



"More than 10,000 people in Gaza still need medical evacuation. We urge more countries to step forward...There are many more waiting."

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

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Gopalganj reeling from four deaths

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

An uneasy calm took hold of Gopalganj yesterday, a day after violent clashes between Awami League supporters and law enforcers over an NCP rally left at least four people dead and around 50 injured.

Since a curfew was imposed in the southern district later that day, the streets remained deserted, with police and army personnel patrolling areas around key government establishments.

The curfew took effect at 8:00pm on Wednesday to bring the situation under control. Yesterday, it was extended indefinitely, with a four-hour break from 11:00am to 2:00pm today, according to the home ministry.

Meanwhile, at least a dozen residents said fear had gripped the town since Wednesday evening, with only a few daring to step outside.

During a visit to Gopalganj, this correspondent saw municipality workers clearing bricks, bamboo, and wood



Army troops on guard during a curfew in Gopalganj town's launch terminal area yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

- ↳ Bodies buried without autopsy
- ↳ Curfew extended indefinitely
- ↳ At least 100 detained so far
- ↳ Govt forms probe body

chips scattered across the roads. Only a few shops were open. Mostly women were seen at the markets buying daily essentials, while tea stalls operated with sparse customers. People avoided gathering in groups.

Police and army personnel were deployed across the town, including near the offices of the district commissioner and Roads and Highways Division.

Speaking to reporters at the Secretariat yesterday, Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said two injured police officials had been moved to Dhaka in critical condition. "I visited the police hospital in Rajarbagh this morning and saw three others receiving

GOVT CAN'T SKIRT THE RESPONSIBILITY

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Army used force in self-defence: ISPR

Police report details Wednesday's events

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Army yesterday said it was forced to use force in self-defence during Wednesday's clashes in Gopalganj after coming under attack from "a group of unruly people."

According to a statement by the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday, a group of people carried out "organised acts of violence" in Gopalganj Sadar centring on a public

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Fundamental reforms non-negotiable

Yunus tells consensus commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is no scope to avoid fundamental reforms of the state's key structures, said Chief Adviser and National Consensus Commission chief Prof Muhammad Yunus.

He made the statement during a meeting of the commission at state guesthouse Jamuna last night, according to sources.

They said that by fundamental reforms, Yunus meant three key issues -- establishing a proportional



representation in the upper house, defining the structure of important constitutional and statutory bodies in the constitution, and ensuring women's representation in parliament through direct elections.

He emphasised that these core reforms are non-negotiable and must be addressed.

Yunus expressed satisfaction over the progress made in the ongoing consensus talks initiated by the commission.

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KSRM

শেকড় থেকে শিথরে



JULY 18, 2024

Deadliest day yet in quota protests

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

On one of the deadliest days in Bangladesh's recent history, at least 29 people, including 11 students and a journalist, were killed and over 3,000 injured in violent clashes across the country, as the quota reform protest intensified into a full-scale nationwide uprising on July 18, 2024.

The protests, which picked up from where they had left off the previous night, spread rapidly through Dhaka and other cities. Violence broke out as police and ruling party activists attempted to suppress student-led demonstrators who enforced a complete shutdown of roads, offices, and transport networks.

In Dhaka alone, at least 23 people were killed. Ten of them died in Jatrabari, Shanir Akhra, and Azimpur; nine in Uttara and

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This picture taken from a position on Israel's border with the Gaza Strip shows smoke billowing during an Israeli strike on the besieged Palestinian territory yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

BNP sees plot to thwart plans for Feb election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A conspiracy is unfolding to derail the national election to foil the democratic transition in the country, said the BNP yesterday.

The party alleged that recent violent incidents, including the attack on the National Citizen Party's rally in Gopalganj, are being used as an excuse to disrupt the democratic process.

Party leaders, at multiple events, also claimed that the Gopalganj incident is a coordinated effort to destabilise the political environment.

At an event at the Dhaka University, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said the country has been freed from fascism, but the conspiracy has not stopped.

"If you observe, you will see that efforts have already begun [through a planned strategy] to prevent this democratic transition," he said.

"Since the decision was made at the London meeting to hold the election in February, problems started arising. In other words, the aim is to prevent the election from taking place."

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Voter sign-up now open till a month before polls schedule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The advisory council yesterday in principle approved the Electoral Rolls (Amendment) Ordinance 2025 that allows the Election Commission to register voters one month before the election schedule is announced, said EC officials.

The ordinance states that individuals who turn 18 before a reasonable time prior to the announcement of national and other polls schedules should be granted the right to vote.

After the meeting, Foyez Ahammad, senior assistant press secretary of chief adviser, told a media briefing at Foreign Service Academy that the "reasonable time" would be at least a month.

Individuals who become eligible voters in a calendar year are enrolled as voters for the next year. Every year, the EC updates the voter list and announces a draft list on January 1 and finalises it on March 2. The commission sets January 1 as the cut-off time to become a voter.

Due to this process, many who became eligible to cast vote after January of a year do not get the chance to exercise their right even if the elections are held in December.

Usually, the EC prepares a supplementary voter list ahead of a national election. Those who became eligible to vote the year before but had not been enrolled are allowed to exercise their franchise through the supplementary voter list.

The EC collected data for the updated voter list through door-to-door visits from on January 20 this year.

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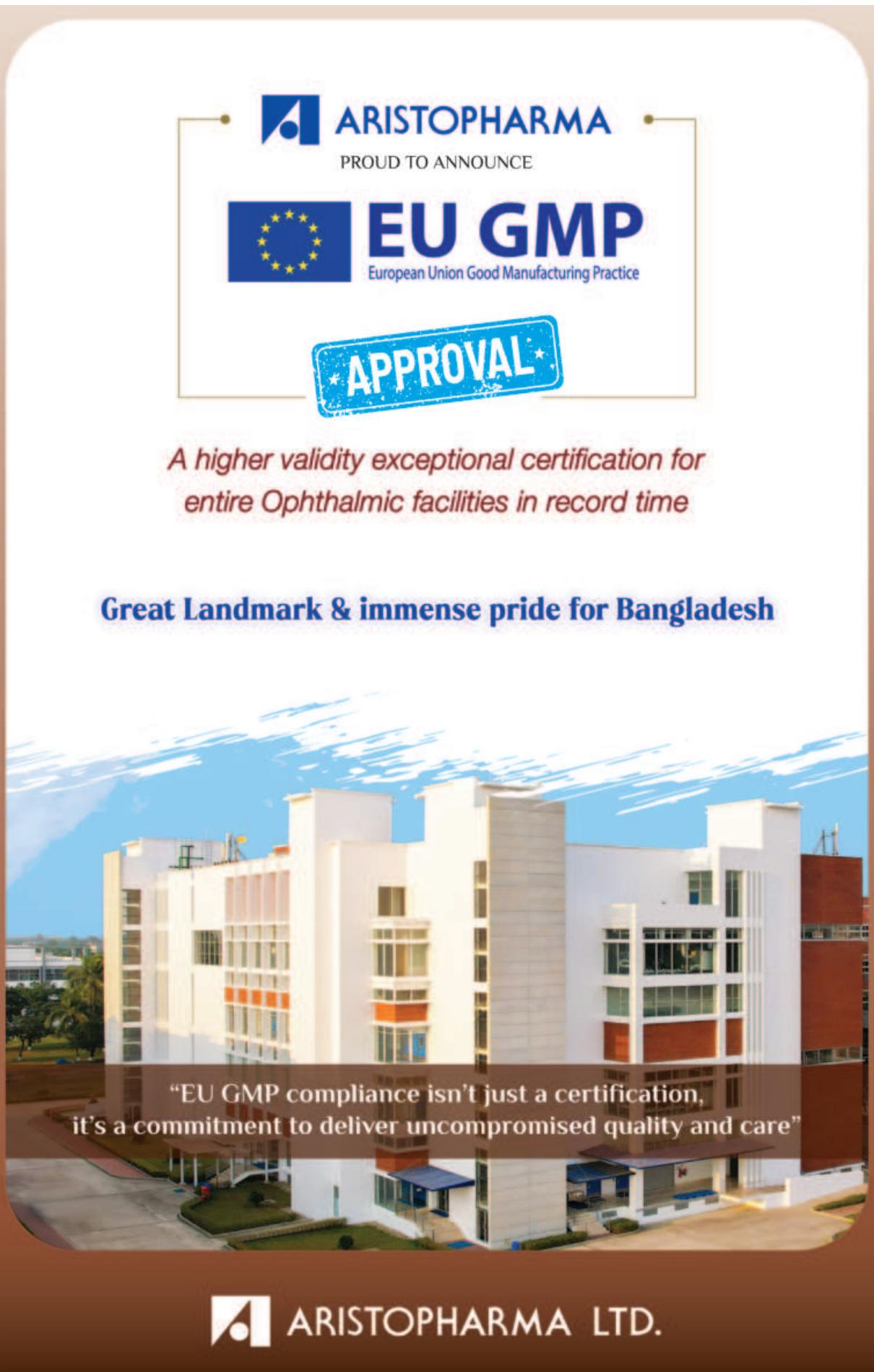
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63 killed in 24hrs of heavy rain in Pakistan
Nearly 300 injured; emergency declared in parts of Punjab

REUTERS, Lahore

Heavy monsoon rains across Pakistan's Punjab province killed at least 63 people and injured nearly 300 in the past 24 hours, provincial officials said yesterday, bringing the nationwide death toll from the rains to at least 159 since late June.

