

Wrap up polls preparations by December

Yunus instructs all relevant authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday ordered the authorities concerned to complete, by December, the preparations for the upcoming national election.

The polls are likely to take place in February or April, he told a meeting with law enforcers at the state guest house Jamuna in the capital.

The meeting, which discussed the law enforcement agencies' preparedness for the election, was also attended by the home adviser, the national security adviser, the home secretary and top officials of the police, Rab, Ansar, Coast Guard and other forces.

Earlier, on the eve of Eid-ul-Azha, Yunus had said elections may take place in the first half of April next year.

"Later, we informed that if preparations are completed and



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A Palestinian woman checks a girl's head inside a heavily damaged building at the site of an Israeli strike on a house in the Shati (Beach) refugee camp in Gaza City yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

US-China tariff war punishes Bangladesh

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Smaller Asian nations, including Bangladesh, have been hit with some of the most punitive duties under the Trump administration's tariff policy. The official justification for these tariffs was to correct what the administration called unfair trade deficits, where countries export more to the United States than they import.

However, analysts widely question the merit of using trade deficit calculations, suggesting the tariff move was a pretext for a broader geopolitical strategy to punish China. The US appears to have targeted countries that rely on or receive substantial investment from China.

Bangladesh is one of those nations that face pressure from Washington to decouple their manufacturing industries from Chinese suppliers, according to officials familiar with trade negotiations.

The threat forces Bangladesh into a near-impossible choice between its largest customer and its biggest supplier, pulling the nation directly into the fallout of the US-China trade war.

President Donald Trump has imposed a steep 35 percent tariff on Bangladeshi goods, primarily due to the high concentration of Chinese inputs in products manufactured here and exported to the United States, according to officials. The move reflects

The US appears to have targeted countries that rely on or receive substantial investment from China. Bangladesh is one of those nations that face pressure from Washington to decouple their manufacturing industries from Chinese suppliers, say analysts.

Washington's broader strategy to counter China's economic influence, they said.

In fiscal 2023-24, Bangladesh's imports from China amounted to \$16.63 billion, representing 26.4 percent of its total import bill, according to Bangladesh Bank data. Over 80 percent of these imports consist of raw materials for the garment sector, including fabrics, chemicals and accessories.

This dependency is at the heart of the trade friction. The US is proposing stringent Rules of Origin (RoO) that would require 40 percent local value addition for products to qualify for American markets.

Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman acknowledged last week that the US proposal on RoO presents a significant challenge for Bangladesh.

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JULY DECLARATION
BNP sends back the draft to govt with its inputs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has sent its recommendations on the draft of the July Declaration to the government, a senior party leader confirmed early today.

Salahuddin Ahmed, a member of the BNP Standing Committee, told The Daily Star at 12:30am that the draft had been sent to the party on July 8 by Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud via WhatsApp on behalf of the interim government.

"The recommendations were finalised after analysing the draft during Standing Committee meetings held at the BNP chairperson's office in Gulshan on Tuesday and Wednesday night," he said.

Both meetings were presided over virtually by BNP acting chairperson Tarique Rahman from London.

Salahuddin would not reveal the contents of the

'Wherever they find, they will shoot'

Hasina ordered use of lethal weapons on July protesters, reports BBC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina personally authorised the use of lethal force against student-led protests in Bangladesh last year, according to a verified audio recording of a phone call revealed by BBC Eye.

In the audio, which was leaked online in March and independently verified by the BBC, Hasina is heard instructing security forces to "use lethal weapons" against demonstrators, saying, "wherever they [the forces] find [protesters], they will shoot."

The July 2024 uprising left at least 1,400 people dead, according to UN investigators. Hasina, who has since fled to India, and her party,

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JULY 10, 2024

Protesters refuse to back down

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

The protests over the quota system in government jobs showed no signs of slowing down on July 10 as students across the country vowed to continue their movement despite the Supreme Court's order for a four-week status quo.

Around noon, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan, ordered that the High Court verdict reinstating the quota system would not come into effect for the time being. This meant that the 2018 government circular abolishing the quotas would remain in force for at least a month.

The five-member bench of the Appellate Division, while issuing the status quo order, urged the students to return to their classrooms and focus on their studies.

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সর্বসাধারণের জন্য সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সাম্প্রতিক সময়ে লক্ষ্য করা যাচ্ছে যে, কিছু অসাধু ব্যক্তি দলবদ্ধভাবে থানাসহ বিভিন্ন সরকারি-বেসরকারি ও আবাসিক/অনাবাসিক স্থাপনায় জোরপূর্বক প্রবেশ করে সরকারি-বেসরকারি সম্পত্তি ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত করা এবং সরকারি কার্যক্রমে বাধা প্রদানের অপচেষ্টা করছে। দেশের বিভিন্ন স্থানে ইতোমধ্যে এ ধরনের অনভিপ্রেত ঘটনা ঘটেছে, যা আইনশৃঙ্খলার জন্য হমকিস্বরূপ।

সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের সদয় অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, এ ধরনের কর্মকাণ্ড ফৌজদারি কার্যবিধি, ১৮৯৮ অনুযায়ী দণ্ডনীয় অপরাধ এবং বাংলাদেশ দণ্ডবিধি, ১৮৬০ এর বিধান মোতাবেক দাঙ্গা, সরকারি কাজে বাধা প্রদান ও সরকারি সম্পত্তি খঁসের শামিল, যা শাস্তিযোগ্য অপরাধ। উল্লেখ্য যে, আল কুরআনে সুরা বাকারার ১৯১ নম্বর আয়াতে বর্ণিত বিশৃঙ্খলাকে ফিতনা হিসেবে আখ্যায়িত করা হয় এবং তা হত্যার চেয়েও জন্মন্য মর্মে ঘোষণা করা হয়েছে।

জনসাধারণের প্রতি অনুরোধ:

- এ ধরনের অবৈধ ও শাস্তিযোগ্য কর্মকাণ্ড থেকে বিরত থাকুন;
- এ বিষয়ে কোনো তথ্য, ছবি বা ভিডিও ক্লিপ থাকলে দুট আইনশৃঙ্খলা রক্ষাকারী সংস্থাকে জানাবেন;
- সরকার এ বিষয়ে কঠোর অবস্থান গ্রহণ করেছে এবং অপরাধীদের বিরুদ্ধে আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হচ্ছে।

দেশে শান্তি, শৃঙ্খলা ও নিরাপত্তা বজায় রাখতে সকলের সহযোগিতা একান্তভাবে কাম্য।

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India wary of Sino-Pak-Bangla 'convergence'

India's chief of defence staff says it may impact internal stability

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India's Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan yesterday cautioned against "a possible convergence of interests" among Bangladesh, China and Pakistan, saying it may have implications for India's internal stability and security.

Speaking at an event hosted by the private think-tank Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi, Gen Chauhan said, "There is a possible convergence of interest we can talk about among China, Pakistan and Bangladesh that may have implications for India's stability and security dynamics."

He said the economic distress in countries across the Indian Ocean region has allowed "outside powers" to leverage their influence, which could create vulnerabilities for India.

During his speech, Gen Chauhan also spoke about the May 7-10 military conflict between India and Pakistan, describing it as potentially the first time two nuclear-armed nations directly engaged in combat.



Covering themselves with polythene sheets to shield against the rain, women farmers plant Aman seedlings in Barshapara village of Rajshahi's Godagari upazila yesterday. Across the Barind region, farmers are busy cultivating Aman paddy, which flourishes in the monsoon.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Wrap up polls preparations by December

FROM PAGE 1
reforms implemented, the election could be held before Ramadan – possibly in February. This means that everything needed to build the institutional framework for the election must begin now," Yunus was quoted as saying by his Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam at a briefing last night.

On June 13, after a meeting with Tarique Rahman in London, where the BNP acting chairperson suggested that polls could take place before Ramadan, Yunus said it was indeed possible to hold the election the week before the month of fasting if all preparations are completed.

Ramadan is expected to begin in the third week of February.

Yesterday's meeting discussed the reshuffle of deputy commissioners, upazila nirkabi officers and superintendents of police at the district level along with officers in charge at local police stations.

Usually, during elections, deputy commissioners serve as returning officers and upazila nirkabi officers as assistant returning officers, while SPs and OCs maintain law and order.

About whether the army will remain on the ground with magistracy power until the polls, Shafiqul said, "It is uncertain ... but the army will serve as a strike force during the voting period.

- ↳ Polls likely in Feb or April
- ↳ Army to serve as strike force
- ↳ 16,000 'high-risk' polling centres
- ↳ CCTV camera at every centre

At the meeting, Yunus stressed the need to verify workforce availability.

"If additional appointments are necessary, recruitment should begin immediately and adequate training should be arranged."

He also instructed the production of video content explaining election procedures for voters, which would be broadcast on television and social media for quick dissemination.

The chief adviser urged everyone to focus on safeguarding the women's voting rights. Separate polling booths for new voters were also recommended.

He suggested evaluating whether a "separate voter list" could be created for those aged between 18 and 33.

"For the past 16 years, voters haven't experienced a proper election. They recall violence and rigging at polling stations. In this election, we want voting to be a positive and memorable experience. First-time voters should feel proud – it should be a moment they cherish."

The meeting also extensively discussed law enforcement deployment, identifying high-risk polling centres and the army's role as a strike force.

Bangladesh will have 47,000 polling centres, around 16,000 of which are potentially "high-risk". Special directives were issued to ensure peaceful voting at those locations.

Discussions also covered installing CCTV cameras at every centre to ensure proper monitoring and training of relevant personnel.

Previously, law enforcers were deployed for four days around election time. For this election, plans are underway for a seven-day deployment to maintain order before,

"And therefore, a media code of conduct should be prepared in advance, so that media workers know their boundaries and election officials also understand to what extent the media should have access."

There were also discussions about polls observers, especially since the upcoming election has already drawn global attention. "We're hoping for around two lakh observers. We have given clear instructions to ensure that political party workers don't show up as 'observers', he said.

At the same time, another group blocked the Chankharpul intersection, while students of Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University blocked the Agargaon intersection near the metro station. Major routes such as Farmgate to Mirpur and Agargaon to Mohakhali remained closed for hours.

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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পুবালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

Protect pond
in RayerbazarBELA issues legal
notice to authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) yesterday issued a legal notice demanding immediate action to protect Potari Pukur, a pond at Sher-e-Bangla Road in Rayerbazar, Dhaka.

Through the notice, BELA called for an immediate halt to the illegal filling of the pond and the re-excavation of the portion already filled in. They also urged the authorities to properly preserve the pond, carrying out necessary renovations while maintaining its natural character.

According to the notice, a multi-storey building is currently under construction on the filled-up portion of the pond, allegedly without obtaining a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Department of Environment (DoE).

BELA reported evidence

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2



Children's faces light up with joy as they see cartoon-like murals created by students of Rajshahi University's Faculty of Fine Arts. The murals depict scenes from the city's heritage, blending both urban and rural life. They were painted on the walls at the entrance gate of the city protection embankment. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

Country gets
first robotic
rehab centre

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh is set to take a significant leap in healthcare innovation with the launch of a pilot project at the country's first Robotic Rehabilitation Center for patients suffering from stroke, paralysis and long-term neurological disorders.

The project will begin at the Super Specialised Hospital of Bangladesh Medical University (BMU) in Dhaka's Shahbagh today.

It will initially operate on a limited scale and will mark the start of a new era in neuro-rehabilitation for the patients.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A staggering 36 percent of Bangladeshi migrant workers are forced to return home within just three months of arriving abroad due to illegal recruitment practices by recruiters and employers, a new study has found.

These premature returns not only crush their hopes of economic improvement but also trap many in debt and a life devoid of dignity.

The study, titled "A Far Cry from Justice for Migrants: A Critical Analysis of Migrants' Experiences in the Arbitration System in Bangladesh", was conducted by the grassroots migrant rights group Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP).

OKUP Chairperson Shakirul Islam presented the findings of the study at a programme in the capital yesterday, highlighting how

AT A GLANCE

75% migrants didn't receive any contract before departure

64% male and 100% female migrants had no contract

THOSE WHO RECEIVED CONTRACTS:

62% got it just hours before their flight.

11% received it a month in advance.

47% received no work permit after arriving abroad.

Of the 53% who got permits, 24% got the promised jobs

All male migrants paid excessive fees

systematic failures in recruitment and arbitration systems leave thousands of migrant workers vulnerable to exploitation and injustice.

One of the report's main concerns is the lack of a standard, independent arbitration mechanism in Bangladesh to resolve migrant workers' complaints.

The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET), which handles arbitration cases while also issuing recruitment licenses and emigration clearance, faces a conflict of interest that undermines the fairness and effectiveness of the process, the report said.

It also found that legal

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

EC to register
voters in
five more
countries

STAR REPORT

The Election Commission (EC) has received approval from the foreign ministry to begin voter registration of Bangladeshi expatriates in five additional countries, including the US.

ASM Humayun Kabir, director general of the EC's National Identity Registration Wing, confirmed the development to reporters yesterday afternoon.

"We had sought approval to start voter registration in eight new countries. The foreign ministry has allowed us to proceed in five countries -- the US, Maldives, Jordan, South Africa, and Oman," he said.

The EC aimed to extend its voter registration efforts for expatriates to 40 countries.

Currently, registration is active in 16 centres across nine countries: the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Italy, the UK,

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Halt Santal eviction
in name of EPZDemand 32 eminent citizens,
call for probe into corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-two eminent citizens have demanded an immediate halt to the eviction of Santal farmers in Gaibandha's Gobindaganj, under the pretext of establishing an Export Processing Zone (EPZ).

They also called for a high-level investigation into corruption related to EPZ projects.

