equal—and at times more effective—terms, within less than two weeks Netanyahu was begging for a ceasefire before Iran wrought greater damage on key Israeli cities and military and intelligence installations in Tel Aviv and other parts of the country. It was only with the direct intervention of US President Donald Trump that Bibi managed to save his skin, at least for now. President Trump has publicly stated of the huge damages that Iran's counter-offensive had caused in Israel.

Obviously, Bibi and his hardline colleagues were suffering from deep amnesia. The supreme irony is that they even chose not to remember that it was Cyrus II, or Cyrus the Great of Persia, who is exalted in Judaism for freeing the Jewish people from the Babylonian captivity following the Persian conquest of Babylon in Sixth Century BCE. This event is described in the Hebrew Bible as the return to Zion whereby displaced Jews were repatriated to what had been the Kingdom of Judah. This enabled the resurgence of Jewish life in the Land of Israel. Cyrus also facilitated Jewish aspirations for a new temple in Jerusalem, where the original Solomon's Temple had once stood before being destroyed during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem. His efforts resulted in the completion of the Second Temple, which marked the beginning of the Second Temple period of Judaism. According to the Book of Isaiah, Cyrus the Great was anointed by Yahweh and explicitly designated as the "messiah" for his seminal role in bringing Jews back to Jerusalem. Cyrus is the only non-Jewish figure to be revered in this capacity. For the ungrateful Zionists of today, as symbolised by the likes of Netanyahu, history has no place in their genocidal narrative. They ventured to bite the hand that had saved them and got bitten instead.

Clearly, Israel's political and military leadership did not do their homework on Iran—its rich culture and long history, its resolve to defend itself against all kinds of adversity. Intoxicated by what he has done and continues to do in Palestine, Netanyahu believed Iran would be an equally easy target. He forgot that Iran had fought and survived a much longer war, one that lasted eight years, against Iraq when Saddam Hussein was lulled into believing that Iran was still in a political, social and military flux following its historic revolution and the overthrow of Shah regime in 1979. Egged on by players who perceived that the new Iran was unstable and weak, Saddam launched his military into Iran in 1980 and the prolonged and bloody conflict between the two neighbouring countries lasted until 1988. The war was sparked by a complex mix of territorial disputes, mostly over the contested Shatt al Arab waterway, a vital oil shipping route, and ideological differences.

The war quickly devolved into a bloody stalemate, characterised by trench warfare, human wave attacks, and the use of chemical weapons by Iraq. Iran launched counter-offensives, pushing back the Iraqi forces and even invading Iraq's territory. Although the war concluded without a

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Application Ends	: 27 July 2025 upto 10 AM
Admission Test	: 10 August 2025 at 10 AM to 11 AM
Viva-Voce	: 11 August 2025; 10 AM to 4 PM
Publication of Final Result	: 13 August 2025
Admission from Merit List (From First Merit List)	: 17-19 August 2025 upto 11:59 PM
Physically Document Submission (Online application form & Original Certificate/Transcript)	: 21 August 2025; 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM
Admission from Waiting List (Second Merit List)	: 24-27 August 2025 upto 11:59 PM
Physically Document Submission (Online application form & Original Certificate/Transcript)	: 31 August 2025; 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM
Examination Center	: Social Science Building
Class Starts	: 1 September 2025
Admission from Waiting List (Third Merit List) (Will be published subject to seat availability)	: 16 September 2025
Physically Document Submission (Online application form & Original Certificate/Transcript)	: 17 September 2025

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(Office time: 9.00 am to 4.00 pm)



Sd-
Deputy Registrar (Academic)
Jahangirnagar University
Savar, Dhaka-1342.

GID-1523



Star Cineplex is set to delight moviegoers with the release of two major Hollywood films today. Leading the lineup is *Jurassic World Rebirth*, the latest chapter in the blockbuster franchise.

The \$180 million sequel, directed by Gareth Edwards, is set five years after *Jurassic World Dominion* and stars Scarlett Johansson as Dr Zora Bennett, who embarks on a mission to extract

dinosaur DNA amid global threats.

Also premiering is the horror-thriller *28 Years Later*, directed by Danny Boyle, marking the third instalment in the *28 Days Later* film series. The story follows

Star Cineplex premieres 'Jurassic World Rebirth' and '28 Years Later' today

12-year-old Spike on a dangerous quest for help in a world still reeling from the Rage virus outbreak.

Both films are premiering at Star Cineplex branches across Bangladesh.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

International Mime Festival



Dhaka University Mime Action (DUMA) will host the 6th edition of its signature event—the only international event organised by any club at the University of Dhaka. The three-day celebration will feature mime performances, workshops, and cultural exchange, continuing a tradition established in 2018.

Date: Saturday-Monday July 5-7

Time: 3pm-6pm

Venue: TSC Auditorium, Dhaka University

Melbourne Festival to celebrate Aamir Khan's cinematic journey



Aamir Khan will be the official Chief Guest at the 16th Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM), set to take place from August 14 to 24. The festival will honour his remarkable cinematic journey with a special retrospective and conclude with a spotlight screening of his recent film *Sitaare Zameen Par*, followed by a live discussion featuring Khan and director RS Prasanna.

Reflecting on the honour, Aamir expressed excitement about revisiting his impactful work and engaging in meaningful conversations. He highlighted that *Sitaare Zameen Par* aimed to promote inclusivity and neurodiversity, and he is grateful for the audience's heartfelt response. The festival marks a significant celebration of Khan's legacy in Indian cinema.

