

MY DHAKA

Dhaka's everyday MIRACLE WORKERS

RBR

Let's put the spotlight on the city's odd-jobbers and handymen -- people who take care of our household disasters. A jammed kitchen sink overflowing, a leaking water pipe, or a sudden power surge causing a blackout -- these domestic emergencies can arise at any time, and the person managing the home must act immediately.

In Dhaka, it is usually the lady of the house who takes charge. Managing a home and family is a demanding task that often goes unrecognised. She must always have a reliable support system to rely on during such emergencies.

On a lighter note, when hiring a home manager, the top criterion should be their ability to troubleshoot quickly and efficiently within the city's residential maze.

The woman running the show at home is rarely appreciated for her exceptional troubleshooting skills or recognised for her quick thinking -- whether it's replacing a circuit breaker fuse or restocking midnight snacks for the family. Her home cannot function without her support system: the fishmonger, the poultryman, the



PHOTO: STAR

vegetable vendor, or the local grocer. But the stars of her team are the plumber and the electrician, and the commander is undoubtedly her chauffeur.

She must also have contacts at hand from the diagnostic centre for home sample collection, assistants who can secure urgent doctor appointments, service help agents, refrigerator workshops, lift operators, and grocers. These odd-jobbers and service providers are her unsung heroes, ensuring her family's infrastructure runs smoothly and without interruption.

Multitasking is second nature to women, whether they are working professionals or homemakers. Even in meetings or on work tours, she remains connected to home management, able to handle emergencies remotely thanks to her trusted network of handymen on speed dial.

My own favourites list includes Quddus, the carpenter; Rezaul, the painter; Ramzan, the electrician; Soheli, the plumber; and Mostafa, the upholstery tailor. But top honours go to Bacchu and Chan Miah -- my fishmonger and poulterer. I must also mention Mizan, my vegetable vendor, a sweet boy in his twenties, who

never forgets to call when he finds my favourites like helencha shak, amra, hog plums, or chalta -- the elephant's apple.

Even when busy elsewhere, I'm never off-duty when it comes to home management. Like me, most people managing a home are always on-call. We have no days off -- nor do our assistants and aides. This team becomes like family, offering personalised service: the fishmonger who calls with the best catch for Friday's lunch, the chauffeur who checks if the pharmacy has restocked the prescription, ensures the maths tutor is on time, and in true emergencies, even steps in to do the supermarket or bank run.

Anyone running a family knows the value of this SOS list that comes to the rescue in unforeseen situations. If women are the modern-day goddesses of domestic balance, then the handymen on their speed dial are the miracle workers. For the man of the house, these are often tasks beneath his concern -- after all, he is the breadwinner and his time is too valuable. But the woman, who earns the butter to go with that bread, also ensures the toaster is fixed when broken -- if you know what I mean.

Our home management networks streamline crises and chores alike, making life smoother and more efficient. It's about time this trusted group of handymen gets the appreciation they deserve.

10 more pushed in thru M'singh border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

India's Border Security Force (BSF) allegedly pushed in 10 more people into Bangladesh through Nalitabari upazila in Sherpur early yesterday.

They include two men, four women, and four children from Sathkira district.

They were pushed in by the BSF through the Ramchandrakura border area of Sherpur's Nalitabari upazila around 5:30am, according to Lt Col Mahadi Hassan, commanding officer (CO) of BGB-39 Battalion in Mymensingh.

Quoting the victims, the CO said they went to India two years ago and were engaged in household work. Recently they were caught by Indian police as they had no proper documents and were pushed in through the Nalitabari border, added the official.

After being handed over to Nalitabari Police Station this morning, their family members received them in the evening, said Md Sohel Rana, officer-in-charge of the police station.

Pak court suspends order seeking YouTube ban on govt critics

REUTERS, Islamabad

A Pakistani court yesterday suspended an order seeking to ban the YouTube channels of more than two dozen critics of the government including former Prime Minister Imran Khan, a defence lawyer said.

Alphabet-owned GOOGLO YouTube this week told 27 content creators that it could block their channels - including those of journalists and Khan and his opposition party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf - if they failed to comply with a judicial magistrate court order seeking to ban them.

A regional communication manager for YouTube did not respond to a Reuters request for a comment.

The judicial magistrate court in Islamabad had said it was seeking the ban after the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency 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."

Protests erupt

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Chhatra Federation President Saikat Arif said, "Since Hasina's fall, BNP leaders have been fighting among themselves over business control, leading to murders. BNP thinks expulsion is enough, but we demand they face trial."

Chhatra Odhikar Parishad President Bin Yamin Mollah said, "Students are protesting Sohag's killing today just as they did during the Awami League's time. BNP must bring these extortionists to justice."

Around 11:00pm, BUET students brought out a torch procession and gathered at Raju Sculpture.

They placed a five-point demand, including swift and impartial trial of Sohag's murder, arrest of all the accused, action against extortion rackets, an end to misuse of political identity to shelter criminals, and greater transparency and accountability at all levels.