It was one of the deadliest days of this year's rainy season so far. Section 144 was imposed across Punjab along with a state of emergency in several districts.

The downpours caused flooding and building collapses, with most of the deaths caused by the roofs of weaker homes failing. Lahore, the eastern provincial capital, reported 15 deaths, Faisalabad nine, and the farming towns of Okara, Sahiwal and Pakpattan several more.

Since late June, the monsoon rains have killed 103 people and injured 393 in Punjab alone, according to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA). More than 120 homes were damaged and six livestock killed.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) gave the toll of at least 159 deaths nationwide since June 25 and said more than 1,000 homes had been damaged.

A high flood alert was issued for the River Jhelum at the northern town of Manga, where water inflows were expected to surge to high levels, according to the Pakistan Meteorological Department. Authorities warned that adjoining streams could also overflow in the next 24 hours, putting nearby communities at risk.

Monsoon rains are a routine part of South Asia's climate and are essential for crop irrigation and replenishing water supplies. However, their adverse impact has worsened in recent years due to rapid urban expansion, poor drainage systems, and more frequent extreme weather events linked to climate change.

Drone hits oil field in Iraq's Kurdistan for second day

AFP, Arbil

A drone loaded with explosives struck an oil field in Iraq's northern Kurdistan region yesterday, Kurdish forces said -- the second attack in two days on the Norwegian-operated site.

"At 10:55 am (0755 GMT) a new attack by an explosives-laden drone hit" the DNO-operated Tawke field in Zakho district, Kurdistan's counterterrorism services said.

No casualties or damage were reported.

Similar attacks on Wednesday forced the Norwegian firm to suspend operations at the Tawke and Peshkabir oil fields.

Another two attacks targeted an oil field operated by the US firm Hunt Oil in Duhok province.

In the past few weeks, Kurdistan has seen a spate of unclaimed drone attacks, which have come as the regional government and the federal authorities in Baghdad wrangle over control of export revenues from the Kurdistan fields.

Several oil fields in the region have been hit in the space of a week.

The Association of the Petroleum Industry of Kurdistan (APIKUR) -- which represents international oil firms in the region, including DNO, and Hunt -- condemned the attacks Wednesday.

It added that the majority of its members have suspended production "totalling over 200,000 barrels per day".

Long plagued by conflict, Iraq frequently experiences such attacks, often linked to regional proxy struggles between Iran and the United States and its ally Israel.

There has been no claim of responsibility for any of the past week's attacks, and Baghdad has promised an investigation to identify the culprits.

But a Kurdish official, who requested anonymity, blamed the recent attacks on the Popular Mobilisation Forces -- Hashid al-Shaabi in Arabic -- a coalition of pro-Iran former paramilitaries now integrated into the regular armed forces.

"We hold the Iraqi government responsible because they are funding the PMF, which is attacking the oil infrastructure," he told AFP Wednesday.

ON THIS DAY LAST YEAR

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surrounding areas; and one each in Badda, Savar, and Dhanmondi. A journalist of Dhaka Times, Mehedhi Hasan, was among the dead, killed during coverage of the clashes at Jatrabari.

Thick plumes of black smoke hung over parts of the capital as buildings, vehicles, and public property burned. Protesters reportedly attacked and set fire to state-run BTV Bhaban in Rampura and the Disaster Management Office in Mohakhali. At least three police outposts in the capital were also torched.

Clashes were reported from major intersections -Uttara, Jatrabari, Rampura, Dhanmondi, Badda, Mirpur, and Science Lab - as law enforcers, aided by ruling party activists, used shotguns, tear gas shells, and sound grenades against the protesters. Students retaliated with brick chunks and makeshift barricades.

In Uttara, intense clashes turned a kilometre of the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway into a battlefield.

Hospitals in Uttara and other parts of Dhaka were overwhelmed. Medical staff at multiple private hospitals treated injured protesters on the roads outside their facilities, unable to accommodate the huge number of injured. Doctors confirmed that many victims had been hit by shotgun pellets fired from close range.

Similar scenes unfolded in at least 19 districts. Two students were killed in Narsingdi, two in Chattogram, and one each in Sylhet and Madaripur. In Savar, Shaikh Ashabul Yamin, a student of Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST), died after being shot during clashes.

In Chattogram's Bahaddarhat area, two young men with bullet wounds died from their injuries at Chattogram Medical College Hospital. Protesters there chased with police and briefly took control of the intersection before torching a police box.

In Madaripur, a student drowned in Shakuni Lake while trying to escape from police and BCL activists. The additional superintendent of police said they recovered the body but had not confirmed the cause of death.

At least 50 people were injured in



Rab vehicles trying to retreat amid fierce protests in Uttara on July 18, 2024, where clashes left at least nine people dead.

PHOTO: FILE

Rangpur, where students from Begum Rokeya University clashed with police.

In Dinajpur, protesters attacked two Awami League offices and set fire to 15 motorcycles. In Manikganj, Bogura, Natore, and Sylhet, hundreds were injured in sporadic clashes involving police, BCL activists, and protesters.

Internet access across the country was completely shut down after the government instructed international terrestrial cable (ITC) companies and mobile carriers to suspend services. The blackout cut off millions and disrupted reporting from the ground.

Amid the bloodshed, the government invited students to talks in the afternoon, but the call was rejected. "No dialogue will take place over the blood of martyrs," said Nahid Islam, a key organiser of the movement, in a Facebook post before internet access was cut. "It is the government that has to find the solution."

The home ministry issued a stern warning, stating that if "destructive activities" continued, law enforcement would use the full force of the law to

maintain order.

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, after a meeting with deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, said the premier had instructed party leaders to take to the streets and resist "the creators of chaos."

He also confirmed that the government would appeal to the Supreme Court on July 20 to retain 80 percent of government jobs based on merit.

Meanwhile, BNP announced plans to hold programmes nationwide in support of the student movement. Jatiyo Party Chairman and opposition leader of the parliament, GM Quader, condemned the "barbaric attacks" on students, calling them unacceptable in a civilised society. He urged the government to stop the violence and accept the students' logical demands.

As the bloodshed deepened and the internet blackout tightened its grip, one thing became painfully clear: for the grieving families, the wounded protesters, and a shaken nation, the fight was no longer just about quotas. It was the moment a generation rose to reclaim its future.

Myanmar junta claims recapture of town near military academy

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's junta yesterday claimed to have ousted armed rebels who captured a town near the military's main officer training academy after a year-long battle.

A 2021 coup sparked a civil war in Myanmar, pitching the military against a myriad of pro-democracy guerrillas and ethnic armed groups which have long held sway in the nation's fringes.

The northeastern town of Nawngkio was seized by opposition fighters last summer, after some of the disparate groups organised a combined offensive which secured a string of victories against the military.

Nawngkio is only about 40 kilometres (25 miles) -- roughly an hour drive -- from Pyin Oo Lwin, the town that hosts the country's main military officer school.

Its capture was a major victory for ethnic fighters from the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and the pro-democracy People's Defence Forces.

But the junta said in state media The Global New Light of Myanmar it had retaken the town after "566 armed engagements within 11 operational months".

A rare one-page spread in the newspaper showed soldiers holding rifles aloft in celebration and detailed the battle, admitting initial attacks led to officers and enlisted men "sacrificing their lives".

But "by combining strategic ground and air military tactics", the military captured "the whole Nawngkio area" by Wednesday, it said.

In a statement, the TNLA did not acknowledge the junta's claim of victory.

But it said "it has been difficult to continue administrative work in the town due to the heavy offensive" and it had "moved civil administration services to safe locations".

Nawngkio is only around 80 kilometres from Myanmar's second most populous city, Mandalay.

While the combined rebel offensive has inflicted sweeping losses, analysts say the junta's control over major population centres is secure as it wields an air force capable of staving them off.

Gopalganj reeling from four deaths

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care ... Drives are on and will continue until all those involved are held accountable."

In response to questions on intelligence failures, he said, "The agencies had information, but not about the extent of the violence that may unfold."

Roni Sheikh, a security guard, told The Daily Star the presence of law enforcers grew as the day wore on. "I saw police detaining several people from different locations. Authorities were also using loudspeakers to urge people to return home."

The curfew brought public transport to a standstill.

Transport workers near Police Lines intersection said there were no passengers. Bus services on Gopalganj-Tekherhat, Gopalganj-Baishpur, and Gopalganj-Kotalipara-Poysarhat routes remained suspended, though long-distance services continued.

The venue for the NCP's pre-announced rally came under attack twice on Wednesday -- once before the event and again after. Four people died during daylong pitched battles between law enforcers and supporters of the Awami League, whose activities have recently been banned.

At a press briefing at the DC office yesterday, Rezaul Karim Mallik, deputy inspector general of Dhaka range, said four people were killed and 40-45 injured in the clashes, including 10 law enforcers.

He did not specify the number of security personnel deployed in the area. "Autopsies have not yet been conducted. We will follow legal procedures."

Asked if police failed to contain the situation, he said, "It cannot be termed a failure; but any negligence will be investigated."

Deputy Commissioner Sharafuddin Ahmed Chowdhury said operations to arrest the attackers were ongoing.