NEWS

'Draft telecom policy worrying'

FROM PAGE 12
medium enterprises (SMEs) and local entrepreneurs."

Highlighting the potential problems and challenges, he said: "If the restriction on owning multiple service sectors is lifted, large mobile operators may establish monopolistic control across several areas. This will reduce competition and smaller companies will fall behind."

Expressing concern that the SME sector may face a financial crisis, he said: "Following deregulation, SMEs – especially the local ISPs or small telecom operators – could face serious financial challenges due to the lack of clear guidelines regarding their assets and liabilities."

"There is ambiguity regarding the limit on foreign ownership, which could discourage investment and disrupt

the stability of the sector. Through loopholes in cross ownership, big companies may further expand their market control."

The policy lacks clear guidelines on satellite broadband or emerging digital services, which may confuse investors.

It also lacks clarity on the scope of enterprise services as it does not clearly define the limits of mobile operators' fibre-based business connectivity services.

This could lead to disputes and inequality, Fakhrul said, reading out a written statement.

BNP believes that only those policies are acceptable that benefit everyone. We will continue to work with a commitment to ensuring equitable development through digital connectivity and safeguarding national digital security and sovereignty," he added.

The government did not take public opinion while drafting the new policy, said BNP Standing Committee Member Abdul Moyeen Khan.

"Large mobile operators will enjoy significant advantages under this policy. Those who can make major investments within Bangladesh will also gain an edge."

In a democratic society, policies should be aimed at ensuring benefits for the public.

"From what we know, the proposed policy lacks this focus. We want a policy whose benefits reach the people of the country."

Stressing the importance of affordable internet access in rural areas, he said: "Artificial Intelligence has created waves around the world. But if its benefits don't reach ordinary people, then this policy will be of no use to them."

Regarding law and order, he said that around 80 percent of the firearms looted following last year's uprising have been recovered, with efforts underway to recover the rest before the polls.

According to Police Headquarters, 5,753 firearms were reportedly looted from police stations across the country after the fall of the AL regime on August 5 last year.

Speaking on the issue of juvenile gangs ("kishore gang"), Col Shafiqul said over 400 gang members have been arrested so far. "We cannot be present in every alley, but we respond immediately when we receive information in this regard."

The army has also pledged firm action against mob violence and activities that may cause public sufferings or damage to lives and property, Col Shafiqul said.

Citing the mob attack on former Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda in Uttara on June 22, he said, "You already know we arrested one of the six suspects the very next day and produced him before a court as per legal procedure. After that, if they get bail, you know the army has nothing to do. But when it comes to any incident of mob violence or public suffering, we, the Bangladesh army, have been vigilant in the past, the present and will be in the

future."

Earlier, reading out a press statement, Col Shafiqul said the army responded promptly to the widely circulated video of a brutal assault on a woman in Muradnagar.

"With the help of local authorities, the army brought the situation under control and arrested five people, including the prime accused ... Efforts are ongoing to ensure the victim's and her family's safety and dignity."

He added that since August 2024, the army has detained at least 15,646 people, including listed criminals, teen gang members, drug dealers, and robbers.

It has also recovered 26 illegal firearms and 100 rounds of ammunition during this period – bringing the total number of seized firearms to 9,692 and ammunition rounds to 286,854.

In the past two weeks alone, 562 individuals were arrested in joint drives across the country, including 45 drug dealers, bringing the total number of narcotics-related arrests to 5,521.

The army has also conducted raids to curb food adulteration and smuggling, seizing contraband worth crores of taka and shutting down illegal operations.

In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, 23 individuals were arrested, 13 firearms recovered, and a United People's Democratic Front camp dismantled, Col Shafiqul said. One soldier was injured in an operation in Rangamati.

Separately, two Kuki National Army operatives were killed in a recent gunfight, with arms and documents recovered. The operation is ongoing.

Additionally, the army treated 4,790 people injured in the July uprising, with 22 still under care. Troops also ensured security during Rath Yatra and continue to support communal harmony and the safety of foreign missions.

In Bandarban, the army is assisting displaced members of the Bawm community to safely return home amid improving conditions, he added.

During the operation, an alleged member of the KNA was captured in a critically injured state, said a member of the operation team in a press briefing held yesterday afternoon at the headquarters of the 36th Bangladesh Infantry Regiment (BIR) Ruma Zone.

The team also recovered four firearms, ammunition, KNF uniforms, and communications devices during the operation, reports our Bandarban correspondent, citing the press briefing.

The operation was led by Major Md Mehedi Sarkar, deputy commander of the 36th BIR Ruma Zone, under the overall supervision of Lt Col Md Alamgir Hossain, psc, the Zone Commander.

At the briefing, Lt Col Alamgir said, "We want to make it very clear that our operations are strictly against armed militant groups in the hills. We hold deep respect and sympathy for the local peace-loving communities. Just as we are citizens of this country, so are they. The army is committed to ensuring their safety and protecting lives and property."

"The KNA is a separatist armed group engaged in terror activities, including extortion, bank robbery, arms collection, and militant training in Bandarban and adjoining hill regions. They have repeatedly attacked security forces and disrupted the safety of civilians."

Mob snatches two convicts

FROM PAGE 12
Health Complex."

Two other officers were critically wounded and sent to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, the OC added.

"The attackers snatched the keys to the lockup and broke out two convicts: Belal and Sohel."

Police fired tear gas shells to disperse them but failed to quell the situation. Later, reinforcements from Lalmonirhat Sadar, Hatibandha, and Kaliganj police stations, as well as members of the army and BGB, arrived at the scene.