JnU students took out a procession around 9:30pm. During a brief rally following the procession, the protesters denounced the ongoing violence and extortion "perpetrated by activists of the BNP and its affiliated bodies, including Jubo Dal".

Abdul Alim Arif, general secretary of JnU unit of Islami Chhatra Shibir, said, "We urge the interim government to take immediate steps to bring the perpetrators of this brutality to justice. Those who receive a share of the extorted money must also be held accountable."

JU students took out a procession from Bot Tola area around 10:00pm and marched around the campus before concluding with a brief rally at the starting point.

Students at Rajshahi University also held a protest rally at the university's Zoha Chatterjee at 7:30pm.

Similar protests were held in Gazipur, Narasingdi, and Barishal.

Meanwhile, the Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal, the youth wing of BNP, yesterday expelled two of its leaders, Rojib Ali Pintu and Saba Karim Laki, over their alleged involvement in the murder.

Pintu, former assistant secretary for climate affairs of the Jubo Dal central executive committee, and Laki, joint convener of Dhaka South Jubo Dal, have been expelled from the party, including their primary memberships, following a case filed by the victim's family, said the party in a statement yesterday.

Chhatra Dal also expelled two of its members -- former leader Mahmudul Hasan Mohin and Chawkbazar Thana member secretary Apu Das.

So far, four people have been arrested in connection to the murder.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir expressed grave concern and condolence over the killing.

"Terrorism and barbarism have no connection with the principles, ideals, and politics of our organisation. No matter who the culprit is, his place can never be above the law and justice," he said in a statement. Fakhrul demanded that the government immediately ensure a neutral and credible investigation into the incident.

In a separate statement, the party's standing committee member Salahuddin Ahmed said despite taking action over the Mitford incident, blaming the BNP for isolated incidents is a form of "dirty politics".

"This is nothing but malicious political manoeuvring," he added.

Political risks threaten to hurt reforms

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VESTED INTERESTS

Despite relatively low debt levels providing some fiscal cushion, the report flags serious structural concerns. It said that "vested interest groups" could resist reforms in politically sensitive areas such as public procurement and banking regulation.

"There is uncertainty regarding whether the proposed ordinance will be approved once Parliament is formed after the elections... Nevertheless, the risks remain high," read the WB report.

It also points to long-standing weaknesses in the financial sector, warning that "resolution of undercapitalised and non-viable banks could require a bailout for recapitalisation".

REFORMS

The World Bank expects a series of outcomes from its \$500 million loan programme after Bangladesh fulfilled nine key conditions tied to transparency, governance, and institutional reform.

No holiday from resistance

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government would be compelled to act if disruptions continued.

In Dhaka, then Metropolitan Police Commissioner Habibur Rahman also warned that any attempt to disrupt law and order would not be tolerated. "There is an obligation to obey the court's order. If anyone tries to break the law, it will not be tolerated," he said.

The students remained resolute, declaring that their demonstrations would continue until the government formed a commission to reform the quota system and enacted legislation accordingly. Across various universities and colleges, they held demonstrations, marches, and rallies, signalling the growing strength of the movement.

At Jagannath University, students marched from the Faculty of Arts building, weaving through the main roads, passing Bahadur Shah Park and Kabi Nazrul College, before returning to campus.

Meanwhile, at Jahangirnagar University, students held a torchlight procession that culminated in a rally at the Shaheed Minar.

In at least 15 locations outside Dhaka, students took to the streets. In Debendra College, Manikganj, protesters alleged that Chhatra League activists obstructed their march.

At Rajshahi University, students blocked the Dhaka-Rajshahi railway line, joined by students from RUET and Rajshahi Medical College.

In Chattogram, students and jobseekers from various institutions, including Chittagong University,

To improve governance and risk management, new regulations have been introduced -- though implementation, the Bank notes, will be critical.

To align with international standards, Bangladesh Bank has mandated greater transparency and oversight. Banks must now identify their ultimate beneficial owners, tighten controls on related-party lending, and improve classification of non-performing loans.

By June 2027, all banks are expected to fully comply with these disclosure requirements -- a significant leap from a baseline of zero compliance as of November 2024. In addition, asset quality reviews must be completed for at least 60 percent of banks.

A key reform, enacted through ordinance on May 12, formally separates tax policy formulation from tax administration. This aims to professionalise policymaking, improve revenue collection, and reduce political influence over enforcement. By June 2027, all

tax exemptions must be disclosed annually and receive parliamentary approval for bringing transparency to what were once opaque, ad hoc decisions.

Public investment management has also come under reform. The planning ministry now requires all project appraisal documents, including climate and environmental risk disclosures, to be published online. A feedback mechanism has been introduced, allowing citizens to comment on planned investments. The goal is for 100 percent of such documents to be made publicly accessible by June 2027.

In line with these reforms, the government is also expected to ensure full audit coverage of public revenues, and make public at least 60 percent of contracts awarded through open tender. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics is to release new datasets each year under a fixed calendar, while 3.5 million poverty profiles are to be added to the national social registry.