According to Superintendent of Police Mizanur Rahman, 100 people have been detained so far. Contacted around 9:00pm, he confirmed the arrests and said multiple cases over the incident were being prepared. "We're analysing CCTV footage to identify the culprits."

Asked whether the attack was pre-planned, DC Sharaf said, "We have intelligence that some miscreants from outside are now in Gopalganj. We're working to identify them and monitoring the situation ... It was not a planned attack, but we were prepared."

All four people killed have already

death certificates, or official inquest reports.

Of them, clothing trader Dipa Saha was cremated at the municipal crematorium on the night of the incident. Tile mason's assistant Ramzan Kazi was buried after Isha prayers that night. Mobile phone trader Sohel Rana and crockery shop worker Imon Talukder were buried yesterday morning at the municipal graveyard, according to family members.

Dr Jibitesh Biswas, superintendent of Gopalganj General Hospital, confirmed that all four bodies had arrived at the hospital, but no autopsies were done. He added that many injured individuals also received treatment.

Gopalganj Civil Surgeon Dr Abu Sayeed Mohammad Faruq said that of the nine people brought to the hospital, three were critically injured and sent to Dhaka, while the rest have since been discharged.

Meanwhile, Gopalganj Sadar Police Station's Officer-in-Charge Mir Md Sajedur Rahman told The Daily Star that apart from the four people killed, at least nine others were shot during the clashes.

This correspondent spoke to five other people who claimed their family members were shot as well, indicating that the number of injured may be higher.

One of those people, requesting anonymity, said his nephew is currently in a private hospital in Dhaka after receiving first-aid at a facility in Khulna.

On the other hand, four people of a five-member family living in a building in Chourangi area -- a few feet away from the scene of the incident in Poura Park area -- had gone into hiding since the clashes. The remaining resident, an elderly woman, told this correspondent that law enforcers had raided their home at least four times.

"On Wednesday night, they [law enforcers] came and asked if anyone was hiding inside, and where the male members of the family were... They came again yesterday and searched all the rooms.

"I don't know what to do. They [her sons] haven't called me either."

FAMILIES GRIEVE

Prothom Alo reports: Marjina Begum sat in silence yesterday, her voice lost after losing her only son -- the family's sole breadwinner -- Ramzan Kazi, who was killed in Wednesday's clashes.

His uncle Kalim Munshi said, "I saw in a video that my nephew was shot. We rushed him to the hospital, but we couldn't save him. When we took the body to the police station,

the gate was shut. We then took it back to the hospital for autopsy, but hospital staff told us to take the body home, saying there might be 'problems' if we stayed. We couldn't even get the autopsy done."

"Ramzan's father is disabled and pulls a rickshaw van just one shift a day. The family depended mostly on Ramzan's earnings. Who will provide for them now?"

Breaking down, Kalim added, "My nephew worked as a mason. He was not involved with any party. What did he do to deserve being shot dead?"

Ramzan's ancestral home is in Harinahati village of Kotalipara upazila. His father, Kamrul Kazi, moved to Gopalganj town around 20 years ago. The family had been living in a rented house in the BSCIC area of the town.

Meanwhile, Bibha Rani Saha, mother of victim Dipa Saha, was clutching onto his clothes.

When journalists approached her at her home around 2:30pm yesterday, she cried out, "Can any of you bring my son back? If you can't, what's the point of all these questions? Why was my son killed? What did he do wrong?"

Dipta, son of Santosh Saha from Udayan Road in Gopalganj, was a garment trader.

His brother Sanjoy Saha told Prothom Alo, "My brother and I, only the two of us, ran a clothing business. When the situation got tense in the town, he [Dipta] shuttered the store and stood nearby. As law enforcers began chasing people away, he tried taking shelter elsewhere but got shot near the Gopalganj Government College Mosque. The bullet pierced through the right side of his abdomen and exited through the left.

"My cousin and some others took him to the Gopalganj General Hospital, but we couldn't save him."

Dipta's cremation was held later that night at the Gopalganj municipal crematorium.

GOVT FORMS PROBE BODY

The interim government yesterday formed a committee led by Home Ministry Senior Secretary Nasimul Ghani to investigate the incident.

According to the Chief Adviser's Office, the committee will examine all aspects of the violence and submit its report within two weeks.

"The interim government reiterates its commitment to upholding justice, maintaining public order, and ensuring that those responsible for any unlawful acts, violence or deaths are held accountable in accordance with the law," said a press release.

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

Army used force in self-defence

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rally called as part of a political party's month-long programme.

The initial wave of violence left several police personnel and journalists injured, while government vehicles and public establishments were vandalised and set on fire, the statement said.

"As the situation quickly escalated, both the Bangladesh Army and local police intervened and were able to bring the situation under control," the ISPR said.

During the political party's rally, the stage came under attack once again, and simultaneously, the district jail was also attacked and extensively vandalised.

According to the statement, army personnel issued multiple warnings via loudspeakers, urging attackers to retreat.

"When those attempts failed and crude bombs and brickbats were hurled at army personnel, the army was forced to use force in self-defence," the ISPR added. The army, police, and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) then dispersed the attackers.

23 more pushed in from India

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Thakurgaon

Twenty-three people were pushed into Bangladesh from India through the Makkadanga and Shingroad borders in Panchagarh early yesterday.

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) detained the 23 individuals after they were pushed back by India's Border Security Force (BSF), said Lt Colonel Sheikh Mohammad Badruddoza, commanding officer of BGB-56 Battalion.

According to the CO, 17 individuals were detained near the Makkadanga border in Boda upazila around 1:00am after crossing into Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, six others were detained near the Shingroad border in Panchagarh Sadar on the same day around 3:00am.

During primary interrogation, the detainees -- seven men, eight women, and eight children -- said they were

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A group of friends ride side-by-side in two rickshaws, chatting and laughing as they enjoy a drizzle. The photo was taken in the TSC area of the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Star wins two accolades at WAN-IFRA Digital Media Awards



STAR REPORT

The Daily Star has earned regional recognition at the South Asian Digital Media Awards 2025, presented by WAN-IFRA (World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers) -- this time for its campaign "Maa Shob Pare", developed in partnership with Meghna Group of Industries.

The campaign received Gold in the Best in Audience Engagement category and Silver in the Best Native Advertising Campaign category, making The Daily Star the only media outlet from Bangladesh to be recognised at this year's awards.

Held in Chennai, India, the awards ceremony brought together some of South Asia's most innovative publishers. This year, over 105 entries were submitted from across the region, celebrating digital creativity, impactful storytelling, and audience first strategies.

Launched to celebrate International Mother's Day in 2024, the "Maa Shob Pare" campaign highlighted a very real challenge: the growing digital gap between generations.

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July dengue cases exceed June total

HELEMUL ALAM

Though July is yet to end, the number of dengue cases has already surpassed the total figure recorded in June, indicating an alarming rise in the mosquito-borne disease across the country.

According to the DGHS, at least 18 dengue-related deaths were reported as of July 18, compared to 19 in the entire month of June. In terms of infections, 5,985 cases have been recorded so far this month, already exceeding June's total of 5,951.

DGHS data shows that dengue cases were relatively low earlier in the year, with 1,161 cases in January, 374 in February, 336 in March, 701 in April, and 1,773 in May. Deaths during the same period were 10 in January, three in February, seven in April, and three in May.

Experts warned the situation could worsen significantly in August due to the current rainfall pattern, which creates ideal conditions for the Aedes mosquitoes that transmit the virus.

"Intermittent rain is highly favourable for the spread of the dengue virus, which is already present across the country," said entomologist GM Saifur Rahman.

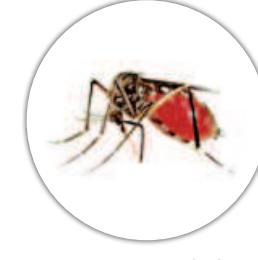
He said Aedes mosquitoes are more active during overcast or gloomy weather, which has persisted nationwide. "During the monsoon, the number of dengue cases can be up to nine times higher than during the dry season," he said.

Saifur urged all to take precautions, such as wearing full-sleeve clothing, using mosquito nets, and conducting regular cleaning drives at home to eliminate breeding grounds, including rooftops.

He also criticised the authorities for inadequate anti-mosquito drives. "They

often fail to conduct proper operations in infected areas and even in homes where cases are reported," he said.

Jahangirnagar University entomologist Prof Kabirul Bashar predicted that August may see at least three times as many dengue cases as July, with a possible further increase in September.



Dengue cases in July (5,985) already crossed June's total (5,951)

18 deaths reported in July so far; June saw 19

Experts warn August could see triple the cases

Monsoon rain creating ideal breeding conditions

All 64 districts now vulnerable, say entomologists

The current rain pattern is one of the main causes behind the surge. Once the outbreak starts, cases tend to increase at a geometric rate," Bashar said.

He emphasised the need for widespread larva and breeding site control. "When both mosquito populations and infected individuals

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The house in question never belonged to Ray family

SAYS FOREIGN MINISTRY

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Media reports claiming that the government is demolishing the ancestral property of renowned filmmaker and author Satyajit Ray are not right, said the foreign affairs ministry yesterday.

"Detailed inquiry into the archival records re-confirmed that the house in question never had any relation with the ancestors of the esteemed laureate Satyajit Ray," it said in a statement.