The OC alleged that many of the attackers were known to him as having ties to the local unit of the BNP and its affiliated organisations.

However, Walur Rahman Sohel, secretary of BNP's Patgram upazila unit, denied the accusations.

"None of our party activists were involved in the attack. The two detainees are not affiliated with the

Awami League and the 'Mujibbadi constitution' must be discarded. There is no point in retaining a constitution that is not the constitution of the people," Nahid said while addressing another street rally in the district, reports UNB.

The former information adviser also warned of dire consequences for those attempting to revive the old culture of terrorism.

"An attempt is being made to bring back the old culture... we are seeing that again. Those who carried out the July

uprising are still awake, still on the streets. If anyone thinks that they can bring back the politics of old terrorism, then their fate will also be like that of the dictator Hasina."

Expressing frustration over the fulfilment of July aspirations, he said a discrimination-free country is yet to be established despite the loss of hundreds of lives.

Among those accompanying Nahid were NCP Chief Organiser (South) Hasnat Abdulla, Chief Organiser (North) Sarjis Alam, Senior Joint Convenor Samanta Shermeen, and Senior Joint Member Secretary Tasnim Jara.

Hamas is seeking clear guarantees that the ceasefire will eventually lead to the offensive's end, the source close to the group said. Two Israeli officials said that those details were still being worked out.

A separate source familiar with the matter said that Israel was expecting Hamas' response by today and that if it was positive, an Israeli delegation would join indirect talks to cement the deal.

Speaking on the matter, Lalmonirhat Deputy Commissioner HM Rafig Haider said, "The accused were directly involved in illegal toll collection on the highway. The mobile court sentenced them in accordance with the law."

Contacted, Lalmonirhat Superintendent of Police Torikul Islam said the police are preparing to file a case over the attack.

A senior Israeli official close to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said preparations were in place to approve a ceasefire deal even as the premier heads to Washington to meet Trump on Monday.

Jota was the blueprint for the high-pressing, high-energy goal-getter

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NEWS



As the Padma River's water level rises in Rajshahi, fishermen spring back to life, busy building and repairing boats to set out with nets for fishing. PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Dhaka to continue efforts

FROM PAGE 3
Bangladesh sent a diplomatic note (note verbale) to India in December last year, along with a set of supporting documents, formally requesting Hasina's extradition.

He also said Dhaka has sought detailed information from Kuala Lumpur authorities regarding the arrest of 36 Bangladeshi nationals in Malaysia on alleged militancy charges.

Hossain said Dhaka will verify the allegations against the arrested individuals to determine whether they were involved in militancy.

"If they are found to be involved, we will ensure their punishment," he added.

Responding to a question on whether the incident could negatively impact the issuance of Malaysian visas to Bangladeshi nationals in

the future, the adviser said, "Any negative incident can affect visa issuance ... we cannot say it will not have an impact."

However, he noted that it is important to take appropriate measures in such cases to minimise any potential impact. "If we take proper steps, the impact can be minimised," he added.

On the issue of water-sharing agreements, including the pending Teesta deal and the renewal of the 30-year-old Ganges Water Sharing Treaty – set to expire next year – Hossain stressed that such matters need to be resolved through bilateral discussions.

Regarding media reports suggesting that a recent meeting between Dhaka, Beijing, and Islamabad was intended as an alternative alliance to Saarc, Hossain clarified

that this interpretation was inaccurate.

The meeting never seemed to be an alternative to Saarc, he said, adding that it was a meeting to discuss some areas of cooperation and was in no way an alliance.

About setting up of an Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the country, Touhid said, "It is still at the draft stage."

He said Bangladesh and OHCHR have exchanged the draft with revisions four times, and the draft is currently under review at the OHCHR end following the latest changes made by Dhaka.

He said Bangladesh and OHCHR have, in principle, agreed to establish the office in Dhaka for three years, with a review scheduled after two years.

ICT to decide on charge

FROM PAGE 3
On June 29, the prosecution presented arguments seeking to frame charges against former Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Habibur Rahman; joint commissioner Sudip Kumar Chakraborty; former joint commissioner Shah Alam Mohammad Akhtarul Islam; former additional deputy commissioner Mohammad Imrul; former assistant commissioner (Ramma Zone) Arshad Hossain; and constables Sujon, Imaz, and Nasirul Islam.

Four of the accused – Arshad, Sujon, Imaz, and Nasirul – are currently in custody, while the others remain absconding.

State-appointed lawyer Qutub Uddin Ahmed, representing the four absconding accused, argued that the charges were false, fabricated, and intentional. He also claimed the incident did not amount to widespread or systematic violence, which the prosecution objected to.

Tribunal chair Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder said the atrocities occurred in multiple locations and showed a pattern of pre-planned, systematic violence.

Defence counsel for Arshad Hossain argued that none of the 11 police witnesses directly implicated his client, who was being charged under

the principle of command responsibility, despite being under the command of senior officers himself.

In response, the prosecution cited video evidence showing Arshad giving instructions to armed constables under his command.

Lawyers for constables Sujon, Imaz, and Nasirul claimed their clients, as junior officers, acted under orders from superiors and were not individually responsible.

The defence lawyer of Sujon also argued that the investigation report was submitted in haste without conducting an executive inquiry, as required by law.

The tribunal chair then asked the prosecution how long the investigation took. The prosecution said it lasted seven months.