In a joint statement, they expressed deep concern that, following in the footsteps of past authoritarian regimes, a group of corrupt bureaucrats and vested interest groups are trying to forcibly acquire fertile agricultural land -- often inhabited by poor farmers and indigenous communities -- for so-called special economic zones or EPZs.

Citing the case of Bagda Farm in Gobindaganj, the statement alleged that a corrupt syndicate, with tacit support from some government officials, is aggressively trying to evict Santal families to make way for an EPZ, without conducting the mandatory Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) or Social Impact Assessments (SIA).

This reflects past practices under previous regimes, where many EPZs were proposed or built without proper environmental or social evaluations, said the citizens.

They also noted that, of the 100 EPZs or special economic zones announced in the last 16 years, only 10 have been implemented -- eight by the government and two by private initiatives -- on about 33,000 acres of acquired land.

Most of these lands were fertile and capable of producing two or three crops a year, many of which still remain unused.

In many cases, farmers were never compensated for

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



A mother helps her son drink from a bowl using a straw as he sits under a mosquito net at Mugda Hospital in Dhaka. The child has contracted dengue amid a nationwide surge in cases that has left most dengue wards filled to capacity.

Jamaat team
heads to China
tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

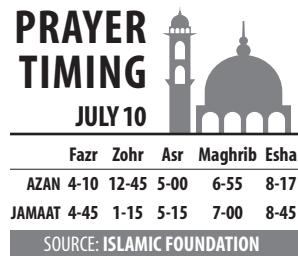
A high-level delegation from Jamaat-e-Islami, led by its Ameer Dr Shafiqur Rahman, is set to begin a five-day visit to China tomorrow at the invitation of the Chinese government.

This marks the party's second trip to the country.

Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar described the visit as "significant for both Jamaat and Bangladesh," noting its potential to strengthen economic and diplomatic ties with China amid the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Parwar said the nine-member delegation will hold discussions with various Chinese institutions, organisations, and the Communist Party of China.

The visit comes after a reception hosted by the Chinese Embassy in Dhaka on Tuesday evening, attended by Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen and Dr Shafiqur Rahman, both of whom addressed the gathering.



PUBLIC NOTICE

It has come to the attention of our client, Dr. Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre ('DMSC'), having registered office at No.6-B, Conran Smith Road, Gopalapuram, Chennai - 600 086, Tamil Nadu, India, that unauthorised persons are fraudulently misrepresenting themselves as being affiliated with DMSC. The said persons are reportedly using forged visiting cards with DMSC's name and a fictitious address at Holycare Hospital, New Eskaton, Ramna, Dhaka, along with a contact number and an email ID which is not associated with DMSC.



Further, the said persons are illegally promoting and selling a tablet under the name "Diabeta (since 1930)" for BDT 2000, bearing DMSC's Chairman Dr. V. Mohan's image thereby implying that the product is either produced or endorsed by him. This is advertised through a fake website <https://diabetadrvmohan.com> and six other similar websites for the sale of the said fake product in Bangladesh. This is to bring to the notice of the public that DMSC never sells any tablets through online and has no association whatsoever with the said persons, the product, or the websites. DMSC does not authorise, endorse, prescribe, or distribute any such product. Moreover, DMSC's Chairman namely, Dr. V. Mohan has nothing to do with this product and his photograph is being used illegally and fraudulently by some unscrupulous elements. The public is cautioned not to be misled by such fraudulent activities and desist from buying the said fake product as it is sold without the authority of DMSC or Dr. V. Mohan. Any person dealing with the said individual or product does so at their own risk. DMSC shall not be responsible for any resulting harm or loss. DMSC has no branch or authorised representative in Bangladesh. A formal complaint has been filed with the relevant cybercrime and regulatory authorities in India.

If you come across with any such fraudulent sale of the said product or any other products in the name of DMSC, please intimate to the following address and assist us in taking appropriate action to curb such malafide activities.

Dr. Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre
C/o R.K Law Associates
Advocates: Flat No.2A, 6th Floor, Gopalapuram, Chennai - 600 086
+91 99400 02973 / 95510 88124
Email: charles@rklaw.in



All 8 accused remanded over Muradnagar triple murder

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Cumilla

A Cumilla court yesterday placed all eight accused in the Muradnagar triple murder case on three-day remands.

Judge Mominul Haque of Cumilla's Cognisance Court-II passed the order in the afternoon.

The eight accused are Sabir Ahmed, 48, Nazim Uddin Babul, 56, Bacchu Mia, 55, Rabiu Awal, 55, Dulal, 45, Atikur Rahman, 42, Bayez Master, 43, and Akash, 24.

They were all present during the hearing, confirmed Sadekur Rahman, inspector of the court.

The incident occurred on July 3 when a mob, allegedly led by local Union Parishad Chairman Shimul Billal, attacked the home of a woman named Roksana Akter Rubi. Rubi, along with her daughter Taspiya Jonaki and her son Russell, were brutally beaten and hacked to death. Roksana's eldest daughter Rikta Akther filed the murder case with the local police station on July 4, naming 38 individuals and listing 20-25 unidentified others. Shimul Billal, chairman of Akubpur Union Parishad, was named as the prime accused.

NCT AT CTG PORT
HC order on DP
World contract
on July 23

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday fixed July 23 for delivering order on a writ petition that challenged the legality of a government decision to initiate process for awarding UAE-based company DP World the contract for container handling operations at New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT) in Chattogram.

The bench of Justice Md Habibul Gani and Justice Sk Tahsin Ali set the date after concluding hearing arguments from the lawyers on the petition.

Senior lawyers Zainul Abedin, AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, Ahansul Karim and Kayser Kamal and lawyer Md Anwar Hossen appeared for the

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

One more dies
from dengue, 406
get hospitalised

STAR REPORT



At least one dengue patient died and 406 others were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With the death and cases, the total number of deaths rose to 52 while total number of cases rose to 13,594, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Among the total cases, a total of 12,225 dengue patients have been released from hospitals, including 9,672 from outside Dhaka. Currently, 1,317 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country, 943 of whom are from outside Dhaka.

Grabbers choke Kalir Chhara canal in Ctg

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

of the canal's natural course have rendered it ineffective.

As a result, during the monsoon season, rainwater has nowhere to go and accumulates rapidly, leading to severe and prolonged waterlogging across the surrounding areas.

These unauthorised constructions have blocked the canal's natural upstream flow at many points.

Once a vital drainage route, the canal used to channel rainwater into the Bay of Bengal efficiently, playing a key role in preventing waterlogging. However, rampant encroachment and the destruction

Previously, because our area is hilly, waterlogging never occurred. However, over the past five years, waterlogging has started to occur at several key points," said Shafiqul Islam, a local resident and environmental activist.

During a recent visit to three points of the canal, this correspondent observed that the once-wide waterbody has now been reduced to a narrow drain, only 8 to 10 feet across in some areas.

At the Harbatal point, several multi-storey buildings have been

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

Protect pond

FROM PAGE 3

that the pond is now surrounded by tin sheets, and preparatory work for construction is underway.

The notice warned that filling up the pond would lead to severe waterlogging.

BELA pointed out that, under existing laws, a pond -- whether public or private -- cannot be filled without prior permission from the relevant authorities or in the absence of national interest. Altering the natural character of the pond violates environmental regulations and is a

punishable offence.

The legal notice has been addressed to administrator, Dhaka North City Corporation; secretary, Ministry of Land; secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; chairman, Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakha (Rajuk); director general, Department of Environment (DoE); chairman, Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC); deputy commissioner, Dhaka district; commissioner, Dhaka Metropolitan Police; director, DoE (Dhaka Metropolitan Office), officer in-charge, Mohammadpur Police Station and managing director, Ratul Properties Limited, Rupayan Group.

FROM PAGE 3

their acquired lands, and there have been widespread allegations of corruption and embezzlement.

The statement also mentioned instances like Sonargaon, where private investors deliberately destroyed agricultural land by filling it with sand before declaring it an economic zone.

They further pointed

out that even the current chairman of the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) recently cancelled 10 proposed zones, admitting that no more than 10 zones are realistically needed in the next decade.

The citizens made five key demands -- halting the eviction of Santals in Gobindaganj, launching a high-level investigation into

corruption and irregularities in land acquisition for EPZs, assessing environmental and agricultural damage caused by these projects, ensuring accountability for those involved in land grabbing and fraud, and returning unused acquired land to the original farmers, through legal reform if necessary.

The signatories of the statement include Hamida

Hossain, human rights activist; Sultana Kamal, human rights activist and founding chairperson of Manabdhikar Sanskritik Foundation; Khushi Kabir, human rights activist and coordinator of Nijera Kori; Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB); Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE); Shireen Pervin Huq, founder of Naripokkho; Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; Sumaiya Khair, professor of Law at University of Dhaka; ZI Khan Panna, senior advocate at Bangladesh Supreme Court; and Advocate Taslima Islam, acting chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA).

Halt Santal eviction in name of EPZ

Ref: BCB/BPL/Marketing Consultancy Service/2025/457

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) from experienced and well-reputed Sports Marketing Consultancy Firms / Agencies / Business Entities to provide Strategic Marketing and Commercial Advisory Services for the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20 Tournament and its commercial properties.

Scope of Work

The selected Sports Marketing Consultancy Firm / Agency / Business Entity will be responsible for, but not limited to:

- Strategic Commercial Structuring**
 - Review and redesign of the BPL business model, • Formulation of commercial rights packaging: media, broadcasting, sponsorship, licensing, digital etc.
- Brand Positioning & Marketing Strategy**
 - Developing and enhancing the BPL T20's brand value, • Creating marketing campaigns and activation frameworks.
- Franchise Model & Revenue Distribution Advisory**
 - Designing franchise tendering frameworks, financial models, and revenue-sharing plans, • Assisting in onboarding and structuring new franchise teams.
- Media Rights Strategy & Bidding Process Management**
 - Rights packaging and valuation (TV, OTT, DTH, Radio, etc.), • Drafting bid documents, technical specifications, and evaluating bids.
 - Liaising with potential (international/local) commercial and/or media partners of BCB for BPL T20
 - Assisting BCB on all kinds of commercial exploitation of the brand 'BPL T20' and related matters.
 - Assisting for resolution of disputes that may arise between BCB and the commercial and/or media partners.
- Sponsorship & Partner Acquisition Support**
 - Structuring title sponsorship, associate sponsorship, and licensing deals. • Advising on contract drafting and partner alignment.
 - Assisting BCB on searching and selecting potential sponsors and other partners for various segments of BPL T20.
 - Assisting for resolution of disputes that may arise between BCB and the sponsors and other partners.
- Event Presentation and Fan Engagement Planning**
 - Assisting in match-day experience design and digital fan outreach.
 - Integrating 'Cricketainment', branding, and innovation in live events.
- Benchmarking and Global Best Practices**
 - Advising BCB based on the updated global benchmarks including all major T20 leagues around the world.
 - Ensuring compliance with ICC standards.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Proven track record in executing similar projects for major sports leagues (preferably cricket).
- A team comprising highly qualified professionals, including at least one senior expert with a minimum of 7 years of relevant experience in the global sports industry.
- Experience in working with national cricket boards or ICC events is highly preferred.
- Preference will be given to participant entities with international/foreign consultants.
- Strong legal, financial, and operational capability in media rights, sponsorship, and franchise-based tournaments.
- Shall be able to provide full time service throughout the year.
- The entity operates physical office(s) in Dhaka, Bangladesh, possessing all required licenses as per laws of Bangladesh.

Submission Procedure:

A detailed document (General Guideline) related to EOI will be available at the BPL Office at BCB management Office during working hours (10.00 AM to 5.00 PM except Friday) and at Official Websites: www.tigercricket.com.bd and www.bplt20.com.bd from Saturday 12 July, 2025 to 24 July, 2025. The EOI (prepared in accordance with the General Guideline for EOI submission) must be submitted in a sealed envelope addressed to: The Chief Executive Officer, BCB Management Office, Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216, Bangladesh during office hours (between BST 1000 to BST 1700) or electronically via email by uploading it to Google Drive to the BCB at email address: bplt20@bccricket.com on or before 26 July, 2025.

Interested firms are invited to submit their EOI with the following:

- Detailed Company Profile. • Experience in similar assignments (with client references). • Proposed approach and methodology.
- List of key personnel and expertise. • Legal structure and ownership. • Accepted detailed Scope of Work. • Payment terms.
- Audited financial statements for the last 3 years.

BCB reserves the unconditional right to accept or reject any or all EOIs at its sole discretion at any time without assigning any reason whatsoever. BCB also reserves the right to amend, postpone or cancel the entire EOI process and / or modify, add or alter the terms of the document and/or the conditions for EOI process by issuing addendum(s) at any time prior to the commencement of the EOI process on or before July 24, 2025.

Chief Executive Officer
Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)

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

ALIF INDUSTRIES LIMITED
COMPOSITE KNITTING DYEING & GARMENTS
Bilquis Tower (9th Floor), House # 06, Road # 46, Gulshan-2, Dhaka-1212.
Tel : +88-02-58815226, 58815227, 58815229, 9857660
Fax : +88-02-58815228, E-mail: alifindustries95@gmail.com

Price Sensitive Information

Further to our earlier letter dated May 27, 2025, concerning the subject "Request for Clarification regarding Dissemination of PSI," and following discussions with the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission, we would like to disclose the following information as Price Sensitive Information (PSI):

This is for kind information of all concerned that Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission vide letter no BSEC/C/CPLC-1022/2022/444 has cancelled the review application for raising of capital of BDT 200 crore.

Date: July 09, 2025

Sincerely

Company Secretary
Alif Industries Ltd.