The statement said the house was originally built by local Zamindar Shashikant Acharya Chowdhury -- next to his bungalow "Shashi Lodge" -- for his employees. After the zamindari system was abolished, the property came under the control of the government and was later allocated to the Bangladesh Shishu Academy.

Since then, the house has been used as the office of the District Shishu Academy under a long-term lease. The land itself was a government-owned non-agricultural (Khas) land.

District authorities reviewed land records and confirmed that, as per past

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ILLEGAL WEALTH ACC sues Tarique Siddique, family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has filed cases against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's defence and security adviser Tarique Ahmed Siddique, his wife Shaheen Siddique, and their two daughters for allegedly amassing over Tk 62 crore in illegal wealth.

According to ACC findings, Tk 28.59 crore in illegal assets was identified under Tarique's name. His wife allegedly owns Tk 25.77 crore in illegal wealth, while their daughters -- Nurin Tasnia Siddique and Bushra Siddique -- hold Tk 3.37 crore and Tk 4.03 crore, respectively.

In total, ACC has found evidence of approximately Tk 62 crore in illegal assets connected to the family and has filed separate cases accordingly.

Additionally, suspicious transactions worth Tk 122 crore have been detected in the bank accounts of Tarique and Shaheen.

ACC Director General Md Akhter Hossain

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3 accused confess to Sohag murder

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Three accused gave confessional statements yesterday in connection with the brutal killing of scrap metal trader Lal Chand alias Sohag near Mitford Hospital in Old Dhaka.

They are Titon Gazi, Mohammad Alamgir, and Monir alias Lomba Monir.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrates Manirul Islam, Mohammad Ehsanul Islam, and Awlad Hossain Muhammad Jonaid recorded their statements.

On July 12, Titon was placed on a five-day remand, while Alamgir and Monir were granted four-day remands each on July 13.

On July 9, Lal Chand alias Sohag was dragged from his shop in Old Dhaka in broad daylight and beaten to death near the gate of Mitford Hospital. His body was then crushed with large chunks of concrete and left on the street as onlookers watched in horror.

Following the incident, the victim's sister filed a murder case with Kotwali Police Station. Police have so far arrested nine accused in the case as of yesterday.

Khelafat names 223 candidates for next polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis has announced the names of possible party candidates in 223 constituencies in the first phase, aiming to participate in the upcoming 13th Jatiya Sangsad election.

The announcement was made yesterday at a press conference held at the party's central office in Purana Paltan by its Ameer Mamunul Haque.

This is the first time any political party has announced the names of its candidates to participate in the next polls, likely to be held early next year. According to the list, party Secretary General Jalaluddin Ahmed will contest from the Shariatpur-1 constituency.

In the second list, the constituencies from which Mamunul and other top leaders will contest will be announced.

Party leaders said in the upcoming national parliament, Khelafat supports a bicameral constitutional structure with partial proportional

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SUHRAWARDY UDYAN Jamaat to rally tomorrow with 7-point demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami will hold a rally at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan tomorrow to press home its seven-point demand, including fundamental reforms in various state institutions to ensure a fair election.

Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar said the party believes that if the next national election is held without reforms, fascism will rise again. Therefore, it is essential to ensure that no conspiracy can disrupt the reform process, he said.

He made the remarks at a press conference held at the Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday.

At the event, Parwar elaborated on Jamaat's seven-point demand. These include ensuring a level playing field in the election, justice for the mass killing that occurred during the July uprising, fundamental reforms of various state institutions to ensure fair elections, a balance of power between the prime minister and the president, medical treatment for those injured in July, election through proportional representation (PR) system, ensuring voting rights of expatriates, and appropriate steps to improve law and order.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 8



The family members of Tajuddin Ahmad, one of the organisers of the Liberation War and the first prime minister of Bangladesh, pose for a photo with Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday. Tajuddin's daughter Sharmin Ahmad and son Tanzim Ahmad Sohel Taj met with the chief adviser to invite him to join the birth centenary ceremony of their father.

Organ donation to get easier Advisory council approves ordinance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The advisory council yesterday approved the "Human Organ Transplantation Ordinance, 2025" in principle, expanding the list of eligible organ donors.

Following the council meeting, Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam said the ordinance is a significant step for the country.

Speaking at a press conference at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka, he said the new law will allow many patients with kidney conditions to receive transplants within Bangladesh. It also opens the door for cornea transplants, offering hope to the visually impaired.

Organ transplantation in Bangladesh will now become much easier, he said.

Previously, only parents, brothers, and sisters were allowed to donate organs. With the new ordinance, nieces and nephews will also be eligible donors, said Shafiqul. "This is a groundbreaking law for Bangladesh."

"Many people wish to donate their bodies after death, raising questions about how organs will be harvested and whether the process is legally protected. This law clearly outlines how organs can be collected from donated bodies

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

2 workers in Dhaka die of electrocution
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two construction workers died after being electrocuted while working at an under construction building in Dhaka's Demra area yesterday afternoon.

The deceased were Rafiqul Islam, 26, and Shafiqul Islam, 25, said police.

They hailed from Mirka Khamari village in Kurigram and were temporarily residing near the construction site in Bhutti Chittar.

The incident occurred around 3:00pm on Badsha Mia Road when the two were straightening iron rods using a machine. One of the rods reportedly came into contact with a nearby electric wire, leading to the electrocution, said Yusuf Ali, father of Rafiqul and a sub-contractor.

They were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared them dead around 5:00pm, said Inspector Faruk, in-charge of the hospital's police camp.

The bodies have been kept at the hospital morgue for autopsy.

Demra Police Station OC Mahmudur Rahman said the workers were electrocuted while working on the ground floor of the building.

PRAYER TIMING
JULY 18
Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-15 12-30 5-00 6-54 8-15
JAMAAT 4-50 1-15 5-15 6-58 8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



A farmer plants Aman paddy seedlings in the Rajargao area of Sylhet Sadar upazila. His labor will bear fruit in the month of Agrahan (late November), when the crop is ready for harvest. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Illegal but abundant

Rampant use of fine-mesh China Duari nets threaten Netrokona's fish stocks

JAYDUL ISLAM

Once teeming with native fish during the monsoon, many of Netrokona's wetlands and village ponds are now eerily quiet. The catch has dwindled, and for many families, fish, once a staple, is now a luxury.

Locals blame the sharp decline in fish stocks on the rampant use of banned fine-mesh fishing nets, particularly the notorious "China Duari".

Fish populations have dropped so drastically that many households can no longer afford to buy fish, even in water-filled areas.

China Duari nets, typically 1 to 1.5

feet high and 60 to 90 feet long, are cage-like structures made from iron rods. Priced between Tk 2,000 and 10,000, they are spreading rapidly



across remote villages. Net traders said the fine mesh ensures that once trapped, no fish can escape.

Wishing anonymity, a

fisherman said, "If we use current nets, the authorities chase us. So, we use China Duari instead. We get more fish. We know it harms fish reproduction, but we do it out of necessity..."

According to Md Kamrul Hasan, upazila senior fisheries officer in Barhatta, the nets trap everything: small fish like puti and khalisha, shrimp, tengra, magur, boal, shing, pabda, shol and even frogs, snails, and turtles.

"The most alarming part is that egg-bearing fish and fry die once caught, severely hampering the natural reproduction process," he said.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

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"The most alarming part is that egg-bearing fish and fry die once caught, severely hampering the natural reproduction process," he said.

328 arrested nationwide in army-led joint drives

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 328 individuals have been arrested in joint drives conducted across the country by the Bangladesh Army in coordination with other law enforcement agencies between July 10 and July 17.

The arrestees include identified criminals, illegal arms holders, smugglers, juvenile gang members, extortionists, illegal occupiers, robbers, illegal sand lifters, drug dealers, and drug addicts, according to a press release issued by the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) yesterday.

During the operations, eight illegal firearms, 49 rounds of ammunition, 16 crude bombs, various types of narcotics, locally made weapons, stolen goods, mobile phones, and cash were recovered.

The ISPR said the arrests were part of the army's professional efforts to help maintain law and order amid the ongoing situation in the country.

The arrested individuals were handed over to the respective police stations after preliminary interrogation and completion of legal formalities, the press release said. To ensure public safety, the Bangladesh Army continues to carry out regular patrols and security operations across various areas, it added.

The army is also directly involved in maintaining stability in industrial zones and controlling labour unrest to ensure uninterrupted business operations.

Need to ensure independence of the judiciary Says chief justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Reafat Ahmed yesterday urged the interim government to ensure meaningful and sustainable independence of the judiciary, warning that failure to do so could jeopardise democratic governance and undermine future reforms.

He made the remarks while speaking at the "Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed Memorial Lecture, 2025" at the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium in the capital. The lecture was organised by the Ishtiaq Centre to mark the death anniversary of eminent jurist Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed, father of the chief justice.

The chief justice stressed the need for a separate judicial secretariat to ensure administrative autonomy.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

JULY UPRISING Police submits charge sheets in 12 cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have so far submitted charge sheets in 12 cases – including three filed over murder – linked to the July uprising.

All three murder cases were filed in Sherpur district, said Enamul Haque Sagar, assistant inspector general (media) at Police Headquarters.