"It is a long time, and the victims' families are now questioning what we are doing, as so much time has already passed," said the tribunal chair.

Yunus urges

FROM PAGE 3
of Japan's most important partners in Asia and reaffirmed Japan's commitment to supporting the country's development journey.

During the meeting, Yunus highlighted the importance of the Matarbari project, calling it "the most important region for our country's future."

Yunus requested Japan to increase scholarships for Bangladeshi youth to study in Japan and expand employment opportunities.

He also expressed concern about the situation of Rohingya refugees. "It is a sad situation. Thousands of young people are growing up in camps with no hope. They are becoming frustrated and angry," he said.

Yunus requested an increase in Japan's annual ODA threshold from 300 billion to 450 billion JPY to support more development projects.

3 get life term

FROM PAGE 3
Tajmud, Russell, Minhaj, and Sharif are in jail, while Matin is out on bail. Quayum and Sohel remain absconding.

attacks carried out by the outfit under the leadership of Shakib Abu Ibrahim Al Hanif, who was killed in a Rab raid in Ashulia on October 8, 2016.

Several top DMP officials said the murder was part of a plot to create unrest, pressure the government, and send a message that foreigners were not safe in Bangladesh.

The Detective Branch submitted the charge sheet on June 28, 2016.

According to the charge sheet, Sohel supplied the firearms, and Sharif arranged the motorcycle used in the killing. Matin, known as "Boro Bhai", was accused of hiring three assailants to target a "white man", with Tavella becoming the victim.

Matin also allegedly hired Bhagne Russell for Tk 5 lakh to shoot and injure any foreigner in Gulshan to create panic in the area, according to a confessional statement recorded on November 5, 2015.

BANGLADESH BANK

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Tender No.: 67/2025

Date: 03/07/2025

Invitation for Tender Through Web

Tenders are hereby invited through Electronic Media (e-Tenders) from bona fide, government-approved higher educational/training institutes for "Selection of an institution/firm for conducting recruitment examination for the post of Senior Officer (IT) (Grade-09)(Job ID-10205) for State Owned Commercial and Specialized Banks" under package no. BSCS/2022/05. Detailed information and the terms and conditions pertaining to this tender are provided below:

01.	Procuring Entity	:	Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS), Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka.
02.	Source of Fund	:	Collection of fees from the applicants and funding from Bangladesh Bank and concerned Banks & Financial Institutions
03.	Invitation for Tender No.	:	67/2025
04.	Method of Procurement	:	Open Tendering Method (National).
05.	Qualification of Tenderer	:	This invitation for tender is open to all government-approved higher educational/training institutes of Bangladesh who have satisfied the following terms and conditions : i) A minimum of 10 years of general experience as a third-party service provider in the public sector, either as a sole service provider or in a joint venture. ii) The experience of successfully conducting a recruitment examination (i.e. an one hour MCQ test and at least a two hour written examination) and the preparation of results for at least 10,000 (Ten Thousands only) candidates in a single arrangement under a single or multiple contracts/work orders with a value of at least BDT 30,00,000.00 (Taka Thirty lakh) for government, quasi-government, autonomous institutions, or banks and financial institutions during the last seven (7) years. The Tenderer shall have to furnish certificates from competent authority in line with the experience requirements. iii) Approval (in case of a Private University/firm) from UGC/relevant government authority regarding formation of the university/firm. iv) Having a valid trade license (applicable for a private university/firm), TIN certificate, VAT registration certificate. v) Average annual turnover (in case of a private institution/firm) of at least taka 20 (Twenty) lakh during the last 3 years. vi) No failure in carrying out any assignment during the last 10 years.
06.	Web Address Receiving Tender Document	:	www.bb.org.bd/en/index.php/about/tenders tender.bb.org.bd
07.	Name & Address of the Offices Receiving Tender Security & Other Documentary Evidence	:	Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS), (16th floor, 2 nd Annex Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Motijheel, Dhaka.
08.	Last Date and Time for Online Submission of Tender Document	:	20/07/2025 up to 2.00 PM
09.	Last Date and Time for Submission of Original Tender Security & Tender Submission Letter as per Format PSN-1	:	20/07/2025 up to 2.00 PM
10.	Date, Time and Place for Tender Opening	:	All Tenders will be opened at Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat, (16th floor, 2 nd Annex Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka on 20/07/2025 at 2.30 PM. (Intending Tenderer or their authorized representatives are allowed to attend.)
11.	Time for Completion of the Assignment	:	One year from the date of contract signing.
12.	Tender Security	:	Tk. 45,000.00 (Taka Fifty Five thousands) only in the form of PO/BD/BG.
13.	Special Instructions	:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Tenderer shall submit tender and scanned copy of documentary evidence through Bangladesh Bank web site (e- Tendering) & shall have valid e-mail address to participate in e-tendering. Original Pay Order/Bank draft/Bank Guarantee will be submitted in person to Director, Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat, Bangladesh Bank, Head office, Dhaka. ii. If the tender is not submitted online or incomplete, defective or without tender security, it will be considered as non-responsive. iii. Tenderer shall provide documentary evidence etc. (attested or original whichever is necessary) when requested, failing which the tender may be considered as non-responsive. iv. The Tenderer shall submit "PSN-1", "PSN-2" as per format given in tender document and attached during submission of tender online (in pdf format). v. Furnishing of any false, misleading documents may result in rejection of tender and may lead to action under Rules 127 of PPR 2008. vi. BSCS reserves all rights to accept or reject any or all the Tender without assigning any reason whatsoever. No claim will be entertained in this regard.