জমি বিক্রয়ের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশনের ৪৬নং ওয়ার্ড, উত্তরখান, গোবিন্দপুর মৌজা, মেনারটেক এলাকায় একটি মালিকের ক্রয়কৃত ৫০ বিঘা নির্ভেজাল উচু জমি জরুরী ভিত্তিতে বিক্রয় করা হবে। জমির সকল কাগজপত্র আপটুডেট আছে। দ্রুত রেজিস্ট্রেশন ও হস্তান্তরযোগ্য। আবুলাহমুর টু পূর্বাচল মেইন লিংক রোড সংলগ্ন জমি এখনই হাউজিং প্রকল্প, শিল্প কারখানা, হাসপাতাল, মার্কেট, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, আবাসিক স্কুল-কলেজ, রিসোর্ট করার জন্য অত্যন্ত উপযোগী। বড় পরিসরে জমিতে বিনিয়োগ করতে অস্থায়ী ক্রেতাগন যোগাযোগ করুন।

বিস্তারিত সম্মুখ সাক্ষাতে: ০১৭০৫-৮০৬৪২৪

Ship attacked by Houthi rebels in Red Sea sinks

Five crew members rescued

REUTERS, Athens

A mission was under way yesterday to rescue crew from the Eternity C cargo ship which sank in the Red Sea following an attack that killed at least four crew members.

Security firms involved in the operation said four crew members and one armed guard from the vessel had been pulled from the water, where they had been for more than 24 hours.

They said they had not yet made visual contact with the rest of the 22-member crew nor two more guards who were aboard.

"We will continue to search for the remaining crew until the last light," said an official at Greece-based maritime risk management firm Diaplious.

AIR INDIA CRASH

Probe focuses on engine fuel control switches

REUTERS

A preliminary report into the deadly crash of an Air India jetliner in June is expected to be released by tomorrow, three sources with knowledge of the matter said, with one adding the probe had narrowed its focus to the movement of the plane's fuel control switches.

The London-bound Boeing 787 Dreamliner, which started losing height after reaching an altitude of 650 feet, crashed moments after takeoff from Ahmedabad, killing 241 of 242 people on board and the rest on the ground.

The investigation into the Air India crash is focusing on the movement of the engine fuel control switches following an analysis of the 787's flight and voice data recorders, along with a simulation by Boeing of the aircraft's final moments, one of the sources said.

The investigation has not raised any immediate concerns over mechanical failure, and there has been no bulletin to airlines recommending changes to 787 operations. Boeing declined to comment. The Air Current first reported the focus on the fuel switches that help power the plane's two engines.



Large boards displaying portraits of children from Gaza are seen during a protest installation titled 'Looking Gaza's Children in the Eyes', organised by the human rights movement Avaaz, in front of the Reichstag building, which houses the Bundestag (Germany's lower house of Parliament), in Berlin yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Russia strikes Ukraine with 728 drones

Nato member Poland, allies scramble jets to ensure air safety; Trump vows to send more weapons to Kyiv

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russia targeted Ukraine with a record 728 drones overnight, shortly after US President Donald Trump pledged to send more defensive weapons to Kyiv and aimed unusually direct criticism at Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Ukrainian air defence units destroyed almost all the drones, including through electronic jamming systems, Ukraine's air force said on the Telegram messaging app.

Zelensky wants secondary sanctions on Russia's war income

Trump aims unusually direct criticism at Putin

Europe working on a new sanctions package against Moscow



the Polish armed forces said.

Buildings were damaged but no deaths or injuries reported in what amounted to the biggest air strike of the war on Lutsk, a city of 200,000 people, regional authorities said.

A storage facility of a local enterprise and some parking structures were ablaze, the mayor of Lutsk, Ihor Polishchuk said.

Ivan Rudnytskyi, governor of the Volyn region that includes Lutsk, said 50 Russian drones and five missiles were in the region's airspace overnight.

The attack, which follows a series of escalating air assaults on Ukraine in recent weeks, showed the need for "biting" sanctions on the sources of income Russia uses to finance the war, including on those who buy Russian oil, Zelensky said on Telegram.

Polish and allied aircraft were activated to ensure air safety, Poland's Operational Command of

Senate that would impose steep sanctions on Russia, including 500 percent tariffs on nations that buy Russian oil, gas, uranium and other exports.

"We get a lot of bullshit thrown at us by Putin ... He's very nice all the time, but it turns out to be meaningless," Trump said at a cabinet meeting.

When asked by a reporter what action he would take against Putin, Trump said: "I wouldn't tell you. We want to have a little surprise."

Separately, Europe is working on a new sanctions package against Moscow.

Trump has shifted US rhetoric away from staunch support for Kyiv towards accepting some of Moscow's justifications for the full-scale invasion it launched in 2022.

But initial rounds of talks between Russia and Ukraine have so far borne little fruit.

POTENTIAL WAR

EU unveils 'stockpiling strategy'

AFP, Strasbourg

The EU yesterday announced its first ever plan to help stockpile essential goods such as food, water, fuel and medicines in case of crises, amid fears over potential war with Russia.

The "stockpiling strategy" from Brussels comes as Nato warns that Russia -- currently waging war on EU neighbour Ukraine -- could be ready to attack the alliance within five years.

The 27-nation bloc has launched a broad readiness push to bolster its militaries and try to ensure it can defend itself by 2030.

"The goal is very simple to make sure that essential supplies that keep our societies running, especially the ones that save lives, are always available," EU crisis management commissioner Hadja Lahbib said.

"The more we prepare, the less we panic."

The EU says the new stockpiling plan is aimed at securing the continuity of key goods during a raft of crises "such as major energy blackouts, natural disasters, conflicts or pandemics."

It involves establishing a network between countries to better coordinate stocks, identifying gaps and bolstering "EU-level stockpiles".

Over two dozen critics of Pak govt face YouTube ban

REUTERS, Islamabad

YouTube has told more than two dozen critics of the Pakistani government that it is considering blocking their channels after a local court sought to ban them for being "anti-state".

The channels that could be blocked in Pakistan include that of the main opposition party and also its leader, jailed former prime minister Imran Khan, as well as journalists critical of the government, according to the June 24 court order seen by Reuters.

The judicial magistrate court in Islamabad said it was seeking the ban after the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) criticised the channels in a June 2 report for "sharing highly intimidating, provocative and derogatory contents against state institutions and officials of the state of Pakistan".

Digital rights campaigners say that any ban would further undermine free speech in Pakistan, where the authorities are accused of stifling newspapers and television and social media is seen as one of the few outlets for dissent.

YouTube told the 27 content creators that their channels could be taken down if they did not comply with the court orders.

"If you fail to do so, as per our local law obligations, we may comply with the request without further notice," the popular video sharing platform said in emails this week to the channel owners, according to a notice seen by Reuters.

Israeli blockade in Gaza hits 'critical point': UN

AGENCIES

The United Nations humanitarian office, OCHA, has warned that the fuel crisis in Gaza due to the Israeli blockade has reached a "critical point" and will cause further deaths and suffering in the besieged Palestinian territory.

OCHA said the fuel powering vital functions in Gaza, including water desalination stations and hospitals' intensive care units, is running out quickly, with "virtually no additional accessible stocks left".

"Hospitals are rationing. Ambulances are stalling. Water systems are on the brink," the office said in a statement.

"The deaths this is likely causing could soon increase sharply unless the Israeli authorities allow new fuel in – urgently, regularly and in sufficient quantities."

Israel has imposed a suffocating siege on Gaza since early March.

Over the past weeks, it has allowed some food into Gaza to be distributed through a United States-backed group at sites where hundreds of aid seekers have been shot dead by Israeli fire.

But fuel has not entered the territory in months. Senior World Food Programme official Carl Skau also decried the lack of fuel in Gaza.

"The needs are greater than ever, and our capacity to respond has never been more constrained. Famine is spreading, and people are dying trying to find food," Skau said in a social media post.

"Our teams in Gaza are doing their best to deliver aid and are often caught in the crossfire. We are suffering from shortages of fuel, spare parts and essential communications equipment," Skau added.

Poorer countries granted access to HIV prevention drug

AFP, Geneva

Lower-income countries will gain access to a "game-changing" HIV prevention drug with a new deal signed between US pharmaceutical giant Gilead and the Global Fund, the health financing group said yesterday.

The group set up to battle AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, described the deal to procure lenacapavir for low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) as "a significant milestone for global health equity".

"This marks the first time in history that an HIV prevention product will be introduced in LMICs at the same time as in high-income countries," the Global Fund said in a statement.

The group said it hoped the agreement with Gilead would make it possible to reach two million people with the revolutionary drug, which was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration last month.

Drugs to prevent HIV transmission, known as pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP, have existed for more than a decade. But because they typically require taking a daily pill, they have yet to make a significant dent in global infections.

By contrast, lenacapavir, marketed under the brand name Yeztugo, requires only two injections per year and has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV transmission by more than 99.9 percent in adults and adolescents -- making it functionally akin to a powerful vaccine.

"This is not just a scientific breakthrough -- it's a turning point for HIV/AIDS," Global Fund chief Peter Sands said. "For the first time, we have a tool that can fundamentally change the trajectory of the HIV epidemic -- but only if we get it to the people who need it most."



Bosnian women pray beside a truck carrying caskets containing the remains of victims of the Srebrenica massacre, as it pauses in Sarajevo yesterday en route to the Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial Cemetery in Potocari, where they will be buried during tomorrow's commemoration of the massacre's 30th anniversary.

Iran holds talks with KSA after truce with Israel

AFP, Riyadh

Iran's foreign minister has held talks with Saudi Arabia's de facto leader, the Saudi foreign ministry said, two weeks after a ceasefire between regional rivals Iran and Israel began.

Saudi Prince Mohammed bin Salman said his country hoped the truce would contribute to regional stability, and emphasised Riyadh's position "in supporting dialogue through diplomatic means as a path to resolving disputes," the ministry said in a post on X early yesterday.

According to the Saudi ministry, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi "expressed his gratitude" to Riyadh for its condemnation of Israel's attacks on Iran last month.

Israel launched its u bombing campaign on Iran on June 13, targeting military and nuclear facilities.

The rising horror of sexual violence

Collective actions needed to ensure safety of women and children

Every year, the one statistic that strikes at the core of women's safety in Bangladesh is the ever-soaring number of rape cases. Within the first six months of this year, the number of reported rape cases reached 481, just 35 fewer than the total number of rape cases reported between January and December last year, according to Bangladesh Mahila Parishad data.

What is more concerning is that children were victims in almost 72 percent of the cases. Worse still, 106 of the 481 reported cases involved gang rape. When one reads these statistics alongside the incidents of rape in Muradnagar, Bhola, or Magura, the severity of the situation becomes even more apparent. The level of perversion displayed in many of these cases is beyond shocking. Moreover, the way these crimes are reported by the media and weaponised by certain quarters, including political parties, the way victims are vilified on social media platforms and put on trial in the people's court, raises serious questions about our collective sense of civility, ethics, and values.

Although the government has taken some steps to expedite the trial process in the Magura rape case, we do not see similar actions or urgency in many other cases. A recent report published in this daily revealed that 35,262 cases filed under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act currently remain pending with courts across the country for over five years. The reasons behind the delay—which include incomplete police investigations, overburdened special tribunals, lack of dedicated prosecutors, and intimidation of witnesses and victims by the accused—culminate in creating a culture of impunity for perpetrators. There is also the tendency in our society to stigmatise the victims and blame them for the crime, instead of the rapist. That is why even a criminal offence like rape is often settled out of court, with victims often being married off to their rapists, subjecting the former to further trauma.

Under these circumstances, the government alone cannot deter sexual violence against women by enacting stricter laws. Proper implementation, institutional practice, and integrity are required to bring perpetrators to justice. Beyond that, we need to change our perception of rape and other sexual crimes. Society at large—and men in particular—must first see women as human beings with agency over their minds and bodies, not as objects. For this, education on equality and rights from the primary level is necessary. Traditional patriarchal practices must be challenged. However, nothing can be achieved unless all political and non-political stakeholders come on board to ensure the safety of women and children, without exception.

A warning sign for democracy

Young people's disillusionment with politics must be reversed

After a youth-led uprising that toppled the autocratic Awami League regime of 15 years, we expected that young people would be more engaged in politics. However, a survey conducted by the South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM) reveals a different reality: an overwhelming 82.7 percent of our youth population, particularly first time voters, are not interested in joining politics or participating in political activities. Shockingly, only 1.6 percent of young people are currently involved in any form of political activity, the survey reveals. At a time when the country is awaiting a meaningful democratic transition, the widespread political disengagement among our youth is deeply concerning. The question is: what is driving their disillusionment with politics, even after a successful uprising that they led?

The survey revealed that the fear of political violence or backlash was a major reason for their disinterest in politics, cited by 58.7 percent of respondents, while 56.4 percent expressed concerns about corruption and lack of ethics in politics. A large majority—80.2 percent—were alarmed by the rising incidents of arson, robbery, and theft, while many pointed to mob violence, politically motivated arrests and legal proceedings. Gender-based violence, hostility towards feminist or liberal views, and unsafe public spaces, especially for women, have further disappointed the youth.

We think these concerns are entirely valid in the present circumstances. In the 11 months since the interim government took office, the country has seen a surge in mob and political violence, alongside a troubling rise in violence against women and children, including rape. The state's shocking failure to uphold the rule of law in these cases has deeply disillusioned young people. Although a new youth-led political party has emerged, it remains uncertain how much youth support it will get. However, despite young people's reluctance to engage directly in political activities, it is encouraging that 76.78 percent expressed willingness to vote in the upcoming election.