The remaining nine cases were filed under various legal provisions – one each under the Dhaka and Barishal Metropolitan Police jurisdictions, three in Chapainawabganj, two in Sirajganj, and two currently under investigation by the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI). Senior police officials are overseeing the investigations to ensure they are conducted thoroughly and properly, he added.

Police reaffirmed their commitment to completing the remaining investigations and bringing those responsible to justice.

9 of a family get life term for murder

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

A court in Kishoreganj yesterday sentenced 13 individuals, including nine members of a family, to life imprisonment in a case filed over the murder of a grocer in 2016 in the district's Karimganj upazila.

District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Nurul Amin Biplob announced the verdict.

The court also fined the convicts Tk 10,000 each. If they fail to pay the fine, they will have to serve six months more in jail, Public Prosecutor Md Jalal Uddin said. All the convicts are residents of Deopur (Kajlahati) village in Karimganj upazila.

According to the case, the accused had a dispute with grocer Syed Ali over a piece of land. On March 23, 2016, when Syed Ali went to the Niamatpur Bus Stand market, he was stabbed in an attack carried out by the accused.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

ACC sues Tarique Siddique, family

FROM PAGE 3

shared the information during a press briefing yesterday.

Sources involved in the probe said ACC found a seven-storey house under Tarique's name on Road 1 in Baridhara DOHS, along

with a plot in Sector 7 of Purbachal. He also owns three apartments in Gulshan, which he claims to have inherited from his mother, and holds Tk 17.36 crore in cash across various bank accounts.

Shaheen Siddique is found to own three plots in Sectors 21 and 30 of the Purbachal New Town Project, a 10-katha plot and two 5-katha plots in Sector 26 of Purbachal, two 3,500-square-foot apartments in Baridhara Model Town,

a 3,000-square-foot flat in Baridhara DOHS, and bank deposits totalling Tk 3.67 crore, including fixed deposits worth Tk 2.75 crore.

No immovable property was found in the names of their daughters. Their combined illegal wealth – over Tk 8 crore – is entirely in the form of movable and liquid assets. Although they claimed the assets were inherited from their parents, the ACC found no valid source of income to support the claims.

Khelafat names

FROM PAGE 3

representation in the lower house and full proportional representation in the upper house.

Manmun said, "We must all unite against fascism. Unfortunately, it is being seen recently that even the anti-fascist parties are using aggressive language against one another. This mutual conflict is encouraging the allies of fascism. They are even daring to attack the revolutionaries of July-August. Now is the time to build a united resistance."

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Garment Factories for Sale - Savar

◆ 25 Ton knit Composite Unit - 250,000 sft, 12 Bigha
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A Duplex House Rent in Gazipur

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ADDENDUM-01 to Invitation for EOI from Sports Marketing Consultancy Firm / Agency / Business Entity for the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20

Ref: BCB/BPL/Marketing Consultancy Service/2025/502

ADDENDUM-01

With reference to the Advertisement published in the national dailies i.e. Daily Star, Bangladesh Protidin & Daily Amar Desh on the 10th July 2025, titled "Invitation for Expression of Interest (EOI) from Sports Marketing Consultancy Firm / Agency / Business Entity for the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) T20" (Ref: BCB/BPL/Marketing Consultancy Service/2025/457), Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) hereby issues the following modifications and clarifications which shall be deemed as part of the aforesaid advertisements and are hereby issued as an official Addendum-01:

1. Eligibility of Consortiums / Joint Ventures

EOIs will be accepted from individual firms as well as consortiums or joint ventures comprising two or more firms/entities. In such cases, bidders must:

a) A signed Joint Venture / Consortium Agreement. b) Authorization Letter identifying the Lead Member.

c) Individual profiles and credentials of each participating entity.

2. International Firms without Physical Presence in Bangladesh

International firms without a registered office in Bangladesh are eligible to participate, provided they

a) The requirement of operating a physical office in Dhaka is no longer a mandatory precondition at the EOI stage. However, selected firms must ensure legal and operational presence in Bangladesh prior to execution of contract.

b) International firms without a registered office in Bangladesh are eligible to participate, provided they: (i) demonstrate sufficient credentials and international experience to the satisfaction of BCB, (ii) commit to deploying a dedicated senior team on-ground in Bangladesh upon selection, and (iii) fulfill all legal, regulatory and operational requirements as per laws of Bangladesh and policies of BCB upon being granted with contract.

3. Project Tenure

This engagement is structured as a multi-year appointment, subject to satisfactory performance and mutual agreement. The precise term and scope will be detailed in the Service Agreement post-selection.

4. Evaluation Process Clarification

EOIs will be evaluated using a weighted scoring model based on pre-defined criteria (refer to General Guideline). Shortlisted applicants will be:

- Invited to make a detailed presentation before the Evaluation Panel.
- Required to submit a comprehensive financial proposal prior to final selection.

5. Scope of Work Template

A template for the Accepted Detailed Scope of Work is available upon request and can be collected from BCB Management Office, Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216, Bangladesh during office hours (between BST 1000 to BST 1700) or by emailing at bpl20@bcb-cricket.com on or before 24 July, 2025.

6. Coordination with Stakeholders

BCB will actively support the appointed firm in liaising with sponsors, broadcasters, franchisees, and commercial partners during the engagement.

All other terms, submission instructions, eligibility criteria, and timelines as per the original EOI Advertisement remain unchanged.

For further clarification, please write to: bpl20@bcb-cricket.com (No later than 24 July 2025)

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 further addendum(s) at any time prior to the commencement of the EOI selection process on or before July 24, 2025.

BPL
T20
BANGLADESH PREMIER LEAGUE 2025

Date: 18th July 2025

KURITA

KURITA (SINGAPORE) PTE. LTD.

(Company Registration No.: 197801706E)

(Registered Address: 30 Joo Koon Road, Singapore 628984)

(A private limited company incorporated in the Republic of Singapore)

NOTICE OF TERMINATION OF RESELLER AGREEMENT

1. The Board of Directors of KURITA (SINGAPORE) PTE. LTD. (the "Company") wishes to announce and make known to members of the public by way of this Notice of Termination of Reseller Agreement ("Notice") that as of 02 April 2025 ("Date of Termination"), the Company has terminated its Reseller Agreement dated 01 April 2024 (the "Agreement"), with CHEMICAL WORLD (BD) ("CWB"), a company organised and existing under the laws of Bangladesh, at the principal place of business address of House #1 (Ground Floor), Road #01, Block #8, Lamatia, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh.

2. As of the Date of Termination, CWB shall no longer be permitted to market, advertise, distribute, or resell any products bearing the Company's name, logo, description, branding, or otherwise be reasonably recognised as belonging to the Company, online or in its physical shop(s). Also, all contracts and agreements, including the Agreement, between CWB and the Company have been terminated, and CWB shall not have any right or authority to represent the Company, or hold that it has any relationship conferring such right or authority to represent the Company, in any capacity in any dealings.

3. Following this Notice, any forgoing dealings with CWB for products bearing our name, logo, branding, or otherwise be reasonably recognised as belonging to the Company, based on the belief that CWB continues to represent the Company in any capacity, e.g., agent, or be an authorised reseller of the Company, shall be at your own risk and costs.

4. The Company regrets that it will not be open to receiving any requests for clarification, or enquiries, about the Notice.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD
KURITA (SINGAPORE) PTE. LTD.

10 July 2025

BPL Governing Council
Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)

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

Fire at mall in Iraq leaves 69 people dead 11 others missing

AFP, Kut

A fire tore through a newly opened shopping mall in the eastern Iraqi city of Kut overnight, killing at least 69 people, authorities said yesterday, as grief-stricken families searched for missing relatives.

Officials said many people suffocated in bathrooms, while one person told AFP that his five relatives died in an elevator. At least 11 people remained missing.

The blaze – the latest in a country where safety regulations are frequently neglected – broke out late Wednesday, reportedly starting on the first floor before rapidly engulfing the five-storey Corniche Hypermarket Mall.

The cause was not immediately known, but one survivor told AFP an air conditioner had exploded.

Several people told AFP they lost families including mothers and children who had gone to shop and dine



A group of migrants walk into the water to board an inflatable dinghy in an attempt to cross the English Channel to Britain, as tougher migration controls are announced, at Petit-Fort-Philippe beach in Gravelines, near Calais, France, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Israel creating discord

Says Syria's interim president, vows to protect rights of Druze citizens as ceasefire holds

REUTERS, Damascus

Syria's interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa promised to protect the rights of Druze citizens yesterday as a ceasefire appeared to be holding in the country's south following US intervention to end fighting between government forces and Druze fighters.

Overnight, the Islamist-led government's troops withdrew from the predominantly Druze city of Sweida, where scores of people have been killed in days of conflict pitting local fighters against the Damascus authorities and Bedouin tribes.

The violence in Syria escalated sharply on Wednesday as Israel launched airstrikes in Damascus while pressing attacks on government forces in the south, demanding they withdraw and saying Israel aimed to protect Syria's Druze minority.

Govt troops withdrew from Sweida after US intervention

Israeli strikes violate Syria's sovereignty: Russia

Over 516 killed since the weekend in violent clashes in Sweida

near its frontier. Facing calls from Israel's own Druze minority to shield Syria's Druze, Israel has also seized ground in the south.

In a speech to the Syrian nation yesterday, Sharaa said Israel had "consistently targeted our stability and created discord among us since the fall of the former regime", accusing it of seeking to "dismantle the unity of our people".