DCP: 48/2025-1705

DATE: 03-07-2025.

Signed-
Mizanur Rahman Akon
Director (BSCS), Bangladesh Bank

&
Member Secretary, BSC
Phone: 88-02-9530226

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিন্বা
কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

(প্রক্ষেপ ড. মোহাম্মদ সাইফুল ইসলাম)

রেজিস্ট্রার (ভার্জিন)

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DHAKA FRIDAY JULY 4, 2025

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The Daily Star

9

SRI LANKA

a story of resilience & beauty



Nine Arch Bridge

SARWAR ALAM CHOWDHURY

Sri Lanka is not just a country; it's a case study of collective resilience. Not long ago, the country was on the brink of collapse -- economically bankrupt and politically unstable. Now, it has turned around so eloquently that one must wonder how it gathered all its strength to do that in just a matter of months.

As I journeyed through its hills, beaches, colonial towns, and spiritual heartlands recently, I couldn't help but wonder: what if things hadn't turned around? And what can we learn from their turnaround?

and preservation.

If you're planning to visit, I highly recommend getting an e-visa. It's efficient and time saving. Sticker visas are also an option and can be processed within a day, usually costing just a bit more through agents.

We opted for a late-night flight from Dhaka (2:15am), which effectively added two full days to our itinerary. The return was at 9:30pm, maximising every minute of travel. One thing to remember: most hotels in Sri Lanka have check-in times between 11:00am and 2-3pm. If pressure is low, they often allow early check-in.

inconvenient.

Upon landing at Bandaranaike International Airport around 5:00am, I was warmly greeted by a friend bearing a gift box of Dilmah tea -- a gesture that felt deeply symbolic of Sri Lankan hospitality.

I quickly passed immigration, exchanged currency, and purchased Dialog SIM cards (the best local network) for around 1400 LKR (Tk 600-650), which came with 20 GB of data and local call minutes. Before boarding, I even ran into a long-lost school friend headed for a factory inspection trip -- proving that serendipity often finds you while travelling.

Our driver guide, Nirosh Chaminda, had been waiting with a placard. After packing up and bidding farewell to my friend, we started for Kandy, stopping along the way to explore.

Breakfast introduced us to kottu, a local favourite made from chopped roti, noodles, and vegetables. Chaminda also offered us two types of coconut: the red-orange King Coconut and the green Young Coconut. The freshness was unlike anything I've had.

Before entering Kandy, we had the option to visit the Elephant Orphanage and the Elephant Foundation. But with limited time on our hands, we chose instead to explore the Sushanta Spice Garden, and it turned out to be the right decision. The hillside was lined with rows of medicinal plants like aloe, cinnamon, and gotu kola, stretching across thousands of acres. If you're a plant lover, the sheer variety and scale are sure to leave you amazed.

Kandy felt like stepping into a quiet colonial bubble, where pagodas, mosques, and temples peacefully coexist. We stayed at Kandy Supreme Hotel, chosen for its excellent location and lake views. Lunch was at Indian Summer, an upscale Indian restaurant with rich, flavourful food. Right across the street was a small soy ice cream stand that surprised us with its taste.

Later, we explored the Royal Botanical Gardens, which were vast, serene, and unlike any other. The park can be an all day destination. We picked up snacks from a departmental store and returned to the hotel, ready

for Nuwara Eliya the next day.

The morning walk around Kandy Lake was magical. A quick coffee at Kandiana Café set the tone. On the way out, we stopped at a government-authorised gem and jewelry shop and spent nearly two hours exploring and purchasing precious stones. We also had the rare chance to visit two gemstone mines.

As we drove higher, the air thinned and the scenery transformed. Misty hills gave way to tea plantations, Buddhist temples, and old mosques -- echoes of a blended culture. We paused at Ramboda Falls for lunch at Ramboda Water Villa, a scenic retreat tucked beside a roaring waterfall.

Chaminda guided us with clockwork precision. With him, we saw in hours what would've taken days on our own.

At 1,853 meters above sea level, Nuwara Eliya is often called Little London, and for good reason. Cool air, colonial buildings, flower gardens, and rolling fog create an almost cinematic setting.

We stayed at Queensland Hotel, a spotless, private property tucked behind a supermarket. If we had more time, I would've stayed a week. The sounds of foxes at night, the wind through the trees, and the view from our open terrace during breakfast were unforgettable.

The post office, several centuries old, was still fully operational -- a testament to Sri Lanka's sense of preservation and pride. Tea tastings, fresh strawberry ice cream, and walks by Gregory Lake added to the charm.

I would highly recommend visiting this place.

Next, we took the scenic route to Ella, visiting the Sita Temple, believed to be the place where King Ravana held Sita captive. Myth or history, the surroundings added gravitas to the legend.

The Nine Arch Bridge is an architectural wonder. Plan for at least three hours here, and if you're buying souvenirs, Ella offers the best value. At Ravana Falls, I reflected on why Ravana may have chosen such a beautiful place to hide. The scenery was awe-inspiring and deeply meditative.

In Mirissa, we stayed at Randiya Hotel, within walking distance of Coconut Tree Hill and Parrot Rock. Watching the sunset there made me feel like the king of the world.

Early morning beach walks stoked our hunger for the excellent hotel breakfast. While the writing feels rushed, the moments were not. They were slow, refreshing, and soul-soothing.