In order to encourage our youth towards politics, our entire political system and the state institutions must undergo meaningful reforms, with young people actively involved in the process. Our policymakers must also identify and address the most pressing concerns facing today's youth. According to the survey, an overwhelming 94 percent of young people viewed education system reform as "very urgent", while 90 percent prioritised labour market reforms. They also called for political party reforms, demanding greater transparency in party funding and an end to patronage, nepotism, and political violence. All these issues must be urgently addressed to reverse the growing disillusionment among our youth towards politics.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Telstar 1 launched

On this day in 1962, Telstar 1, the first communications satellite to transmit live television signals and telephone conversations across the Atlantic Ocean, was launched, inaugurating a new age in electronic communications.

EDITORIAL

Dhaka's drains, dengue, and denial



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H.M. NAZMUL ALAM

What is the capital of Bangladesh known for?

Ask this question on a dry winter morning, and you will hear a chorus: "Biryan!" "Traffic!" "Overpopulation!"—with someone perhaps adding "resilience" as a compliment or a curse. But ask the same question during monsoon season, and the answer will change faster than the city's disappearing footpaths. Dhaka becomes less of a city and more of a soggy simulation—an accidental water park where rickshaws float like Venetian gondolas, and office-goers reenact scenes from *Titanic*, minus the romance and with the added thrill of catching leptospirosis.

It happens every year—rain falls, drains fail, city halts. And each year, officials act as if the sky has done something outrageously unexpected. "Heavy rainfall was unforeseen," they say, as though clouds haven't been part of the Bangladeshi climate since the Pala Empire. But the real surprise isn't the rain—it's our ever-deepening incompetence in dealing with it.

Take the drainage system. Legends say it exists. The Dhaka South City Corporation claims to maintain 3,000 km of drains. Dhaka North boasts another 1,500 km. That's 4,500 km in total—enough to stretch across Bangladesh from Teknaf to Tetulia multiple times. And yet, when the first heavy downpour arrives, those drains behave like introverts at a party: overwhelmed, unresponsive, and quick to disappear.

The Institute of Water Modelling reported that almost 70 percent of Dhaka's stormwater drains are clogged—choked not only by plastic bags and household waste but also by layers of concrete apathy, construction debris, and the crumbled remains of political promises. These are not drains anymore; they are time capsules filled with everything we have chosen to ignore.

So, when it rains, water doesn't flow. It lingers. It pools in alleyways, reminiscing about the flood from last year, and the year before, and the one before that. You can practically host rowing competitions on Mirpur Road, or perhaps inaugurate a wetland research institute on Panthapath.

This aquatic chaos isn't just a nuisance—it's an open invitation for disease. The Aedes mosquito,

that airborne agent of doom, thrives in stagnant water. And Dhaka, during monsoon, becomes its dream honeymoon resort. Flowerpots, construction sites, rooftops, potholes, plastic cups—every puddle is an incubator.

In 2023-24, dengue didn't just visit—it unpacked its bags and moved in. Over 1,700 people died, making it one of the deadliest outbreaks in the country's history. And yet, preventive measures remain as rare as a government meeting that starts on time. Public announcements are

cocktail of memes, madness, and mild dysentery.

photo-ops in knee-deep water.

And yet, no one ever seems to resign.

What's more absurd is how quickly the cycle resets. After every "flood," there's a press conference. A "special task force" is declared. The task force holds several "urgent meetings." A thick report is written—possibly water-resistant. It's shelved. A new committee is formed. Consultants are flown in. Samosas are served. Recommendations are made: "elevated walkways," "mobile pumping stations," "awareness campaigns." Then...silence.

Until the next monsoon arrives and the entire performance repeats, like a tragic opera directed by Kafka and choreographed by Monty Python.

Accountability, it seems, floats away faster than the floodwater.

This isn't just about governance—it's about the normalisation of dysfunction. When children grow up thinking that a flooded school is normal, that electricity should vanish with the first thunderclap, that mosquitoes are as inevitable as midterms, then we have moved beyond negligence. We have institutionalised absurdity.

And what's our long-term vision? Dhaka, at the mercy of rain, keeps expanding vertically and horizontally with little regard for drainage, green zones, or water reservoirs. The canals that once breathed life into the city have been choked into oblivion. Wetlands have been encroached on by real estate greed. Every bit of concrete laid without planning becomes a future flood zone.

Yet amid all this, we remain resilient. Or is it numb? Maybe both.

There's something heartbreakingly poetic in our ability to carry on. A city submerged in failure, yet floating on sheer stubbornness. A place where people laugh while knee deep in water because crying won't keep them dry. Where a shopkeeper rescues floating packets of Maggi noodles and tells a passer-by, "Now we sell seafood flavour."

Dhaka doesn't sink. It limps, floats, laughs, and curses. It becomes a case study in how a city can grow without growing up.

So, bring the rain. Let the clouds burst and the rivers rise. Let the drains hide in shame. Let Dhaka drown again, not because it has to—but because it always does.

Because in this city, infrastructure is seasonal, promises are waterproof, and accountability is amphibious.

We will endure. Not because we are prepared, but because we have no other choice.

So, dear Dhaka, until the next monsoon: keep your raincoat, your boots, your memes, and your gallows humour. Above all, keep your hope afloat. Because, in the city of waterlogged dreams, hope is the only thing we haven't learned to drain.



Dhaka, at the mercy of rain, keeps expanding vertically and horizontally with little regard for drainage, green zones, or water reservoirs.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

made. Sprays are sprayed—often into the air, never the water. And when questioned, health officials fumble between statistics and statements like, "We are taking steps," which in Dhaka's bureaucratese translates to: "We are waiting for the rain to stop and the news cycle to move on."

Meanwhile, as dengue breeds in puddles and rats enjoy their waterfront condos, the people of Dhaka do what they always do—adapt. A woman carrying her baby through waist-deep water in Mohammadpur shrugs and says, "Well, at least it's not hot today." A rickshaw-puller adds an extra Tk 50 for "water surcharge." Foodpanda riders contemplate swimming lessons.

Our coping mechanism? A

spent nearly Tk 1,000 crore on waterlogging and canal-cleaning projects. Yet, with every rain, Dhaka drowns again—quicker than ever. Where did the money go? Some say it evaporated. Others suggest it floated away with the drains. Rumour has it a large chunk was spent on "training" abroad—perhaps to study how Paris or Amsterdam handles its drainage, forgetting that Dhaka has neither its rivers nor its reason.

Transparency International Bangladesh reported that up to 30 percent of urban infrastructure budgets are lost to corruption. That's not a footnote—that's a confession. It's no longer a matter of inefficiency. It's institutionalised failure, propped up by excuses, committee reports, and

THE DIGITAL STRIP SEARCH

How America's visa edicts redraw colonial borders in cyberspace



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ZAKIR KIBRIA

First, they demand our gold, then our spices, now our selfies. But the ledger always settles.

Act I: The notification

The alerts hit Kathmandu and Dhaka within 24 hours of each other—twin seismic pulses in the geopolitical nervous system. First, Nepal: "Effective immediately, all applicants for F, M, or J visas must set social media accounts to PUBLIC." Then Bangladesh: identical language, identical demand. No velvet gloves, no diplomatic sugarcoating. Just the sterile click of a bureaucratic mouse that echoed like a vault sealing shut.

In the monsoon-drenched lanes of Dhaka, medical student Arifa Rahman (not her real name) stared at her phone. "They want my family WhatsApp jokes? My cousin's wedding photos?" In Kathmandu, engineering aspirant Bikram Joshi (not his real name) scrolled through years of Tibetan solidarity posts. Both knew this wasn't vetting. This was digital strip search

under open skies.

Act II: The algorithmic Raj

Let's be clear: 21st-century imperialism wears algorithmic robes. When the US State Department orders South Asian students to bare their digital souls, while exempting German or Japanese applicants, it resurrects the colonial "natives vs Europeans" divide. The platforms enabling this? Facebook, Twitter, Instagram—Western digital fields born from Pentagon partnerships and Silicon Valley venture capital. As Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) scholars note, these are not neutral tools but "geo-economic weapons" where "winner takes all."

"Every visa adjudication is a national security decision," declares the notice from the US Embassy in Kathmandu. Translation: your dreams are now contingent on your Instagram likes.

This is a connectivity weaponised. This is America deploying its platform architecture. The brilliance? Forcing

self-colonisation. Students now scrub profiles preemptively—deleting Palestine solidarity posts, hiding climate activism, and burying critiques of US drone strikes. The chilling effect is the feature, not the bug.

Act III: The multipolar counterpoint

Enters the subplot: a world rebalancing. As American soft power wanes, alternatives surge. Germany reports a 58 percent spike in South Asian students; Finland waives social media checks entirely. Meanwhile, Dhaka negotiates digital partnerships with Delhi—India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payment system now processes cross-border education fees in seconds.

The irony? The US condemns China's "social credit system" while implementing behavioural vetting via visa forms. Yet, as Carnegie scholars note, the Global South increasingly rejects this hypocrisy: "The central divide remains between the dominant North and the aggrieved South."

Act IV: Resistance in minor key

How to fight back? Nepal's foreign ministry quietly circulates a draft note: "Reciprocity demanded: US applicants must publish tax returns and gun ownership records." Bangladeshi hackers launch #EncryptTheSouth tutorials—teaching students to archive "private" profile versions before compliance.

Scholars at Dhaka University trace

the policy's lineage: from British colonial "Thuggee Files" to Facebook's Cambridge Analytica scandal.

Their weapon? Dark humour. Memes flood Telegram: "My ancestors gave spices to colonisers. Now I give Zuckerberg my DMs."

Final: The unsilenced South

This isn't just about visas. It's about whose digital bodies are deemed legible, harvestable, and disposable. When Arifa toggles her profile to "public," she hears echoes of her grandmother's stories: "The British measured our skulls to prove inferiority." Today's metrics are likes and network graphs.

Yet the revolt is subtle. Students create decoy accounts—carefully curated performances of apolitical banality. Others flood feeds with Tagore poetry or Bhutanese throat-singing videos, encrypting dissent in cultural noise. As one Kathmandu tweet goes viral: "You want my data? Here's a sonnet."

Epilogue

The embassies framed this as "security." But in the bazaars of Dhaka and the cybercafes of Kathmandu, they know the truth: data is the new spice, silicon the new soil. As the post-American world stirs, South Asia's response blends poetic defiance with technological pragmatism—a digital *satyagraha* unfolding one privacy setting at a time.

Star Cineplex to screen 'Superman' and 'Karate Kid: Legends' with global rollout



A double treat awaits Bangladeshi moviegoers this weekend as James Gunn's *Superman* and *Karate Kid: Legends*, starring Jackie Chan, will premiere at Star Cineplex on July 11 (Friday).

Superman is releasing on the same day as its international release. It introduces a new DC Universe on the big screen with David Corenswet in the titular role. Beyond action, the film explores themes like immigration, morality, and politics. Director Gunn described it as "the story of an immigrant finding his place in the world."

Meanwhile, *Karate Kid: Legends* sees Jackie Chan return as Mr Han, mentoring a new student, Li, who moves from Beijing to New York. The film, a spiritual successor to the 2010 reboot and *Cobra Kai*, also features Ralph Macchio reprising his iconic role as Daniel LaRusso. Together, they face off against Kim Tae Sang, a martial arts master seeking to corporatise the discipline.

Star Cineplex has confirmed screenings at all its branches, offering Bangladeshi audiences a chance to enjoy both blockbusters alongside the rest of the world.

'Aesthete' invites viewers into a vivid dialogue of art and identity

Aesthete, a group exhibition at Alliance Française de Dhaka's La Galerie, features 33 paintings and sculptures by 28 Bangladeshi artists. Open to the public until July 15, the exhibition runs Mondays to Saturdays, from 3pm to 9pm.

Inaugurated by Professor Emeritus Rafiqun Nabi, with Raquib Mohammad Fakhrul and Ranjit Das in attendance, the show presents diverse artistic voices through various media and styles—from abstraction to social realism.

Themes range from natural beauty and folklore to political unrest and personal identity. With works by artists such as Abdullah Al Bashir, Lutfa Mahmuda, and Bishwajit Goswami, *Aesthete* invites viewers to observe, reflect, and engage with layered narratives.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF AFD



'Bachelor Point' Season 5 to stream free on YouTube

The fifth season of the popular Bangladeshi series *Bachelor Point*, directed and produced by Kajal Arefin Ome, will stream for free on Boom Films' YouTube channel starting today.

New episodes will air every Thursday and Friday at 7:30pm, featuring fan-favourite characters like Kabil, Pasha, Habu, and Shimul.

Initially launched on the Bongo OTT platform, the series is now headed to YouTube due to strong viewer demand. "Boom Films gained over 600,000 subscribers just from promos," said Ome. The show will also air on Channel i at 7:50pm, with reruns at 3:40am and 11:30am.

Each 20-minute episode stars Marzuk Russell, Ziaul Hoque Polash, Chashi Alam, Shimul Sharma, Lamia Lam, Abdullah Rana, and Monira Mithu.



NEWS

Helicopter deal with Russia stalls

FROM PAGE 12
company by the US Department of the Treasury.

In a letter dated January 19 this year, Md Jasim Uddin, deputy secretary of the Public Security Division, instructed the inspector general of police to halt all processes involving the justification certificate required for importing the aircraft.

The move was taken "to avoid any future complications in procuring helicopters from a sanctioned entity," the letter stated.

According to ministry sources, Tk 299.68 crore has already been paid in two installments—Tk 214.06 crore in the first and Tk 85.62 crore in the second.

The remaining amount remains deposited with the bank.

According to police sources, four officers were sent to the Army Aviation School in July 2021 to undergo basic aviation training.