Reuters footage showed Syrian forces moving out of Sweida overnight. The situation in Sweida was calm on yesterday morning.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said late on Wednesday the US had engaged all the parties involved. "We have agreed on specific steps that will bring this troubling and horrifying situation to an end tonight," he said on social media.

Gaza church hit by Israeli strikes

Two killed, several injured; 22 more Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes across enclave; negotiations for ceasefire going well, says Trump's envoy

AGENCIES

The Roman Catholic parish in the Gaza Strip was damaged by a military strike yesterday, killing two people and injuring several others, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem said in a statement.

Earlier, doctors at the Al-Ahli Hospital in Gaza City said two women had been killed in the strike which was blamed on Israel.

The Latin Patriarchate, which oversees the Holy Family Church in Gaza, said parish priest Father Gabriele Romani was one of those injured in the attack, but gave no details about his condition.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni blamed Israel for the attack. Pope 'deeply saddened' by Gaza church attack, without mentioning Israel.



The attacks against the civilian population that Israel has been carrying out for months are unacceptable. No military action can justify such an attitude," she said in a statement.

Medical sources have told Al Jazeera correspondents

on the ground that at least 22 Palestinians were killed in Israeli attacks across Gaza since dawn yesterday. Thirteen of them were killed in Gaza City, they said.

Eight Palestinians were killed while trying to protect aid trucks on their way to northern Gaza. "As many

of 20 trucks were on their way to designated areas in the northern part of the Strip and were targeted by a drone strike. Body parts were scattered and civil defence members had to collect them," said an Al Jazeera correspondent.

Two members of Israel's Battalion 202 paratrooper brigade have been "seriously injured" in fighting in the northern Gaza Strip, the Israeli military has said.

US President Donald Trump's Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, said on Wednesday that negotiations for a ceasefire in Gaza were going well.

In a separate development, Yemen's Houthi rebels claimed a missile launched at Israel's main civilian airport, after the Israeli military said it intercepted a missile fired from the Arabian Peninsula country.

GENERAL ELECTION UK to lower voting age to 16

AFP, London

The British government said yesterday it plans to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in general elections, a landmark change giving the UK one of the lowest voting ages worldwide.

It follows a pledge from the ruling Labour Party to make the shift ahead of winning power last year, and is among several planned changes to the democratic system.

The voting age change is likely to prove contentious, with critics previously arguing it is self-servicing as newly-enfranchised teenagers are seen as more likely to support the centre-left Labour party.

"I think it's really important that 16- and 17-year-olds have the vote, because they are old enough to go out to work, they are old enough to pay taxes, so (they) pay in," PM Keir Starmer said. "And I think if you pay in, you should have the opportunity to say what you want your money spent on, which way the government should go," Starmer added.

JEFFREY EPSTEIN ROW 69pc Americans believe Trump admin hiding info: poll

REUTERS, Washington

Most Americans think President Donald Trump's administration is hiding information about accused sex-trafficker Jeffrey Epstein and give it poor marks on the issue after pledging to make public documents in the case, a Reuters/Ipsos poll found.

The two-day poll, which closed Wednesday, showed 69 percent of respondents thought the federal government was hiding details about Epstein's clients, compared to 6 percent who disagreed and about one in four who said they weren't sure.

Epstein, a wealthy financier and convicted sex offender, was facing federal charges of sex-trafficking minors when he died by suicide in jail in 2019. He had pleaded not guilty, and the case was dismissed after his death.

The case has captivated swaths of Trump's political base who were expecting lurid details after some of Trump's top law enforcement officials said they would be releasing documents that would lead to major revelations about Epstein and his alleged clientele. The Trump administration last week reversed course on its pledge, enraging some of the president's followers. Close to two-thirds of Republicans think the administration is hiding details on Epstein's business, the poll found.

BNP sees plot to thwart

FROM PAGE 1

"Fascism has not ended yet," he said, hoping that the election will be held in February 2026 as agreed in the meeting between Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and BNP's Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman.

On Wednesday, BNP standing committee, the highest policymaking body of the party, held a meeting at its chairperson's Gulshan office, where the recent violent incidents, including in Gopalganj, were discussed. Tarique presided over the meeting virtually from London.

Calling the NCP Gopalganj rally "carelessly planned", standing committee members said such an incident is being

government are further worsening the situation. The advisers in charge are only making statements in the media but are failing to take effective action," it added.

Meanwhile, at a protest rally yesterday in front of the party's central office in Nayapaltan, BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed said a new political party, which has yet to receive registration, is announcing one political programme after another in an unplanned manner.

Salahuddin accused NCP of creating a situation to portray the government as incapable of maintaining law and order, raising doubts about its ability to hold elections.

Yunus has still not officially given any



BNP's youth wing Jubo Dal holds a rally outside the Nayapaltan office of the BNP yesterday, protesting deteriorating law and order across the country.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

proper instruction to the EC to hold the election in the first week of February, Salahuddin added.

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Advocate Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed said a conspiracy is ongoing to foil the upcoming polls.

After the meeting between Prof Yunus and Tarique in London, there was a greater clarity on the election timeline, which brought people "some relief", he said.

"But I think some people do not want it. After that [the meeting], violent incidents started all over the country! Why?" asked Rizvi.

Bangladesh Open University

Engineering & Estate Division
Gazipur-1705, Bangladesh
Website: www.bou.ac.bd

Ref. No. BOU/E&E/28(427)/2025/186

Dated: 17/07/2025

e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders is invited through e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by University Engineer, Bangladesh Open University, Gazipur-1705 for the procurement of work, which will be available at e-GP website from 27.07.2025, on 10.00am.

SI No.	Tender ID, Ref. No. & Package No.	Name of work	Last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time date
1	Tender ID: 1131016 Ref. No. BOU/E&E/Fur/10/2025-2026. Package No. 10	Supply Furniture for BOU Campus, Gazipur-1705.	Date: 16/08/2025 Time: up to 14.00pm	Date: 07/08/2025 Time: at 14.00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents can be deposited online through any bank's branches as per tender notice.

Sd/-
Engr. Md. Shahriar Sahan
University Engineer
Bangladesh Open University
Phone: 02996691121

GD-102

GENERAL ELECTION

UK to lower voting age to 16

AFP, London

The British government said yesterday it plans to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in general elections, a landmark change giving the UK one of the lowest voting ages worldwide.

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বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক

(সেন্ট্রাল ব্যাংক অব বাংলাদেশ)

প্রধান কার্যালয়

মতিবাল, ঢাকা-১০০০

বাংলাদেশ

১ খাবণ ১৪৩২

তারিখঃ ১৬ জুলাই ২০২৫

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্ব-১৪/২০২৫

২০২১ সাল ভিত্তিক 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিস্ট্রেটর' (গ্রেড-০৯)

(Job ID-10200) এর ২২ শুন্য পদে ৩০ পর্যায়ে নিয়োগ প্রদান প্রস্তুতে

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটির তত্ত্বাধানে সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি-এ ২০২১ সাল ভিত্তিক 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিস্ট্রেটর' (গ্রেড-09) (Job ID-10200) এর ০৩টি শুন্য পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে এ সচিবালয়ের বিগত ১২/০২/২০২৫ তারিখের নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্ব-১৪/২০২৫ এর প্রেক্ষিতে অনুষ্ঠিত লিখিত ও মৌলিক পরীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত নম্বরে নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত সরকারি বিধিবিধান অনুসরণপূর্বক ত্যু পর্যায়ে প্রাথমিকভাবে নির্বাচিত ০২ (দুই) জন প্রাথীর রোল নম্বর বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের ওয়েবসাইট (<https://erecruitment.bb.org.bd>) এ আপলোড করা হয়েছে।

নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত পরবর্তী সকল কার্যক্রম সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি কর্তৃক সম্পাদিত হবে।

সূত্র মৎ ডিসেপ্টেম্বর ১৪/২০২৫-১৮০০

শাক্রিত/-

মিজানুর রহমান আকম

পারিচালক (বিএনসিএস)

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সদস্য-সচিব, বিএনসি

বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের প্রকাশিত ফলাফলের সংশোধনের প্রয়োজন দেখে বিএনসিএস তা

Gopalganj violence demands answers

Govt must ensure quick and fair investigations

We condemn the attacks on the National Citizen Party's (NCP) rally in Gopalganj by alleged activists and supporters of the fallen Awami League regime. We also regret the loss of at least four lives following daylong clashes between security forces and AL supporters. While the violence was triggered by AL activists, we must ask: did it justify such a forceful response from the security forces, including the quick use of lethal weapons? Following the ouster of the AL regime, and in line with the aspirations of the people, we had hoped that the use of deadly force by security personnel would be limited only to the most extreme circumstances. Even Nahid Islam, the NCP convener, has condemned the use of such lethal force—a principled position that deserves to be acknowledged.

Reports suggest that tensions had been high in Gopalganj since Wednesday morning, as AL supporters, armed with local weapons, took up positions on the Gopalganj Tekerhat road in the Ulpar area of Sadar upazila, blocking several roads by felling trees. They also set fire to a government vehicle and damaged another. Later, they vandalised the venue of the NCP rally and attempted to physically harm NCP leaders and activists. Given that all political activities of the AL have been banned by the government, and with overwhelming evidence emerging of the party's involvement in crimes during the July uprising, it is deeply disturbing that its supporters have once again resorted to such violence. But it is how such violence is handled that best reflects the aspirations and capability of a country, and we have set a poor example of that in Gopalganj.