Our final stop was Galle -- a treasure trove of colonial architecture. Despite being hit hard by the 2004 tsunami, the Galle Fort remained largely intact. Walking through its old walls felt like time travel. Cafés like Dutch Café on Rampart Street offered a quiet place to sit with coffee and centuries of history.

While driving from Galle toward Hikkaduwa, it felt like this was the real Marine Drive. What we call Marine Drive back home doesn't even come close. As the road hugged the beach, I found myself repeatedly lost in thought -- why is Sri Lanka this beautiful? I had never heard before that Sri Lanka was this stunning!

On the way, we stopped at the Tsunami Memorial Buddha -- its height matching that of the deadly wave that killed over 50,000 people in 2004. It was a solemn, humbling moment. We also visited a moonstone mine and a cinnamon farm, both small but rich in tradition.

Entering Colombo city felt like entering a slightly calmer Dhaka. As we neared the airport, the color-changing Lotus Tower lit up the skyline. Colombo traffic is intense -- leave at least two hours for the airport, especially after 5:00pm.

Sri Lanka cannot be captured in words. You have to visit it to know it, feel it. And being a little prepared before you travel can make your tour a bit more special.



Galle Lighthouse

Want to share your travel experiences with us? Please send your stories to holiday@thedadlystar.net

Geographically, Sri Lanka is a small island nation. But don't let that fool you -- this land is brimming with natural wealth and cultural richness. And most importantly, it is a nation of people who refuse to give up, no matter how dire the circumstances.

My little experience says, with just a bit of fine tuning, they could be miles ahead. In tourism, there's still room for improvement in regulatory monitoring, but as a nation, Sri Lankans display an exceptional level of hospitality, pride,

I always prefer planning my own trips. While travel agents offer ready-made packages, they often lack flexibility. This time, I designed our route to begin with Colombo sightseeing en route to Kandy, followed by two nights in Nuwara Eliya, then Ella, Mirissa, and finally Galle.

It's important to choose accommodation near main roads. Many hotels are isolated and don't appear properly on the maps, making transportation, food, and sightseeing



Tsunami Memorial Buddha



Ramboda Falls



A group photo in front of a waterfall and palm trees.



Sita Amman Temple

Time for BFF to match Ritu and Co's level

ASHFAQ UL ALAM

If winning the SAFF Championship in 2022 and 2024 warranted the Bangladesh women's team an open-top bus parade, what would be a proportionally appropriate celebration for the miracle they have just pulled off in Myanmar?

The word miracle is often thrown around casually in sports writing, but the achievement of the Bangladesh team -- qualifying for the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026 -- really warrants this distinction.

Still, for the unconvinced, here is a stat: on Wednesday, Bangladesh became the lowest-ranked team in history to qualify for the Women's Asian Cup.

Bangladesh, ranked 128th, thrashed the 92nd-ranked Bahrain 7-0 and defeated the 55th-ranked hosts Myanmar 2-1, to secure top spot in Group C with a match in hand and earned their ticket for the mega event set to take place next year in Australia.

This record previously was held by Indonesia, who were ranked 96th when they qualified for the 2022 edition of the tournament.

Another way to understand the magnitude of what Ritu Porna Chakma and Co have pulled off is to take a look at the four teams that had qualified before Bangladesh -- Japan, Australia, China, and South Korea.

Japan, the highest ranked team in Asia at seventh, is a two-time Asian Cup winner and are also the only Asian side to win the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2011.

China, ranked 17th, are record nine-time winners and the defending champions in the Asian Cup, while Australia (15) have won the continental



tournament once and South Korea (21) are still searching for their maiden title, having finished as runners-up in the last edition.

Come March next year, Bangladesh will be up against one, if not more, of these behemoths in the land down under, a battle they have earned the right to fight through their grit.

All four of these countries have a long history in women's football, having been active in the international scene since the 1990s, the decade when women's international football first started taking shape.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's history in women's football officially began in 2010, when they took on Nepal in their very first international game in Dhaka, in the South Asian Games, a match they lost 1-0.

For years, Bangladesh's football revolved around wanting to win the SAFF Championship, a tournament that holds

no real esteem in the global sense, and failing to achieve that.

The wonderous women's team have broken through this cycle of mediocrity with consecutive SAFF successes and the miraculous Asian Cup qualification.

For a country so deprived of sporting achievements, these girls have done more than enough to become the toast of the nation.

And while they have received the love and admiration of the people, exhibited through how thousands who flocked to their victory parades for SAFF triumphs, they have not received a proportionate monetary return nor the facilities high-achieving athletes like them deserve.

The women's team basically functions out of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) dormitory, which was claimed to be "like a prison" by former women's team captain Dalia Akter last year.

Despite repeated successes, the

women's team still don't have a dedicated training ground, let alone the bare minimum standard of training facilities. Questions have been raised over the diet prepared for them by the BFF and their overall sub-standard living condition during the tenure of the previous president, Kazi Salahuddin.

BFF has also failed to establish a proper domestic structure for the girls. The Women's Football League first began in 2011, ran for two seasons, then didn't happen for seven seasons straight before resuming in the 2019-20 season.

The top men's clubs have been reluctant to form teams in the women's league from the beginning, with none taking part in last year's edition.

Without the participation of top clubs, the league faces a lack of competition, with current champions Nasrin Sporting Club signing almost all of the national team stars.

The current women's team setup is reaping the rewards of the talents unearthed in school-level and age-level competition in the 2010s. But without a proper domestic system, the pipeline of players is at risk of drying up.