Mushfiq Haque (35th BCS), Sarwar Hossain (35th BCS), Fatema Tuz Zohra (36th BCS), and Abul Hossain (37th BCS) completed their solo flight training by March 16, 2022.

Additionally, several sub-inspectors and constables received helicopter maintenance training through the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) Air Wing.

A full aviation wing was established under the police to support rescue

missions, emergency response, and aerial surveillance—particularly in remote or disaster-prone areas.

An assistant inspector general was also given charge of the wing.

Without the aircraft, the wing remains inactive and faces the risk of becoming obsolete, while concerns have also arisen over potential skill loss among trained officers.

"These two helicopters have now become a thorn in the police's side. The aviation wing, launched five years ago with high hopes, is now sitting idle," said a senior official.

Confirming the development, SM Humayun Kabir Sarker, joint secretary (Police 2 Branch), Public Security Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs, told The Daily Star, "We have withheld the delivery of the helicopters until further notice due to sanctions by the US Department of the Treasury."

Asked about a possible resolution, Humayun Kabir said, "The sanctions were imposed due to military concerns. As a developing country, we are now trying to make it clear that these helicopters were entirely meant for civil purposes."

"There is a provision for a waiver under the terms of the sanction, and we are now working to secure that waiver as part of our next course of action," he added.

According to JSC Russian

Helicopters' website, the Mi-171A2 is a next-generation multirole helicopter that builds on the legacy of the Mi 8/17 series, offering enhanced reliability, safety, and performance.

Developed in collaboration with operators, it features powerful propulsion, upgraded rotor and gear systems, a modern fuselage, advanced avionics, and a glass cockpit.

The Mi-171A2 is versatile, cost-effective, and capable of handling a wide range of missions in diverse conditions, while ensuring high levels of comfort and operational efficiency.

The aviation wing was expected to play a crucial role in disaster response, emergency rescues, and law enforcement surveillance operations across the country.

Police officials say the wing would also enhance rapid deployment capabilities during search and rescue missions, natural calamities, or incidents of public security.

Enamul Haque Sagar, assistant inspector general (media) of the Police Headquarters, told The Daily Star, "Police officers have already received pilot training, and maintenance staff are prepared."

Regarding the officers' idleness, he said, "In the absence of an aviation wing at the PHQ, the four pilots and a maintenance engineer are now posted in Rab's air wing and receiving training as part of continuous skill development."

He added that Indian authorities often claim those being pushed in are undocumented Bangladeshi, and Bangladesh must verify those claims. "And any Rohingya found in Indian territory should be repatriated to Myanmar, not sent here [Bangladesh]."

Indian human rights activist Kirity Roy told The Daily Star, "India has legal mechanisms. Article 21 of our Constitution guarantees the right to life and personal liberty. And the Foreigners Act outlines procedures for dealing with undocumented individuals. If someone is here illegally, there must be a legal process for repatriation. What's happening now is a blatant violation of human rights. We have protested and alerted both the National Human Rights Commission and the Supreme Court."

Another official, requesting anonymity, said the push-ins violate existing bilateral frameworks, including the 1975 India-Bangladesh Joint Guidelines for border authorities, the 2011 Coordinated Border Management Plan, and agreements made during director general-level talks between BGB and

and India's Border Security Force.

He added that Indian authorities often claim those being pushed in are undocumented Bangladeshi, and Bangladesh must verify those claims. "And any Rohingya found in Indian territory should be repatriated to Myanmar, not sent here [Bangladesh]."

A Bangladesh foreign ministry official said Dhaka has formally raised the issue with New Delhi multiple times, calling for an end to the push-ins. "We've asked India to follow proper procedures, but have yet to receive a response. Meanwhile, the push-ins continue," he told The Daily Star.

In early May, the foreign ministry sent a letter to India's external affairs ministry, urging compliance with the established repatriation mechanisms. The ministry warned that illegal push-ins could undermine border security and fuel anti-India sentiment.

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Relentless rain

FROM PAGE 12
regions of Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, and the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

A bulletin by the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) mentions heavy rainfall in several places in neighbouring Indian states, including Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and West Bengal.

Contacted, FFWC Executive Engineer Sarder Uday Raihan said, "The water level in the Haldia river is expected to cross the danger marks on Thursday. Due to continuous rains, water levels in all major rivers have been increasing. However, chances of a large scale flooding are low at the moment."

He further said the flood situation in Feni might begin improving from Friday.

Sources at the Feni district administration said Aman seedbeds and vegetable fields have been submerged, and fish from enclosures have been washed away in the flooded villages.

Abul Hashem, a resident of Paschim Alka village in Parshuram, said, "We still haven't recovered from the extensive damage caused by last year's flood. And now, we're facing another flood. Fish from the pond in front of my house have been washed away, the seedbed is submerged, and water has entered our home. Our houses are on the verge of going under."

"We are on the brink of losing everything. We want a permanent solution."

FFWC Deputy Commissioner Saiful Islam earlier told this newspaper that around 12,000 people have been marooned in parts of Fulgazi and Parshuram. Of them, 347 people from 115 families have taken shelter in various relief centres.

PORT CITY WATERLOGGED

In Chattogram, many low-lying areas of the city went under knee-to-waist-deep water amid heavy rains. Areas like Chawkbazar, Bakalia, Agrabad, Halishahar, GEC Intersection, Kapasgola, Shukalabazar, Chandaon, and Katalganj are among the worst affected.

Abdur Rahman, a meteorologist at the Patenga office of BMD, said the city recorded 160 millimetres of rainfall in the 24 hours leading up to 3:00pm yesterday.

Similarly, heavy rainfall has been recorded in Bardarban, Khagrachhari, and Rangamati, causing waterlogging in the low-lying areas in those districts.

Some 6,558 families live in risky areas on the slopes of 26 hills, said the Chattogram district administration, adding that they were asked to leave their homes for safety because of the rain, but many did not listen.

HIGHEST RAINFALL

Patuakhali is the worst affected in the Barishal division, as 275 millimetres of rainfall was recorded in the district in the last 24 hours ending at 9:00pm on Tuesday—the highest single day rainfall ever recorded in the district's history, said Md Rahat Hossain, a local weather observer.

Continuous downpours have left large parts of the Patuakhali municipality waterlogged. Many roads

remain submerged, severely disrupting daily activities, particularly in low-lying neighbourhoods.

"My fish enclosure and pond have been submerged. Many of the fish have washed away. I've suffered a huge loss," said Rahim Sildar, a resident of the Bara Bighai area in Sadar upazila.

In Barishal and Bholai, many low-lying areas in the city have been submerged under two to three feet of water.

Educational institutions, including Government BM College and several girls' high schools, have witnessed flooding on their premises.

Chittagong under water

over a thousand people and injured over 10,000. "Some of my brothers have lost eyes, others have lost legs. According to a BBC report, Sheikh Hasina herself ordered the shootings. Hasina and the Awami League are responsible for this massacre."

NCP leaders began the march in Chittagong from Hatboalia Bazar in Almudanga upazila. When they reached Hatboalia from Meherpur's Gangni at 1:00pm, students from various educational institutions welcomed them.

NCP Member Secretary Akhtar Hossain, its Chief Organiser (south)

Hasnat Abdullah, Chief Organiser (north)

Sarjis Alam and Senior Joint Member

Secretary Tasnim Zara were present.

'Dune: Part Three' announced, to be partially shot in Imax

Denis Villeneuve's next instalment in the *Dune* saga is officially titled *Dune: Part Three* and will partially be filmed using Imax cameras.

The film adapts Frank Herbert's *Dune Messiah*, following Paul Atreides as emperor. While Imax CEO Richard Gelfond previously suggested it would be filmed entirely in Imax, this was later clarified as a misstatement.

Villeneuve, who considers the first two films a diptych, says the third will have its own distinct identity. Production begins soon, with Timothée Chalamet, Zendaya, and Jason Momoa returning.

A December 2026 release is expected. The film precedes Villeneuve's involvement in Amazon MGM Studios' *James Bond* reboot. Imax has seen strong demand, with recent blockbusters earning over 20% of box office revenue from its screens.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Laalchey Bikel Belay'

Post Office Society, the eclectic band formed in 2006, will host their first ever solo show, *Laalchey Bikel Belay*, at Jatra Biroti. Known for their rare appearances and unreleased originals, the band will perform 16-17 of their own songs—offering audiences a long-awaited glimpse into their rich, under-the-radar musical archive.

Date: Friday | July 11

Time: 6:30-9:30pm

Venue: Jatra Biroti, Banani



Over 1,900 forced into Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12

Khagrachhari (160), Lalmonirhat (128), Satkira (110), Panchagarh (99), Kurigram (91), Thakurgaon (69), Feni (67), Sunamganj (53), Jhenaidah (52), Meherpur (50), Chapainawabganj (45), Dinajpur and Habiganj (43 each), Netrokona (32), Mymensingh (31), Cumilla (13), Kushtia (nine), Brahmanbaria (seven), and Naogaon (one).

According to the Refugee, Relief and Repatriation Commission (RRRC) and the BGB, over 200 Rohingyas have been pushed in by Indian authorities.

"At least 18 Rohingyas were pushed in through Sylhet on June 28," said RRRC Chief Mohammad Mizanur Rahman. He added that many are now staying in transit camps in Cox's Bazar or with relatives.

"These Rohingyas even had UNHCR cards issued in India. Now they're ending up here, and we are being forced to take responsibility," he said, adding, "I don't understand why Rohingyas with Indian UNHCR cards aren't being sheltered in Indian camps."

Contacted, UNHCR Bangladesh Spokesperson Shari Nijman said they are aware that Rohingyas were among those pushed into Bangladesh. "Being able to

seek safety in another country, when in fear for your life, is a human right. UNHCR calls on the government of India to uphold its commitment to human rights and ensure that no one seeking international protection is returned to situations where their lives or freedoms are at risk."

A Bangladesh foreign ministry official said Dhaka has formally raised the issue with New Delhi multiple times, calling for an end to the push-ins. "We've asked India to follow proper procedures, but have yet to receive a response. Meanwhile, the push-ins continue," he told The Daily Star.

In early May, the foreign ministry sent a letter to India's external affairs ministry, urging compliance with the established repatriation mechanisms.

The ministry warned that illegal push-ins could undermine border security and fuel anti-India sentiment.

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"If India wants a cordial relationship with Bangladesh, it must be based on equality and respect. Bangladesh is not only dependent on India; India is also dependent on Bangladesh. India must never forget this. It is the responsibility of Bangladesh

BHOLA LAUNCH TERMINALS

Lack of waiting rooms, toilets adds to passengers' misery

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Thousands of passengers in Bhola face serious problems at launch terminals and boarding points because there are not enough waiting rooms and toilets.

When it rains, people often have to shelter in roadside shops or stalls. Many are forced to use unsafe and dirty places to relieve themselves.

The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) has acknowledged the fact.

During the recent Eid holidays, Ilisha Ghat – the biggest terminal in Bhola – was crowded with passengers. Many got wet in the rain and couldn't find a place to rest.

Things get worse in the monsoon when people disembark from launches in heavy rain with no shelter. More than 50 launches leave from Ilisha Ghat every day, connecting Bhola with Barishal,



Dhaka, Chattogram, Lakshmipur, and other places. Over one lakh passengers use this route daily.

Other terminals in the district are also in poor condition.

Aklima Begum, travelling to

Dhaka from Maju Chowdhury Ghat, said she had to run into a shop to avoid the rain. Rezaul Islam, travelling to Chattogram with his family, had a similar experience.

BIWTA said Bhola has five terminals with toilets and waiting rooms, but these are poorly maintained, dirty, and not enough for the number of passengers. There are no such facilities at 19 other boarding points.

Dewan Abdur Rashid Nilu, a leader of the Barishali unit of Noujatri Oikya Parishad, urged the authorities to improve terminal facilities to meet basic needs.

Selim Reza, Bhola river port officer of BIWTA, said they plan to build modern toilets and waiting areas at Ilisha, Monpura, and other terminals under a World Bank-funded project.

"These changes will help reduce the passengers' suffering," he said.

Ward-based

FROM PAGE 3

"In addition, special emergency response teams have been formed in each ward. These teams are prepared to respond swiftly to any waterlogging that may arise due to rainfall," the release added.

It further said, "Our teams are monitoring the situation in every ward. We urge citizens to report immediately if they notice any waterlogging or blocked drains in their area."

Seeking public cooperation, DSCC requested that residents contact the central control room immediately if waterlogging is witnessed in any part of the city. For this, the control room hotline 01709900888 has been made available and will remain open 24/7 to provide assistance.

July killings strategic

FROM PAGE 3

definitely identified. However, eight of those were found to be carried out by armed Awami League activists, according to Sapran.

The organisation found that 33 of the 54 headshot victims were active participants in the July uprising. Sixteen were identified as bystanders or onlookers, while the roles of five victims could not be confirmed due to a lack of verifiable information.

Unarmed protesters and civilians were often shot point blank, suggesting a clear intent to kill, said Zeba Sajida Saraf, a researcher at Sapran.

She said the conclusions were drawn based on forensic evidence, verified cases, and international human rights reports, and aimed to highlight a pattern of state violence.

The shots were deliberately aimed at the

heads of civilians, often at close range and without provocation. These killings were not incidental, but part of an intentional strategy by security forces to terrorise the population, even within residential areas," the paper stated.

Bokhtiar Ahmed, a professor at the Department of Social Science and Humanities at Independent University Bangladesh, said, "The state itself became a murderer over the past 15-16 years gradually."

He noted that extrajudicial killings have been normalised under the authoritarian government by putting different tags on the victims, with many accepting the violence when it targeted criminals or opposition activists.