That said, the culture of attacking rival political rallies has long been one of the biggest obstacles to establishing democracy in this country. This is something we must urgently address. We hope all political parties take heed of this grave crime committed by AL supporters and refrain from repeating such actions in the future. Not only do these acts damage the country's image, but they also instill fear among the public as we are currently witnessing in Gopalganj, where the government imposed a curfew.

In response to these developments, the government has so far arrested at least 25 individuals and deployed additional law enforcement personnel to prevent further untoward incidents. Reportedly, a committee has also been formed to investigate the events of July 16. We hope the committee will carry out its duties with the utmost transparency and ensure accountability for the deaths and injuries. Those responsible for the attacks on NCP must be brought to justice. Equally, those responsible for the loss of lives must also be held accountable.

Finally, the home affairs adviser admitted that law enforcement agencies had prior intelligence regarding potential unrest in Gopalganj, although they did not anticipate the scale of the violence that eventually unfolded. In that case, why were security measures not strengthened accordingly? This, too, must be thoroughly investigated by the government.

We must empower domestic workers

Recognise them under labour law, ensure their rights

We cannot stress enough the importance of improving the condition of domestic workers. Despite being indispensable to the functioning of countless households, these workers, mostly female or child, still remain outside the legal framework and vulnerable to exploitation. Currently, 47 sectors are covered under the Bangladesh Minimum Wages Board, and a review by the Labour Reform Commission shows that 22 of them pay workers below the poverty line. Domestic workers are in a worse position, however, as they are not even recognised officially, making them the most vulnerable of all workers. This exclusion was the central focus of a recent roundtable meeting where experts highlighted the need to address their plight.

It should be noted that both the Labour Reform Commission and the Women's Affairs Reform Commission have recommended the inclusion of domestic workers under labour law. While the Domestic Workers Protection and Welfare Policy 2015 does deal with domestic workers, it has yet to be made legally binding. Without legal protections, any claim to rights outlined in the policy is unenforceable. Speakers at the roundtable, therefore, repeated the call for their inclusion under labour law with clear provisions for fair wages, benefits, and so on. They also stressed that verbal agreements with workers—currently the norm—must be replaced by written contracts that outline their duties, working hours, leave, etc. Moreover, experts called for a formal complaint redress system, run through ward committees or apartment societies, to address issues like abuse, non-payment, or overwork.

A lot of the problems facing domestic workers can be addressed simply by formalising this sector, which we hope will be done sooner rather than later. But to ensure that any rights granted under law are properly enforced, it is important that they are registered. Through this mechanism, the relationship between employers and workers can be formalised, ensuring accountability and the protection of the rights of both parties. An inclusive database should also help with unionisation, which is also essential for addressing grievances. Since about 80 percent of permanent domestic workers are reportedly underaged girls, as per a March 2024 report by the Bangladeshi Ovibashi Mohila Sramik Association, it is crucial that this issue is comprehensively addressed under any law. We must eliminate child labour in domestic work, and ensure that any employment is done in line with legal age and other requirements.

The Labour Reform Commission has already echoed many of these demands, recommending legal recognition, a national minimum wage coverage for all workers, etc. Given how vulnerable domestic workers are, these proposals and recommendations deserve to be considered with the highest importance.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Mein Kampf published

On this day in 1925, the first volume of *Mein Kampf*, the political manifesto written by Adolf Hitler that became the bible of Nazism in Germany's Third Reich, was published.

National consensus cannot be built without youth voices



Dr Kazi ASM Nurul Huda is associate professor of philosophy at the University of Dhaka. He can be reached at huda@edu.ac.bd.

KAZI ASM NURUL HUDA

In a country where the youth played a decisive role in toppling an authoritarian regime through a mass uprising in July-August 2024, one might expect a wave of political engagement among the younger generation. But reality defies that hope. A recent survey by the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM), in collaboration with ActionAid Bangladesh, reveals that 82.7 percent of youth in the country, particularly first-time voters, are not interested in participating in politics; only 1.6 percent are currently involved. While I do not have comparative data from the pre-2024 period, given the severity of that era's political repression, it is safe to assume the numbers were no better. This sharp disconnect between democratic aspiration and political disinterest raises serious questions about who truly represents the youth in today's Bangladesh, especially as major political dialogues seem to move forward without them.

This column is not intended as a critique of the above-mentioned survey itself, though one might acknowledge its methodological limitations, including concerns about sampling and bias. Rather, the survey invites a deeper question about how political representation is being structured in the present moment. In particular, it raises concerns about the legitimacy of the National Consensus Commission (NCC), where political parties are engaged in high-level dialogues aimed at shaping the country's future. Surprisingly, few people are interrogating the representational claims these parties make, or questioning whether they genuinely speak for the majority of citizens, especially the youth.

The NCC was formed in February this year to coordinate national dialogues around reform proposals prepared by the reform commissions. These dialogues have involved established political parties who are presumed to

speak on the people's behalf. During the first round of discussions, 45 sessions were held with 33 parties and coalitions, including the BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, NCP, CPB, Nagarik Oikya, Ganosamhati Andolon, Gono Odhikar Parishad, and AB Party. A second round is now underway with a similar lineup. This continuity is troubling in light of what the SANEM



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

report reveals.

Although 82.7 percent of young people reported to have no interest in political affairs, as first-time voters, they have a legitimate stake in shaping the country's future. Their overwhelming disinterest in politics suggests that they do not see themselves represented by the current political class.

When someone shows no interest in participating in a political activity led by groups that nevertheless claim to speak on their behalf, the outcome is both misrepresentation and paternalism. The political parties currently in dialogue with the NCC are widely regarded as people's representatives. Yet, if the youth, who make up more than one-fourth of the country's population, are not only disengaged from politics but also

disinterested in the very parties that dominate the political arena, their so-called representation is a fiction. Representation by those in whom the supposed constituents have no interest constitutes a fundamental misrepresentation.

Misrepresentation is always a serious concern. But it becomes even more dangerous when it involves being represented by actors in whom one has no trust or interest, a condition that undermines the moral legitimacy of representation itself. While disinterest does not always stem from distrust, the likelihood that it does, given Bangladesh's long history of political dysfunction, cannot be dismissed. If young people avoid political participation because they do not trust the system or its

trust and participation, these parties behave as though that trust already exists.

They engage in high stakes dialogues such as the national consensus talks without any actual mandate from this generation. This reduces the young people from autonomous political agents to passive subjects in need of guidance. In doing so, the parties deny them the moral and political agency to decide who should speak for them, what issues matter to them, or whether they want to participate at all. That is the essence of paternalism: assuming authority over another's interests while bypassing their voice.

For instance, youth-led community organisations that played crucial roles during the uprising, such as organising protests and disseminating information, have been notably absent from these national discussions. Their exclusion reinforces the idea that only party-affiliated voices matter in shaping the future, sidelining precisely those who mobilised for change but do not conform to traditional political structures.

If inclusiveness is truly the goal, the process must expand beyond party-based representation. The NCC cannot credibly claim to build a new political settlement while ignoring those who do not see themselves reflected in the existing political architecture. Dialogues, therefore, must include independent youth representatives and others who speak from outside traditional party lines. Only by engaging directly with those currently excluded from political participation can any claim to inclusivity or legitimacy be sustained.

If the youth have withdrawn from politics out of disillusionment, then their absence from state-building conversations is not apathy. It is a message, a call to rethink who gets to represent whom, and how legitimacy is constructed in a post-uprising democracy. Without earning the trust of the youth or reforming the structures that have failed them, political actors risk building a future on foundations that the next generation has already rejected. A new political settlement cannot emerge by speaking on behalf of those who remain unheard; it must begin by listening to those who have gone silent.

How Iran's authoritarian rule became its greatest vulnerability



Dr Sayeed Ahmed is a consulting engineer and CEO of Bayside Analytica, a technology-focused strategy and management consulting organisation.

SAYEED AHMED

What is Iran's most significant vulnerability that the recent 12-day war with Israel has uncovered? The conflict led the Iranian authorities to report more than 600 deaths and nearly 4,800 injuries from Israeli strikes, while Iran's retaliatory bombings led to around 30 casualties in Israel. However, the gravest concern in this conflict is not the casualty figures or how destructive and advanced the weaponry both sides deployed were. It's the stories emerging about how deeply Israeli intelligence infiltrated the innermost circles of Tehran's security systems. The case of Catherine Perez Shaked, a French-born journalist who reportedly spent years infiltrating Iran's top circles, highlights this chilling vulnerability.

Perez Shaked infiltrated elite circles, gaining the trust of top regime loyalists, using her most effective weapon—charm—to befriend the wives of Iran's high-ranking government and military officials.

Whether the allegations about her being a Mossad operative are true or not, her story highlights a key weakness in Iran's security system.

Reports indicate that Mossad infiltrators smuggled precision-guided weapons and set up a drone base near Tehran, targeting air defences and ballistic missile

launchers, which crippled Iran's ability to mount a counterstrike. But how could Israel get this far?