Considering how these girls have time and again exceeded expectations, despite the glaring limitations, an open-top bus parade to welcome Ritu and Co will only be reflective of how things are often operated in Bangladesh -- prioritising glitz over meaningful work.

Maybe this time, the country will see a different approach, one that ensures that this doesn't end as another flash in the pan and that Bangladesh continues climbing up the ranks in women's football.



Gill piles on the runs against England

India skipper Shubman Gill piled on the runs against hosts England, smashing his maiden Test double ton on Day 2 of their second match of the five-match series at Edgbaston in Birmingham on Thursday. The right-handed batter, who recently took over the reins in the format for India, scored 269 as the visitors were bowled out for 587 soon after tea. In just his second Test as captain, Gill set a new record for the highest score by an India batter in a Test in England, surpassing the great Sunil Gavaskar's 221 at the Oval back in 1979.

PHOTO: AFP

Collapse curse continues under best minds

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

On November 6 last year, a day after Mohammad Salahuddin was appointed as Bangladesh's senior assistant coach, the team suffered a familiar collapse in the ODI series opener against Afghanistan in Sharjah.

Chasing 236, the Tigers collapsed from 120-3 to 143 all out, losing by 92 runs, as rookie spinner AM Ghazanfar tore through the lineup with a career-best 6-26.

Salahuddin, who was not with the team at the time, began his tenure in the following West Indies tour. But since his arrival, little has changed. Batting collapses have continued to haunt them across all formats.

Seven months on, the collapse repeated in eerily familiar fashion.

In Wednesday's ODI opener against Sri Lanka in Colombo, Bangladesh collapsed from 100 for two to 105 for eight -- the worst-ever fall from the second to eighth wicket in men's ODIs -- before losing by 77 runs, undone again by spin as Wanindu



Hasaranga and Kamindu Mendis shared seven wickets.

When

coaching staff, it was seen as a breath of fresh air. Known for his rapport with players and ability to address technical and mental flaws, his appointment was seen as a long awaited shift toward greater comfort and communication in the dressing room. But those expectations

have yet to materialise.

In the West Indies, Bangladesh collapsed in both Tests and continued the trend in the white-ball games. The ICC Champions Trophy brought more of the same, as they stumbled to 35 for five against India before managing 228 which was insufficient to trouble the eventual champions.

The batting woes persisted on tours to the UAE, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and even in their home Test series against Zimbabwe.

Salahuddin's addition also completed a high profile trio with chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu and cricket operations chairman Nazmul Abedeen Fahim -- touted as the country's finest cricketing minds. Together, they were expected to change the trajectory of Bangladesh cricket.

So far, however, the cycle remains unbroken. Whether this think-tank can reverse the tide is still uncertain.

Time will tell, but it might run out faster than anticipated.

Bangladesh tour of UAE against Afghanistan

1st ODI: 120-3 to 143 all out

3rd ODI: 53-1 to 72-4, 244-8

Bangladesh tour of West Indies

1st Test 2nd innings: 23-4, 102-6 to 132 all out

2nd Test 1st innings: 139-7 to 164 all out

2nd ODI: 26-1 to 115-7, 227 all out

2nd T20I: 8-1 to 88-7, 129-7

Champions Trophy

Against India: 35-5, 228 all out

Against NZ: 97-3 to 118-5, 236-9

Zimbabwe tour of Bangladesh

1st Test 1st innings: 98-3 to 146-7, 191 all out

1st Test 2nd innings: 194-5 to 255 all out

Bangladesh tour of UAE

3rd T20I: 10-1 to 84-8, 162-9

Bangladesh tour of Pakistan

1st T20I: 100-3 to 164 all out

2nd T20I: 44-1 to 77-7, 144 all out

Bangladesh tour of Sri Lanka

2nd Test 2nd innings: 63-3 to 133 all out

1st ODI: 100-2 to 105-8, 167 all out

Djokovic evokes nostalgia

REUTERS, London

Seven-time Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic showed that he remains a real threat for a record-extending 25th Grand Slam title at the age of 38 with a clinical 6-3, 6-2, and 6-0 destruction of home hope Dan Evans on Centre Court on Thursday, moving into the Wimbledon third round.

The Serb continues to rage against the dying of the light and, having identified the grass of Wimbledon as his best chance of adding to his extraordinary tally, showed exactly why in a superb all-round performance where he looked as sharp and fit as any time in his career.

He was never really troubled on serve all afternoon while wildcard Evans had to scramble for almost everything on his -- saving nine first-set break points before eventually succumbing on the 10th.

Djokovic continued to dominate, as Evans, who beat him in their only previous meeting on clay four years ago, saw his tame sliced backhands repeatedly crashed back past him as the sixth seed romped home.



'HEARTBROKEN' Jota leaves lasting impact

Liverpool's Portuguese forward Diogo Jota died in a car crash near Zamora in Spain with his brother Andre on Thursday, leaving the football world and beyond mourning the 28-year-old's untimely demise. Jota's brother Andre played as a midfielder for FC Penafiel in Portugal's second tier. Though tragically cut short, Jota's footballing journey was filled with remarkable moments and achievements at both club and international levels.

• In 398 appearances across his club career, Diogo Jota scored 136 goals and provided 66 assists.

• He rose to prominence at Liverpool under Jurgen Klopp, having also played for Wolves and Porto among major clubs.

• At Liverpool, the forward won the Premier League (2024/25), FA Cup (2022), and the English League Cup (2024, 2025).

• He also won the Championship in 2017/18 with Wolves, helping the club promote to the Premier League.