Rezwan Karim Snigdha, associate professor of anthropology at Jahangirnagar University, said the head is a symbol of

dignity, and headshots are intended to destroy both the dignity and ideology of protest.

"Every killing sent a message that the protesters meant nothing to the government," she said.

Zina Tasreen, a senior journalist at The Daily Star, said there is no doubt that police used disproportionate force during the movement, but not all shootings could have been carried out by them.

"Other state organs must have been involved, and it should not be glossed over."

At the event, Solaiman Topu, brother of Atiqur Rahman, who was martyred during the uprising, and Sirajul Islam, brother of martyr Sajidur Rahman Omor, shared their heartbreak experiences of finding out about the death of their loved ones during the uprising.

At the event, Solaiman Topu, brother of Atiqur Rahman, who was martyred during the uprising, and Sirajul Islam, brother of martyr Sajidur Rahman Omor, shared their heartbreak experiences of finding out about the death of their loved ones during the uprising.

Country gets first robotic rehab centre

FROM PAGE 3

Established with technical and material assistance from China, the centre has been equipped to meet international standards in robotic rehabilitation.

Chinese authorities have donated robotic equipment worth around Tk 20 crore, making this one of the most advanced centres of its kind in South Asia.

According to BMU sources, the centre houses 62 high-precision robotic devices -- including 222

powered by artificial intelligence (AI). These robots can provide tailored physiotherapy, neurological rehabilitation, and long-term care, adjusting precisely to each patient's condition.

Ahead of the pilot rollout, a seven-member team of biomedical engineers from China trained 27 Bangladeshi doctors and physiotherapists, equipping them with the essential technical skills.

Once the trained personnel gain sufficient experience and the pilot

phase proves successful, the centre will shift into full scale operation.

Moreover, the centre is designed to serve patients affected by conditions such as stroke, paralysis, nerve injuries, chronic pain, frozen shoulder, and trauma-induced impairments.

Notably, injured individuals from the recent July uprising who are dealing with prolonged physical injuries will receive free robotic rehabilitation services here.

BMU officials clarified that while the primary

services will be limited and targeted, the centre will eventually open its doors to the general public in phases, following a structured policy.

Efforts will also be made to ensure that treatment costs remain within the reach of patients' financial capabilities, they added. Besides, this robotic rehabilitation initiative will not only mark a technological milestone in the country's medical landscape, but also bring renewed hope to thousands suffering from long-term physical and neurological issues.

Online registration for Bangladeshi expatriates was first launched in the UK on February 12, 2020.

EC to register voters in 5 more countries

FROM PAGE 3

Kuwait, Qatar, Malaysia, Australia, and Canada.

The process is also set to begin in Japan on July 15.

The commission has already identified a substantial Bangladeshi expatriate population across

40 countries, according to information compiled from different sources.

These include the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training, the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, and the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA), among others.

Saudi Arabia hosts the largest number of Bangladeshi expatriates, with 40,49,588 individuals, while New Zealand has the

smallest, with 2,500.

In 2019, the commission led by KM Nurul Huda initiated the project to provide NIDs abroad.

Online registration for Bangladeshi expatriates was first launched in the UK on February 12, 2020.

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION) COMPANY MATTER NO 934 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994. **AND**

IN THE MATTER OF: Shahnewaz Chowdhury, son of Mostaque Ahmed Chowdhury and Rokuya Begum, Shareholder and Managing Director, Naf Overseas (Pvt) Ltd. **Petitioner**

—Versus—

Naf Overseas (Pvt) Ltd. of 89, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka, Bangladesh and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. **Respondents**

Take notice that an application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above named Petitioner for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting of **Naf Overseas (Pvt) Ltd.** for the calendar years 2022, 2023 and 2024 and to give necessary direction for holding the said meeting within a reasonable time. Upon hearing of the application on 23-06-2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge **Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel** has been pleased to admit the said application. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an advocate on or before the date fixed for hearing. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.

Advocate Md. Anowar Hossain

Room No. 351 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbagh, Dhaka-1000, Mobile: 01913391551

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION) COMPANY MATTER NO 968 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994. **AND**

IN THE MATTER OF: Abu Saleh Mohammad Mijanur Rahman, son of Mohd. Saleh-Ur-Rahman and Begum Sayeda Rahman Sel, Shareholder and Managing Director of AL-AKSHA DEVELOPERS (PVT) LIMITED of RD. 8th Floor, 80, Kakrail, Dhaka, Bangladesh. **Petitioner**

—Versus—

AL-AKSHA DEVELOPERS (PVT) LIMITED of 8D, 8th Floor, 80, Kakrail, Dhaka, Bangladesh and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. **Respondents**

Take notice that an application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above named Petitioner for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting of **AL-AKSHA DEVELOPERS (PVT) LIMITED** for the calendar years 2022, 2023 and 2024 and to give necessary direction for holding the said meeting within a reasonable time. Upon hearing of the application on 23-06-2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge **Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel** has been pleased to admit the said application. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an advocate on or before the date fixed for hearing. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.

Advocate Md. Anowar Hossain

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION) COMPANY MATTER NO 967 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994. **AND**

IN THE MATTER OF: Md. Rezwan Selim, son of Md. Selim and Habeba Selim, Shareholder and Managing Director of Sofex Cotton (Pvt) Ltd. of Concord I-K Tower, (Level-6), Plot No. 2, Block-CEN (A), North Avenue, Gulshan-2, Dhaka, Bangladesh. **Petitioner**

—Versus—

Sofex Cotton (Pvt) Ltd. of Concord I-K Tower, (Level-6), Plot No. 2, Block-CEN (A), North Avenue, Gulshan-2, Dhaka, Bangladesh and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. **Respondents**

Take notice that an application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above named Petitioner for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting of **Sofex Cotton (Pvt) Ltd.** for the calendar years 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and to give necessary direction for holding the said meeting within a reasonable time. Upon hearing of the application on 23-06-2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge **Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel** has been pleased to admit the said application. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an advocate on or before the date fixed for hearing. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.

Advocate Md. Anowar Hossain

Room No. 351 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbagh, Dhaka-1000, Mobile: 01913391551

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION) COMPANY MATTER NO 966 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994. **AND**

IN THE MATTER OF: Md. Rezwan Selim, son of Md. Selim and Habeba Selim, Shareholder and Managing Director of Sofex Sweater Industries (Pvt) Ltd. of Concord I-K Tower, (Level-6), Plot No. 2, Block-CEN (A), North Avenue, Gulshan-2, Dhaka, Bangladesh. **Petitioner**

—Versus—

Sofex Sweater Industries (Pvt) Ltd. of Concord I-K Tower, (Level-6), Plot No. 2, Block-CEN (A), North Avenue, Gulshan-2, Dhaka, Bangladesh and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. **Respondents**

Take notice that an application under Sections-81(2), 85(3) & 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above named Petitioner for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting of **Sofex Sweater Industries (Pvt) Ltd.** for the calendar years 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 and to give necessary direction for holding the said meeting within a reasonable time. Upon hearing of the application on 23-06-2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge **Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel** has been pleased to admit the said application. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an advocate on or before the date fixed for hearing. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.

Advocate Md. Anowar Hossain

Room No. 351 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbagh, Dhaka-1000, Mobile: 01913391551

HC order on DP World Contract

FROM PAGE 4

writ petitioner while Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Mohaddes Ul Islam Tutul represented the state during the hearing.

Writ petitioners' lawyers told the HC bench that if the contract for handling operations of NCT is awarded to DP World, national interest of the country will be damaged.

They prayed to the HC to issue a rule on the authorities concerned of the government to explain why the process for awarding the container handling contract of the NCT to DP World, which is a 100 percent foreign company, is double the rate for those bound for Saudi Arabia and six times higher for Malaysia.

According to the report, 75 percent of migrant workers do not receive any contract before going abroad. Among male migrants, 64 percent reported not receiving a contract prior to departure, while not a single female migrant received one before leaving.

The absence of a standardised arbitration process creates significant barriers for workers -- from filing complaints to attending hearings -- and causes widespread mistrust in the system.

They prayed to the HC to issue a rule on the authorities concerned of the government to explain why the process for awarding the container handling contract of the NCT to DP World, which is

BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

Imagining Africa in Bengali fiction and verse

Review of 'Africa in the Bengali Imagination: From Calcutta to Kampala, 1928-1973' (Routledge, 2025) by Mahruba T. Mowtushi

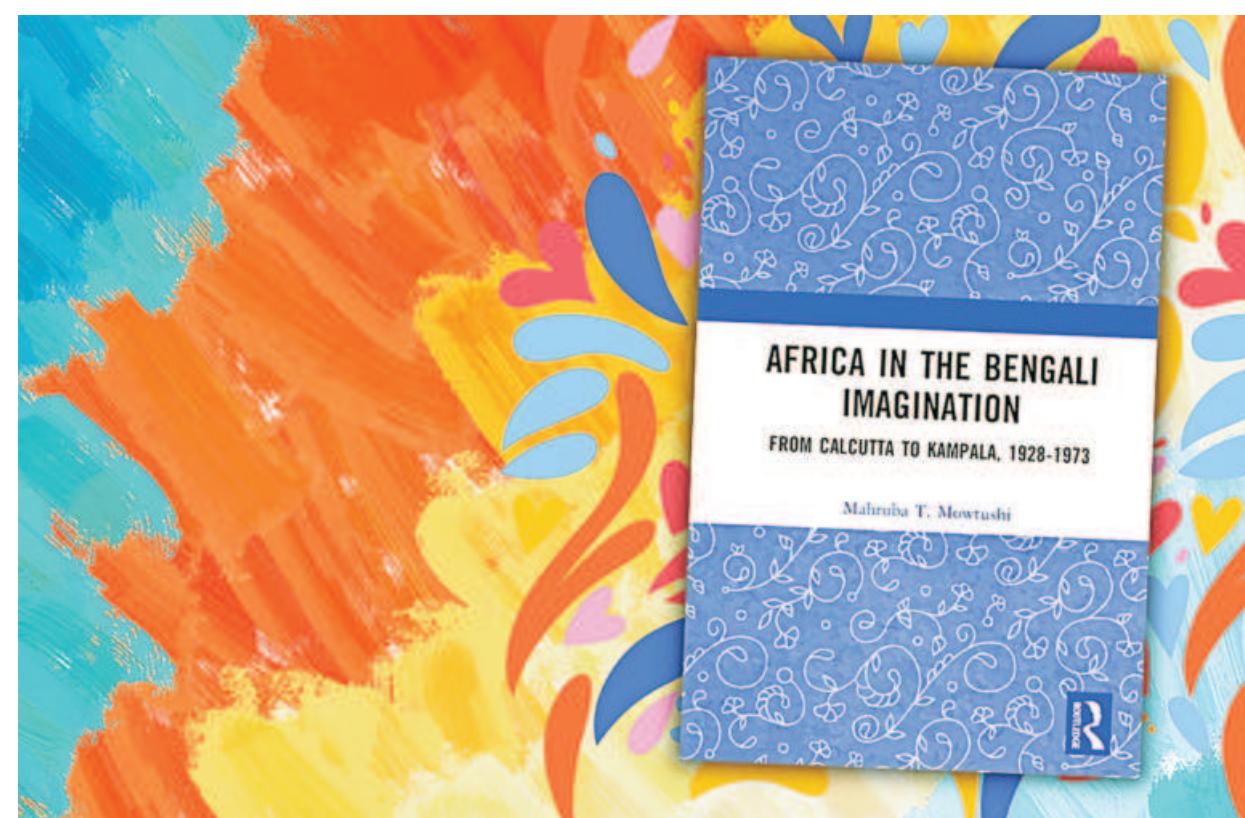
At the heart of Mahruba Mowtushi's book is a chapter featuring Rabindranath Tagore's 1937 poem "Africa". Written a few years before his anguished response to the way the world was caught up in a maelstrom created by rampant nationalism, imperialism, and fascism, Rabindranath sets out in the English poem to show, as he himself explained in a letter, "how an Indian poet feels about the despoliation of a whole continent in the name of civilization."

FAKRUL ALAM

Mowtushi's work is based on a childhood lived in North Africa that eventually led her to a scholarly quest. In the early 1990s she had spent some years in Algeria with her parents because of her diplomat father, and had gone to a school in Algiers, where she became intimate with a few Nigerians and Kenyans. These years and the nostalgia that they induced in her when she went back to Dhaka made her feel that she had to read African literature in English with "passion", albeit all by herself, aware that her Bangladeshi friends took a dim view of the continent and Africans, fed as they had been on negative images and racial stereotypes. Consequently, she immersed herself in whatever she could find of Bengali writing about Africa.

Mowtushi's book is thus an outcome not merely of nostalgia about a continent and places she had lived in earlier, but also a sustained critical attempt to trace the evolution of Bengali attitudes to parts of the continent over the 20th century, particularly the stretch of land in East Africa that includes Kenya and Uganda. She stresses how in the early 20th century the Bengali "imagination" had "pandered to Western stereotypes of Africa", fictionalising it from subcontinental perches with a false sense of superiority, forgetting perennial mutually beneficial civilisational ties between peoples of the Indian subcontinent and Africans living on the other side of the Indian Ocean. Using something like EM Forster's "only connect" as her leitmotif, she concentrates on five writers, the first three of whom—the novelist Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay; the children's writer and essayist, Hemendra Kumar Roy; and the poet-philosopher, Rabindranath Tagore—wrote entirely imaginatively in their depiction of the continent and its people, while the last two—the playwright Ganesh Bagchi and the poet Rajat Neogy—put their imaginations to work in articulating their felt responses to Africa and life there either on the basis of their diasporic experiences and desire for belonging, or anguish about being ultimately uprooted from the land and its peoples.