With her fist raised high, a protester joined hundreds chanting slogans demanding quota reform during an hour-long demonstration at Dhaka's Shahbagh intersection on the afternoon of July 12, 2024. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

marched from Sholashahar railway station through the city.

Students at Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur held a protest rally on campus but were reportedly stopped by police from moving onto the main road.

At Comilla University, students marched from the main gate to the university's entrance, while at Comilla Victoria College, students issued an ultimatum demanding the arrest of those responsible for an earlier attack.

Protests and human chains also took place at Ananda Mohan College, Narayanganj College, Mymensingh College, Bangladesh Agricultural

University, and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University. Students at Patuakhali Science and Technology University, Islamic University in Kushtia, and in Syedpur, Nilphamari also joined the nationwide movement.

In Bogura, general students held a demonstration march from Satmatha Square, while protests were also reported in Majdee, Noakhali, involving students from various educational institutions.

Across the country, the call for quota reform resonated louder, as students vowed to press on until their demands were met.

Crops on 78,000 hectares

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be possible once the water fully drains in the coming days.

Among the affected areas are 44,662 hectares of Aush, 14,393 hectares of transplanted Aman, 135 hectares of jute, 9,673 hectares of vegetables, 114 hectares of bananas, 293 hectares of papaya, 387 hectares of betel leaf, 297 hectares of broadcast Aman, 104 hectares of chilli, and 281 hectares of summer watermelons.



I cultivated Aus paddy on three acres of land with a loan from the bank. I also prepared 30kg of paddy seedbeds there. All of it has been submerged

Abdus Shahid
A farmer from Feni

Many fish enclosures, especially in Noakhali and Khulna, have also been washed away, said local fish farmers and officials.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) said an active monsoon and a low-pressure system in the Bay of Bengal are causing heavy rainfall in the coastal regions, which is expected to continue for another three to five days -- deepening farmers' worries. The downpour has already pushed up vegetable prices in local markets.

"I cultivated Aush paddy on three acres of land with a bank loan. I also prepared 30kg of paddy seedbeds there. All of it has been submerged by the rain in the last few days," said Abdus Shahid, a farmer from Fazilpur village in Sadar upazila. "I had hoped to harvest this paddy, keep some for my family, and sell the rest to repay the loan. But the rain has washed away all my dreams. I am now helpless."

Abul Kashem of Mukimpur village said his one and a half acres of Aush paddy, 100 sacks of ginger, a papaya orchard, and 30 decimals of Aman seedbeds are under four to five feet of water.

At New Market, Natun Bazar, Puran Bazar, and Kalatala Bazar in Patuakhali town yesterday, prices of most vegetables increased by Tk 10-20 per kg compared to last week. Green chilli prices more than doubled from Tk 120-150 per kg last week to Tk 320-350.

Green papaya was being sold at Tk 30 per kg, bottle gourd Tk 60-70, coriander leaves Tk 200, sweet pumpkin Tk 30, brinjal Tk 90-100, cucumber Tk 30-35, carrots Tk 100-150, bitter gourd Tk 60-65, and snake gourd Tk 35-40.

Saiful Islam, a vegetable seller in Pirojpur town, said, "You'll have to pay Tk 50-70 for any variety of

vegetable. Supplies from Bagerhat and Khulna have dropped, pushing prices up."

In the same area, fish farmer Mannan Sheikh said, "There is too much water in the canals. The sluice gate in Orjakhali is closed, and the embankment built at Badhal Bazar for dredging the Bishkhali river has worsened the flooding."

Rampal upazila in Bagerhat district has also been hit hard. "I had

fries in my seven-bigha enclosure. The sudden rise in water washed everything away. Recovering from this loss will be extremely difficult," said shrimp farmer Abu Huraira from Chakshree village.

Harunur Rashid, another shrimp farmer, said, "The embankments of all the ponds have broken due to incessant rain. I've lost over Tk 5 lakh. I can't afford to buy fries and start again."

Md Badiuzzaman, Khulna district fisheries officer, said the full extent of damage is still being assessed. However, several shrimp enclosures in Paikgachha upazila have been flooded. According to farmers, fish worth nearly Tk 4 crore have been lost.

Asked about livestock damages, officials from the Department of Livestock Services (DLS) said so far, 16 unions across eight districts -- Barishal, Bhola, Pirojpur, Jhalakathi, Patuakhali, Barguna, Feni, and Lakshmipur -- have reported damage to around 4,900 cows and buffaloes, and 992 goats and sheep.

Md Abu Sufiun, DLS director general, said approximately 25,342 poultry farms have also been significantly affected. "About 30,000 ducks, chickens, and cows have already been vaccinated," he added. The total estimated livestock loss stands at Tk 98 crore so far, though it is still a preliminary figure.

The FFWC bulletin noted that the water levels of the Muhuri and Selonia rivers in Feni are now flowing below the danger level. Meanwhile, the water of the Teesta, Dharla, Surma, Kushiyara, Ganges-Padma, and Brahmaputra-Jamuna are rising but still below the danger mark.

The forecast warns of further moderate to heavy rain in the next three to five days, which could worsen the flood situation.