• He netted 14 and assisted 12 in 49 appearances for Portugal.

• With Portugal, he won the UEFA Nations League twice (2025, 2019).

"I'm heartbroken. Diogo was not only a fantastic player, but also a great friend, a loving and caring husband and father!"

Former Liverpool coach JURGEN KLOPP

"It makes no sense. We were just together with the national team (they won the Nations League title last month), you had just gotten married."

Portugal captain CRISTIANO RONALDO

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FORCED DISAPPEARANCE Army to take legal action if any member found complicit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The army yesterday said it would take legal action if any of its members are found to have been involved in enforced disappearances.

Colonel Shafiqul Islam, military operations directorate staff colonel of the Army Headquarters, said this at a press briefing at the Officers' Mess in Dhaka Cantonment.

"Some army members are deputed to various agencies that are not directly controlled by the army. Allegations have surfaced against some of them, and an investigation is currently underway. If any of them are found involved [in enforced disappearance], appropriate legal action will follow."

Col Shafiqul further said the army has been assisting the government in addressing enforced disappearances and related investigations, and will continue to do so. "We're willing to provide assistance and

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Rather than stopping at the level crossing as the gateman began lowering the barriers, battery-run rickshaws and a motorcycle sped across, putting themselves at risk of being run over by the train. They became trapped between the two gates just as the train approached. The photo was taken at the Ambagan railgate area in Chattogram city yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

'Draft telecom policy worrying'

BNP says its implementation ahead of polls will be inappropriate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday expressed concerns over the BTRC's recently drafted "Telecommunication Network and Licensing Regime Reform Policy 2025", saying that unilaterally enacting such a national policy ahead of the upcoming national election would be inappropriate.



The party said that the draft policy contains certain provisions that would give advantages to large mobile operators, while harming small and medium-sized entrepreneurs.

"Such a national level telecom policy must be formulated with proper caution, transparency and inclusive participation. Since the national election is approaching, decisions should not be made in a hurried manner," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir in an emergency press conference at the Chairperson's Office in Gulshan.

Stating that the policy contains serious flaws that could hinder equitable and sustainable development in the telecom sector, Fakhrul called on the government to hold open discussions with all relevant stakeholders -- including the small and medium enterprises, technology experts and consumer groups -- before finalising the policy.

"BNP, with a constructive mindset, is highlighting the potential weaknesses, ambiguities and certain clauses within this draft that could unduly benefit large mobile network operators (MNOs) -- which might harm small and

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Mob snatches two convicts from police station

Cops blame BNP men

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Lalmonirhat

A mob attacked the Patgram Police Station in Lalmonirhat on Wednesday night and snatched away two convicts from police custody.

Just hours earlier, the escapees, Belal Hossain and Sohel Rana, were each sentenced to one month in prison by a mobile court on extortions charges.

At least 20 people were injured during the attack, including eight police officers. Mizanur Rahman, officer in charge (OC) of the station, was among the injured.

According to police, some 200 to 250 individuals stormed the police station compound around 10:30pm on Wednesday. They smashed chairs, tables, and computers and ransacked case files. They also broke windows and doors by hurling bricks at them.

OC Mizanur said, "Six of us received treatment at the Patgram Upazila

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Israeli forces kill 69 Palestinians across Gaza

Say health authorities; 38 of them near an aid distribution site; scores injured

AGENCIES

Hamas is seeking guarantees that a new US ceasefire proposal for Gaza would lead to the offensive's end,

a source close to the group said yesterday, as medics said Israeli strikes across the territory had killed scores more people.

Israeli officials said prospects for reaching a ceasefire deal and hostage deal appeared high, nearly 21 months since the offensive began.

On the ground, intensified Israeli strikes, artillery or gunfire across Gaza continued unabated, killing at least 69 people yesterday, civil defence spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP, including 38 people waiting for humanitarian aid.

Israel has recently expanded its military operations in the Gaza Strip, where the offensive has created dire humanitarian conditions and displaced nearly all of the territory's population of more than two million.

In Gaza City, civil defence official Mohammad al-Mughayir said there were 17 martyrs, the majority of them children and women, and a large number of injuries in an Israeli air strike on the Mustafa Hafez School,

which shelters displaced persons, in the Al-Rimal neighbourhood.

According to medics at Nasser hospital farther south, at least 38 people were killed by Israeli fire en route to an aid distribution site and scores of people were injured.

Hamas seeks ceasefire guarantees

Netanyahu due in Washington on Monday

UN expert asks states to cut trade ties with Israel

Artillery shelling in the northern town of Beit Lahia also killed three people. A strike on Jabalia, also in the north, killed one. Further south, three people were killed in a strike that hit tents housing displaced people in the coastal Al-Mawasi area, Mughayir said.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Liverpool's Diogo Jota dies in car crash

REUTERS, Madrid

Liverpool's Portuguese forward Diogo Jota and his brother died in a car crash in northwestern Spain early on Thursday, when their Lamborghini veered off the road and burst into flames.

Evidence at the crash site suggested Jota's car suffered a burst tyre while overtaking, police said. The vehicle then flipped over and ended up in the central reservation. The crash occurred around 00:30 a.m. (2230 GMT) in the province of Zamora.

Tributes to the 28 year-old poured in from national leaders, football presidents, his teammates and clubs, while in Liverpool, devastated fans wept and laid flowers outside Anfield stadium for a man who weeks earlier had celebrated winning the Premier League with the team.

Jota had married his partner of 10 years Rute Cardoso on June 22,

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

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