With the obvious exception of Rabindranath Tagore, Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay is the most famous of the five Bengali writers Mowtushi chose for her critical voyage into the role Africa has played in the Bengali imagination. Bibhutibhushan's novel *Chander Pahara* (1937) is about its protagonists' travails in East Africa where he is part of a workforce doing



DESIGN: MAISHA SYEDA

construction work for the Ugandan Railway; however, he abandons such work for diamond exploration. Readers/viewers of *Panther Panchali* (1929), the classic Bibhutibhushan novel/Satyajit Ray film will understand why a Bengali might have felt the need to leave his homeland because of issues "relating to land, migration and loss of indigenous capital" consequent to colonial debilitation, and why the novelist had chosen a less known work to reimagine his protagonist Shankar breaking the mould used to cast Bengalis as effeminate, passive people, inclined to clerical work, and to project him as enterprising and willing to strive for financial success in Africa. Using his English education and knowledge of English adventure novels confidently, Shankar ventures into a continent where he can make a distinctive contribution, utilising his intellectual superiority. He, however, finds the task far more challenging than he had anticipated and even intimidating at times because of many obstacles in his way. The end results, however, are positive, for he will return to Bengal feeling he can start life anew in it. Mowtushi notes that the novelist has Shankar come back in 1910 with "renewed love and devotion for Bengal" at a time when nationalist fervour had gripped Hindu Bengalis.

Mowtushi chooses to focus on

Hemendra Kumar's *Abar Jakher Dhan* (Dev Sahitya Kutir Pvt Ltd, 2017) next. This is another narrative about empowering the self through adventurous encounters in Africa. Mowtushi views Hemendra as deploying a "spatial symbolism" and "developing a 'deshi-city-bidesh triad'. Escaping the regulated life of Calcutta for treasure hunting in Africa, and eschewing the soft but constricting options of "bhadrolok" and "babu" culture, Hemendra's protagonist Bimal opts to pursue adventures in the African wilderness, hoping to tame or dispose of the threatening wild creatures of the continent he comes across. Bimal's adventures, Mowtushi observes, is his "manly rites of passage", but though Hemendra is not unwilling to stereotype Africans and demean them and their lifestyles in places, he is also forthright in critiquing Calcutta life and Calcuttians. Hemendra's fictional intent, she concludes, is to inspire a new generation of its citizens "to establish a virile and wholesome relationship with the nation, as opposed to the effete *babu* of the *bhadrolok*".

At the heart of Mahruba Mowtushi's book is a chapter featuring Rabindranath Tagore's 1937 poem "Africa". Written a few years before his anguished response to the way the world was caught up in a maelstrom created by rampant

nationalism, imperialism, and fascism, Rabindranath sets out in the English poem to show, as he himself explained in a letter, "how an Indian poet feels about the despoliation of a whole continent in the name of civilization." This would entail moving away from the romanticising perspectives adopted by Bibhutibhushan and Hemendra, and adopting a viewpoint that would affirm "anti-colonial solidarity" and revive civilisational ties between India and Africa strained and marginalised by colonial excesses and disinformation. The need for Europeans, Tagore felt, is to recognise the havoc they had wrought on the continent, seek forgiveness for what they had done, and embark on "reparation and rehabilitation".

Mowtushi's final chapters deal with two Bengali writers, who, unlike Bibhutibhushan, Hemendra and even Rabindranath, would be writing about the continent and Indians in Africa on the basis not merely on what they had read or heard about the continent, but on their lived experiences. The first of them, Ganesh Bagchi, had left Calcutta for Kampala in 1948, hoping to root himself in the place professionally. To him, unlike Bibhutibhushan and Hemendra, this is no "dark" continent; he fully desires to belong to it. Bagchi's plays and memoirs thus reflect his intention to find in his part of Africa a viable alternative to Bengal in the

1940s, which was disintegrating in all kinds of ways as well as reeling from the impact of the 1943 famine. His initial plays, however, seem to be inspired by his critique of the "oppressive, bureaucratic system" hampering growth in the part of Africa he had wanted to make his own, for such colonial leftovers were stifling and stunting its people and deterring men like Bagchi seeking alternatives to what they had experienced in India. He even wrote a play to promote "multiracial existence" but reality seemed to show him ultimately that this was not feasible. Failing thus to belong to a land where he was unable to endorse what was going on, and where migration did not bring the kind of rehabilitation he had envisaged, he leaves the continent with "unrequited longing".

Bengali expatriates in Africa like Bagchi are thus often subjected to "multiple displacements and replacements", experiences that also mark the life and works of the final subject of Mowtushi's book on Africa and Bengali imaginative writing about it—the poet Rajat Neogy. Bengali racially but Ugandan by birth, cosmopolitan by upbringing and nonconformist by inclination, when still in his early 20s, Neogy had launched in 1961 an avant garde journal called *Transactions* that not only attracted leading as well as budding African writers but also became an outlet for his experimental prose poems. But the Uganda he began his writing career in soon became prey to dictators exploiting nationalist feelings. Neogy's poems then veer towards pessimism and surrealism, thereby indicating a poet inhabiting nowhere and articulating despair. His poems and journal proved too provocative for Uganda's rulers; he soon ends up in prison and ultimately leaves the country, heading first for Ghana, but then opting for the USA. Distracted by what was happening in his part of Africa but also by the events of 1971 in Bangladesh, he seemed to have wanted to assume a Bangladeshi persona as well, writing poems about his bewilderment at events there and even embracing Islam, as if to identify himself with the majority of the people of the land. And thus it was that he became "a Muslim Bengali émigré seeking rehabilitation in the United States".

This is an excerpt. Read the full review on *The Daily Star* and Star Books and Literature's websites.

Fakrul Alam has retired as Professor of English at the University of Dhaka but continues to teach there and at East West University.

BOOK REVIEW: POETRY

When silence speaks louder than words

Review of Mohammed Shafiqul Islam's 'On the Other Side of Silence' (Red River, 2025)

RITUPARNA MUKHERJEE

In talking about cynicism and Postmodernity, Timothy Bewes mentions how the postmodern cynic is prone to flights of introspection and interiority, and a refusal to actively engage with the politics of the times, thoroughly disillusioned by it. Mohammed Shafiqul Islam's slim volume of poetry *On the Other Side of Silence*, tries to wade through the general environment of shock, betrayal, and overall moral degeneration to focus on the necessity of artistic endeavour, especially when silence is chosen or enforced. The epitaph by Adrienne Rich on silence as the enabler of creative impulse, which is thereafter used to break the broader silence, is something which seems to govern the poet's own writerly ethos. This book, as the poet mentions in the afterward, is mostly based in South Asia and especially Bangladesh, but the issues that are dealt with can be true anywhere. This book is very much a product of its times and is aimed at exploring the predominant silences that the present human experience subsumes. Broadly categorised, the poet tries to



talk about three kinds of silences—the hegemonic, the complicit, and the writerly silence. The most vociferous silence in this book is the silence of complicity. The present world is drowning in noise, plunged into complete disarray and entropy by warring nations, factions out to

get each other's throats to solidify power in the name of faith, and bodies pile up in silence, brought on by a collective stance of 'understanding' such that language, history, and memory lose their meaning. In the very first poem, "The Central Jail of Silence", the poet talks about this enforced

silence, birthed in fear and misinformation, oppressing the very subjects that are meant to be the truth bearers: "Artists committing crimes through words / Or images or voice become jailbirds".

But an artistic life itself can be a point of hubris as the artist runs the risk of placing himself on a higher plane than his fellow citizens, gazing down from his jail of silence. The poem talks of the hegemonic silence in a cacophonous world that isolates and alienates. He affirms the need for a certain degree of interiority to be able to use language consciously in a world where language is weaponised to alter histories, erode entities—

You don't pretend as you know
How they set fire on trains of thought,
On the asylum of ontologies—

In the library of longings
you explore an archive of silence.

Modern life is beset by the challenges of the corporate rat-race, the need to be ahead of the curve, and the naked terror of violence which births complicity in the common man. Nothing at present is sacrosanct and that has diminished

freedom of expression. The world has become a place where the living shares an ambivalent relationship with death—death is neither an escape route for the living nor is it a finality for those dead as they carry an inchoate urge for life. In such an environment, grief becomes a verb, a consistent performance, a slow devolving dissolution of selfhood.

In carrying this cycle of complicity further, the poet talks of the city of Dhaka in "A City of Cynics" and ruminates on how the desire for comfort breeds silence and the modern malaise of selective observation, selective anger:

Nothing lasts longer than how we perceive

Things around us, for we do not look
Beyond zones where we calculate our comfort

Always keeping tallies of loss and gain.

This is an excerpt. Read the full review on *The Daily Star* and Star Books and Literature's websites.

Rituparna Mukherjee is a writer, translator, and editor based in Kolkata, India.

Fading ODI reputation REFLECTING MAJOR FALL

NABID YEASIN

When it comes to Bangladesh cricket, finding flaws and shortcomings through examining stats and figures is disconcertingly easy.

For years, the one thing that Bangladesh had going for them in cricket was their ODI pedigree -- a format in which the Tigers from time to time stood toe to toe with the big boys.

Could the same be said now?

In the other two formats -- Tests and T20Is -- Bangladesh have had sporadic successes, but never looked convincing. It was through ODIs that Bangladesh first made a mark in the sport -- from winning the 1997 ICC Trophy to qualifying for the 2015 World Cup quarterfinals and the 2017 Champions Trophy semifinals.

A cursory look through Bangladesh's ODI stats in the last few years shows how far they have fallen in the format that first brought them to the fore in the world of cricket -- glaring decline that also reflects the overall downward trajectory of cricket in the country.

Bangladesh succumbed to their third consecutive bilateral ODI series defeat on Tuesday when the Mehidy Hasan Miraz-led side surrendered by 99 runs to Sri Lanka in the third and final match in Pallekele, conceding the series 2-1.

This loss follows a 2-1 defeat against Afghanistan in the UAE in November last year and a 3-0 clean-sweep against the



West Indies in the Caribbean a month later.

With the one match the Tigers managed to win in Sri Lanka, the second ODI, Bangladesh broke a seven-match losing streak in the format.

The last time Bangladesh had such a lengthy winless streak in ODIs was during a seven-month period in 2014, when the Tigers lost 12 of the 13 ODIs they played, with one match yielding no result.

From then on, Bangladesh enjoyed a splendid run -- losing just four in their next 24 games, with wins that included home series triumphs over Pakistan, India, and

South Africa, alongside knocking out England from the 2015 World Cup.

Will the Tigers be able to stage such a comeback this time too?

Looking at how the team has been operating, the odds seem slim.

During that purple patch, Bangladesh seemed to have cracked the code in ODIs, with a core set of players, namely Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad, and skipper Mashrafe Bin Mortaza having a clear mindset on how to go about things during each phase of a 50-over match.

With the 'Big Five' of Bangladesh

cricket gone, the players who played the complementary roles during that period are now in charge and unfortunately, they are seemingly not in tune about the demands of 50-over cricket at the moment.

The likes of captain Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Litton Das, Mustafizur Rahman, and Taskin Ahmed should already be in a shape, or at least show signs of having their own philosophy of how to run things, at least in this one format.

But could any particular brand, or a philosophy, be unearthed from the modus operandi of Miraz and Co in the recent Sri Lanka series?

The team looked out of sorts for the most part even during their lone win in the series as that game also had almost slipped out of their hands in the final over.

When skipper Miraz churned out worn out excuses like leading a "young team" and needing "more time" after the Sri Lanka series, it indicated that even after possessing around a decade of experience in international cricket, he does not realise where they have gone wrong.

This lack of clarity, which is evident in other experienced players too, points to a clear failure in the transition process, a failure that has thumped Bangladesh, a team that once looked to be making their way up in the format, back to square one in ODIs.

Archer back for England, India get Bumrah boost

AGENCIES

Jofra Archer will make his long-awaited return to Test cricket at Lord's this week, after more than four years of injury-induced exile, while India's ace Jasprit Bumrah is set to come back into the eleven as both sides look to get the upper hand in the series currently level at 1-1.

Archer was included in the England side named Wednesday for the third Test against India, returning in place of fellow fast bowler Josh Tongue in the only change to the team that suffered a 336-run thrashing by India at Edgbaston as the tourists levelled a five-match series at 1-1.

England will hope he can give their faltering attack a much-needed cutting edge.

Tongue drops out despite being the top wicket-taker in the series with 11 but fellow pacemen Brydon Carse and Chris Woakes keep their places despite toiling for a combined 9-605 across the opening two Tests.



"We've had two tough games, lots of time in the field and got through some overs as a bowling unit. Back-to-back Test matches, you feel it's the right time to get fresh legs in," England captain Ben Stokes, speaking at a pre-match press conference at Lord's, said Wednesday.

Archer has played just one County Championship match for Sussex this season, in which he bowled 18 overs and took one wicket. But a week of training with the England squad in Birmingham has convinced team management he is now ready to add to his 13 Test caps in a match starting Thursday.

Meanwhile, Bumrah, who was advised to play only three out of the five Tests in the series due to his back issues, to returns to bowl his first ball since June 24, the final afternoon of the first Test at Headingley. He bowled 43.4 overs in that Test, picking up a five-for in the first innings and going wicketless in the second. That decision to rest the 31-year-old received heavy flak as critics feared India could go down 2-0 with England taking advantage of an inexperienced bowling attack.



Iga Swiatek celebrates after reaching the Wimbledon semifinals for the first time in her illustrious career on Wednesday, beating Russia's Liudmila Samsonova 6-2, 7-5. The Polish eighth seed has won four titles on the clay at the French Open, as well as the US Open in 2022, but has struggled on the lawns of the All England Club. Her previous best result at Wimbledon was a run to the quarter-finals in 2023.

PHOTO: AFP

BCB scraps BCL plans for this year

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has scrapped its plan of holding this season's Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) -- a four-day franchise-based domestic first-class tournament, and instead will organise National Cricket League T20 in September to start the new domestic calendar year.

The BCB had shifted the BCL, originally scheduled for May, twice due to the national level teams' international engagements and extreme weather, planning to hold it in September.

However, the board has now decided to start the new season with NCL T20 at 20 to give the players opportunity to showcase their mettle ahead of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) draft, which is supposed to take place after the NCL T20.

"We will begin the new season with NCL T20, which will be followed by the BPL, the NCL [four-day tournament] and the BCL," BCB's tournament committee chairman Akram Khan told reporters yesterday, adding that they will discuss about the venues and other matters in the next meeting.

The last time the four-day tournament took place was its 11th edition, back in December 2023 where East Zone clinched their maiden title.

Tigers hope to turn T20I fortunes

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh head into the first of the three T20Is against Sri Lanka on Thursday in Pallekele, hoping the change of format can see them turn things around after a disappointing 2-1 loss in the ODI series on Tuesday.

Bangladesh are on a run of five straight T20I losses following a bitter 2-1 series loss against UAE and a 3-0 hammering by Pakistan.

The Litton Das-led side has a few changes from the previous series, as Mohammad Naim and Mohammad Saifuddin came in for Najmul Hossain Shanto and Soumya Sarkar. Whether the additions will have an impact in the series remains to be seen, as Naim, who was also part of the ODI squad, did not get a game.

Meanwhile, Saifuddin's inclusion may see all-rounder Mehidy Hasan Miraz sit out.

Bangladesh's opening duo showed T20I prowess in the last series against Pakistan, and the team's think tank would certainly hope the duo can offset the form deficiency of batters such as Litton and Tawhid Hridoy.

The Tigers may breathe a bit easier, however, as Wanindu Hasaranga, the highest wicket-taker in the just-concluded ODI series, has been ruled out of the T20I series after a hamstring injury on his right leg.

Jaker Ali, who has been carrying



a bit of form in T20Is among the Bangladesh batters, will be expected to provide the fireworks and the finishing touch. There are concerns over Shamim Hossain, who scored in the single digits in his last seven T20I appearances.

Pallekele International Cricket Stadium has been known to produce big scores, and the onus would be on the batting unit to find answers after the disappointing third ODI, where batters could not capitalise on a good batting wicket.

Bangladesh have played and lost three T20Is at the venue to date, the last of them in 2013. Overall, Bangladesh have played 10 T20Is in Sri Lanka, winning just three. However, they

might hold a mental advantage against the hosts, having won three of the five T20Is against Sri Lanka on Lankan soil.

Rishad Hossain is expected to bolster Bangladesh's spin attack, but the leg-spinner had been expensive against Pakistan in all three T20Is -- bringing Nasum Ahmed into the equation. Shak Mahedi, meanwhile, would need improvement, having failed to create the impact that he had in the West Indies series sweep in December last year.

Pacer Taskin Ahmed also returns after sitting out the UAE and Pakistan series and will lead the pace attack as the Tigers look to salvage something from this Sri Lanka tour.

'Performance first' as girls launch SAFF U-20 title defence

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh are aiming to continue their dominance in age-group women's football as they prepare to defend their crown at the four-nation SAFF U-20 Women's Championship, which kicks off on Friday at the Bashundhara Kings Arena in Dhaka.

Nine senior national players -- including captain Afeda Khandokar, Sapna Rani, Munki Akhter, Mst Sagorika and Umehla Marma -- have been drafted into the U-20 squad, leaving them with limited time to train with the squad after returning from Myanmar, where they secured qualification for the AFC Women's Asian Cup.

The U-20 side will face Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka in a double round robin league format.

While head coach Peter Butler sees the tournament as a development opportunity, captain Afeda is focused on maintaining the team's winning streak to "keep that continuity intact" after becoming champions in the last edition held in 2023.

Bangladesh have won four of the five previous editions across U-18, U-19 and U-20 levels.

"Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka are

T Sports
Sri Lanka vs Bangladesh
1st T20I
Live from 7:30 pm
Sony Sports 1
England vs India

3rd Test, Day 1
Live from 4:00 pm
Star Sports Select
HD1 and 2
Wimbledon
Live from 6:00 pm



Joao Pedro brilliance fires Chelsea into CWC final

AGENCIES

New signing Joao Pedro scored twice on his first start as Chelsea eased to a 2-0 win over Fluminense on Tuesday to seal a spot in the final of the Club World Cup.

The Brazilian striker opened the scoring in lethal fashion in the 18th minute of the last four clash at the MetLife Stadium and struck again shortly before the hour mark as Chelsea set up a showdown with either Real Madrid or PSG in Sunday's final.

Signed from Brighton and Hove Albion last week for a reported £60 million, the 23-year-old, who was on holiday in Rio de Janeiro just 10 days ago, made his debut off the bench in the quarterfinal win over Palmeiras and was then given his first start up front here in place of the suspended Liam Delap.

Joao Pedro refused to celebrate after either goal against the club with whom he started his career as a defensive midfielder when he was just nine years old. He made 36 top-team appearances before moving to England with Watford in 2020.

"I'm very happy to score two goals and I think it's very important for me to win this trophy," he told FIFA. "I've been preparing myself for years for this moment. To score two goals in the semifinal of the Club World Cup, to win the Player of the Match, it couldn't have been any better. I'm really happy."

"Now we've got a big final. It will be a difficult game for us, but it will also be a difficult game for our opponents. We have a lot of weapons. I think it will be a great game. It will be a worthy final."

strong opponents and we don't want to take any opponents lightly," said Afeda, who also captains the senior side, told reporters during a press conference at the BFF House yesterday.

When asked about the challenge of staying motivated after facing tougher teams like Myanmar and Bahrain, she said they approach every game with full effort, regardless of the oppositions.

Butler echoed a developmental focus, calling the tournament a chance to "blood players" and emphasising performance over results.

"It's a league format. It's quite strange... [but] it is what it is. And I'm going to use it as an opportunity to blood players. The performance is really important to me."

"Everything is based on performance. It's not result first, it's performance first," said the Englishman, who added that the same mindset guided their recent matches against stronger international sides like Myanmar, Indonesia and Jordan.

On the inclusion of senior players in the youth squad, the Bangladesh coach explained that he chose eligible senior members to build a balanced side, keeping the more prestigious AFC U-20 Women's Championship Qualifiers in mind.





Relentless rain triggers flash floods in Feni

Hilly regions at risk of landslide

STAR REPORT

Incessant rains for the past few days have triggered flash flooding in Feni's Fulgazi and Parshuram upazilas.

Thousands of residents were marooned yesterday after breaches in the embankments of the Muhuri, Selonia, and Kohua rivers submerged at least 30 villages in those two upazilas.

Those stranded are struggling to cook meals and access safe drinking water.

The Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) attributes the ongoing deluge to an active monsoon system and a persistent low-pressure area affecting not just Feni but also other coastal and hilly districts.

Torrential downpours have battered Patuakhali, Cox's Bazar, Chattogram, Barishal, Khulna, Noakhali, Bandarban, Khagrachhari, and Rangamati, inundating low-lying areas and leaving thousands of people in distress.

As of now, flooding has affected Patuakhali, Khulna, Feni, and Noakhali the most, damaging standing crops and fish enclosures in the regions.

The BMD said yesterday that the rain is expected to continue for a few more days. Out of 75 monitoring stations across the country, 22 stations recorded "heavy rainfall" (above 48 mm in 24 hours).

The BMD also issued landslide warnings for the hilly

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



A tin-roofed house stands partially destroyed after a breach in the Muhuri River embankment in Uttar Sripur Purba Para in Feni's Fulgazi upazila on Tuesday evening. The river, swollen from incessant rain, burst through the embankment, causing flash floods that swept away several homes in the area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ABU TAHER

BANGLADESH POLICE Helicopter deal with Russia stalls for US sanctions



MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Five years ago, Bangladesh initiated a Tk 400 crore deal with a Russian company to procure two helicopters for its police force, but the delivery was recently suspended due to US sanctions.

On November 19, 2021, Bangladesh signed a government-to-government (G2G) agreement with the Russian company "JSC Russian Helicopters", to purchase two Mi-171A2 helicopters for the police force at a cost of Tk 428.12 crore.

Over the years, significant progress has been made, including the training of police pilots and technical staff, and the payment of nearly Tk 300 crore.

Even an eight-member team from the home ministry and police headquarters had visited Russia on December 12 last year, at the expense of the Russian company, to inspect the completed helicopters as part of a pre-shipment inspection.

After the inspection, the helicopters were supposed to be delivered to Bangladesh by January this year.

However, soon after the pre-shipment inspection, all processes stopped following a directive from the Ministry of Home Affairs citing sanctions imposed on the Russian

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

JULY ATROCITIES AL should be punished as a party: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League must be brought to justice as its chief, deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, is solely responsible for the killings of thousands of people, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday.

"We always believe that political parties that support fascism -- especially the Awami League, which has done so -- every one of its members must be punished," he told reporters after visiting two BNP chairperson's advisers undergoing treatment at the National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital in Agargaon.

They should be brought under the law and held accountable.

"Sheikh Hasina, the head of the Awami League, is, in my opinion, personally responsible for the killings of thousands of people. Legal proceedings against her have already begun. We are hopeful that she, along with others involved in the mass killings, will be brought to justice."

The country must be saved through the united efforts of all and it is the responsibility of every

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

New austerity measures amid low revenue receipts

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The interim government yesterday imposed several restrictions on allocated budget expenditures, including foreign tours and vehicle purchase, in a turn towards austerity amid low revenue collection.

The move to rein in the expenses of ministries, state agencies and public corporations comes in line with the contractionary monetary and fiscal policies of the Bangladesh Bank and the finance division respectively to tackle the high inflation. The Daily Star has learnt from finance division officials informed with the proceedings.

After 27 months, inflation dropped below 9 percent in June, according to data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

The low revenue collection was another deciding factor behind the austerity measures, which were announced in a circular by the finance ministry yesterday.

The government has yet to calculate the amount of money saved from last fiscal year's austerity, but in fiscal 2023-24, about Tk 2,500 crore could be conserved.

The latest round of austerity measures, which took effect from July 1, excludes expenditure restrictions on electricity, petrol, oil and lubricant, gas and fuel.

Due to the austerity measures over the past few years, different ministries and divisions could reduce unnecessary waste of these resources, said a finance ministry official.

As a result, the government did not deem it necessary to impose further restrictions on these overheads this fiscal year, he said.

The ministries and divisions could spend a maximum of 80 percent of total allocations for electricity, petroleum and gas last fiscal year.

Besides, except for education, health and agriculture purposes, no ministry is allowed to

construct residential, non-residential or other buildings under the operating budget.

However, if 50 percent of the construction work on any building has been completed, the agencies may continue with the project with approval from the finance division.

AT A GLANCE

- Govt restricts foreign tours, vehicle purchases
- Austerity move aims to cut budget deficit
- No new cuts on electricity, fuel spending
- Ongoing building projects (50% done) may continue with approval
- Land acquisition restricted without approval

Ctg open drain takes 3yr-old's life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A three-year-old girl became the latest victim of drowning in Chattogram after falling into an open roadside drain in the city's Halishahar area yesterday.

Locals said the child fell into the drain around 2:45pm near her home in the Tasnia Gate area while playing with a ball.

Md Sujan, a witness, said the incident occurred when the girl tried to retrieve the ball after it fell into the drain.

"She tried to fetch the ball but was swept away by the strong current. Some neighbours attempted to rescue her but couldn't find her immediately. About 45 minutes later, her body was found stuck against a plastic pipe," he said.

Kamrul Islam, an official of the Agrabad Fire Service and Civil Defence office, said they sent a rescue team to the scene upon receiving the information.

The child's body was recovered by locals, he added.

At least 14 people have lost their lives after falling into open drains or canals in Chattogram city over the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

Freeze 53 bank accounts of S Alam Group chair, family Court asks ACC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission to freeze 53 bank accounts of S Alam Group Chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam, his family members, and his beneficiaries over corruption allegations.

S Alam and others deposited Tk 113,098,2868.09 in accounts of First Security Islami Bank PLC, Mutual Trust Bank PLC, and Islami Bank Bangladesh PLC.

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

"The ACC official came to know from credible sources that S Alam and others were trying to transfer their properties elsewhere. So, an order is needed to prevent them from doing so," said the anti-graft body in its application.



A woman and a child carefully make their way across a dug-up street in the capital's Gopibagh area, where the Dhaka South City Corporation is carrying out sewerage pipeline installation work. Residents say the slow progress is making daily life extremely difficult. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Over 1,900 forced into Bangladesh since May 7

Push-ins continue as Delhi ignores Dhaka's concerns

PORIMOL PALMA and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Despite repeated concerns raised by human rights groups, Indian authorities have continued the practice of "push-ins" -- forcibly sending individuals across the border into Bangladesh -- with over 1,900 people pushed in since May 7.

Among them are over 200 Rohingya refugees, according to official data.

This ongoing wave of push-ins comes at a time of strained bilateral relations between the two countries following Bangladesh's political changeover last August and is believed to be the largest of its kind in recent years.

Rights organisations have condemned the practice, saying it violates both bilateral protocols and international law, which require repatriation through legal and formal procedures.

Many of those pushed in have alleged abuse and mistreatment while in India. Several returnees were found with visible signs of torture, according to Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) sources.

Government data shows the highest number of push-ins -- 502 -- took place along the Moulvibazar border. Other major entry points include Sylhet (250),

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