Iran's greatest weakness isn't

its ageing military equipment or its isolated economy. It's the very nature of its authoritarian system. When a government rules through fear and oppression, it creates the conditions for its own downfall. Citizens become potential assets for foreign intelligence, not because they are traitors but because they yearn for the freedom their government denies them.

The regime's brutality towards its people has created a reservoir of resentment that foreign powers can exploit. Every protester imprisoned, every woman beaten for removing her hijab (remember Mahsa Amini), every journalist silenced, represents not just a human rights violation but a strategic fault line. In a system where trust is replaced by surveillance and loyalty is coerced rather than earned, the very foundations of national security become compromised.

This does not mean that all Iranians unhappy with their rulers are potential spies; most are patriots with unquestionable loyalty to the country. Iran's cinema, which has consistently produced excellent, award-winning films despite stringent government restrictions, aptly illustrates this point, highlighting the strategic fault line.

Mohammad Rasouli's *The Seed of the Sacred Fig* (2024), which received the Cannes Film Festival's Special Jury Prize, employs the

metaphor of the strangler fig to illustrate how authoritarian power ultimately destroys the very society it aims to protect. The strangler fig is a parasitic plant that encircles a host tree, eventually choking it to death. A government judge's family unravels when they decide to defend anti-government protesters instead of supporting the regime. The judge, symbolising the state's authority, becomes isolated even within his own family. Events lead to a tragic ending for the once-loving family—a powerful metaphor for how authoritarianism ultimately destroys itself.

My Favourite Cake (2024) by Maryam Moghaddam and Behtash Sanaehee captures the profound longing of everyday urban Iranians for the freedoms they enjoyed before the revolution. The film's elderly protagonist represents a generation that remembers a different Iran, one where women could dance, where music filled the air, and where life was lived with less fear. Her quiet rebellion against the regime's restrictions speaks to the millions of Iranians who carry similar memories and yearnings.

The government banned both the films and prosecuted the directors, ignoring the deep social discontent they reflected, which can have far-reaching strategic implications.

It's not just the weapons systems, troop movements, and tactical capabilities that underpin national security. The Iran-Israel confrontation reveals something more fundamental: the strategic importance of legitimacy. Iran could be much stronger if not for the alienated population that its merciless authoritarian rule has created with its systemic oppression.

A 2024 Human Rights Watch report states that the government continues to execute political

opponents and dissidents on flimsy charges, severely restricts freedoms of assembly and expression, and conducts widespread prosecutions of women and girls for not wearing the hijab in public. An intensified crackdown on activists and human rights workers, using harsher measures and severe sentences, has become the norm to suppress dissent and silence opposition voices. These actions have created an atmosphere of fear and disdain towards the government among a large portion of the population.

When citizens feel betrayed by their government, they become susceptible to foreign recruitment. When intellectuals and professionals are imprisoned for their beliefs, they may seek allies elsewhere. When young people see no future in their own country, they might view foreign powers as an enemy of their enemy, making them potential allies.

This is the fate of authoritarian systems: they become so reliant on fear and control that they can't adapt to change. They don't trust their own citizens, so they miss out on their talents and loyalty. They can't tolerate dissent, which stops them from learning from mistakes. They won't allow freedom, so they can't generate the motivation needed for the national security ingrained in the society.

Iran's rulers might have missiles, drones, intelligence services, and revolutionary guards. Yet, their vulnerability lies deep within the minds of their people, where even such a complex security system would be utterly ineffective. In their attempt to control everything, the leaders left the country exposed to a major security threat. The sacred fig they planted in their society might slowly suffocate the very nation they claim to protect.

Bangladesh faces a legal void on climate-induced migration

Ahmad Ibrahim and Mahbuba Kamal
work at the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) and are members of the Dhaka North City Corporation Local Experts Advisory Committee.

AHMAD IBRAHIM and
MAHBUBA KAMAL

Much has been made of Bangladesh's perceived vulnerability to climate change—it consistently ranks among the countries projected to suffer the worst human, economic and cultural losses. In response, Bangladesh has taken a policy-driven approach to tackling the problem, developing a labyrinth of climate change policies and engaging vociferously on the global stage to lead negotiations at the Conference of the Parties (COP) on issues such as Nationally Determined Contributions and the Fund for Loss and Damage.

Relatively less focus, however, has been paid to the issue of developing a domestic legal framework that complements Bangladesh's global ambitions and commitments. Significantly, the issue of climate-induced displacement and autonomous mobility linked to climate change has flown under the radar in the face of *in-situ* adaptation and mitigation efforts by the state.

Bangladesh is no stranger to displacement. Disaster-induced displacement, both temporary and permanent, has long been a feature of the country, owing to its low-lying topography. Climate change exacerbates this displacement risk by amplifying the intensity of sudden onset events such as cyclones and tidal surges, while also creating new streams of pre-emptive mobility through slow-onset changes such as prolonged droughts and salinity intrusion caused by sea level rise.

As of the end of 2024, there were 585,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Bangladesh. This figure excludes those who have been obliged to move, often in anticipatory fashion, due to how climate change has affected their livelihoods, assets and way of life. Add to this the fact that, *ceteris paribus*, Bangladesh is projected to lose between 12.34 and 17.95 percent of its coastal landmass due to sea-level rise-induced flooding by 2100, the estimation that by 2050 one in every seven people in the country will be displaced due to climate change does not seem far-fetched.

Within this context, how prepared are

urban spaces to deal with the ongoing influx of those who autonomously relocate or are forcibly displaced? Data highlights that Dhaka is taking in a significant number of new arrivals each day, many of whom realistically fall into the categories described above. Rapid and spontaneous urbanisation has given rise to a sprawling mosaic of informal settlements

displaced individuals can hold policymakers accountable?

Bangladesh's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), the guiding document, outlines the scope of government activities to address climate change and to fund projects through the Bangladesh Climate Trust Fund, established by the Climate Trust Fund Act

on Internal Displacement. The disconnect between these two government documents highlights a broader disconnect between ministries and policymakers.

Having exhausted avenues under the climate change paradigm, we turn to the normative legal framework to identify mechanisms for ensuring durable solutions

rights for displaced people or those at risk of displacement due to environmental failures. As such, the absence of explicit constitutional provisions for climate-displaced persons severely limits legal enforcement.

The Non-Agricultural Khas Land Management and Settlement Policy 1995 allows for the long-term settlement of Khas lands for climate-displaced people and their rehabilitation on unused government land. However, there is a legal prohibition against such settlements within major metropolises such as Dhaka, Chattogram, or the municipality of Narayanganj.

As a result, many climate-displaced communities end up living in informal settlements, with insecure tenure and in environmentally hazardous areas, facing further displacement due to evictions, fires, or disasters like floods.

The inadequate legal framework to ensure tenureship for displaced communities in urban areas is born out of faulty logic and an aversion to data. In the absence of viable livelihood opportunities elsewhere, displaced people inevitably relocate to cities. By failing to decentralise development away from urban centres—while also restricting the possibility of tenureship for the displaced—the state has consigned a significant portion of its population to a life of precarity and uncertainty.

While emergency litigation to halt slum evictions has taken place in the High Court, these interventions have not structurally altered the existing barriers to durable solutions for climate-displaced individuals. It is essential for the state to make fundamental changes to its approach to climate change adaptation by recognising the phenomena of climate displacement and autonomous, climate-induced mobility, and ensuring that these communities have access to durable solutions.

This also entails acknowledging the high concentration of such displaced communities within urban spaces and developing secure livelihoods and tenure solutions accordingly. While urban density should rightly be a concern for the government, the problem cannot be solved through exclusionary policies or anti-poor governance.

Decentralised urbanisation processes must go hand in hand with ensuring durable solutions for displaced and floating communities who are struggling to survive in metropolitan spaces today.



Disaster-induced displacement, both temporary and permanent, has long been a feature of the country, owing to its low-lying topography.

FILE PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

across urban and peri-urban spaces.

Within these informal settlements, communities live under constant threat of eviction and in deteriorated conditions, as though abandoned by the state. It is important to consider two key questions: first, is the current urban planning and climate change response framework capable of effectively accommodating these communities and providing them with adequate housing and services? Second, is there a coherent legal framework through which distressed and

2010. Unfortunately, it fails to address human mobility in its social protection and disaster management programmes. As a result, people who move forcibly or autonomously in the face of climate change are largely left to fend for themselves.

The absence of a mobility and displacement narrative in the BCCSAP is even more puzzling when read alongside the National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management, which insists upon durable solutions for IDPs in line with the United Nations Guiding Principles

for climate-displaced communities. Article 15 of the Bangladesh constitution guarantees access to basic necessities, including housing, for all citizens, but this is judicially unenforceable.

Although fundamental human rights to equality before the law, equal protection and treatment, and the right to life are guaranteed, these do not amount to immediate housing provision or durable solutions for the displaced. Moreover, Article 18A does not establish any corresponding

REMEMBERING MUGDHO

A life full of warmth and courage

Jahir Rezwan (not real name)
was a friend of Mir Mahfuzur Rahman Mugdho.

JAHIR REZWAN

The day I first met Mugdho (Mir Mahfuzur Rahman) is etched in my memory. It was January 5, 2019. Our esteemed professor, Dr Munnujahan Ara, came to our classroom looking for students who were interested in cultural activities. Mugdho and I, both guitar enthusiasts, immediately volunteered. Our shared passion for music quickly forged a friendship during rehearsals, and I was struck by how effortlessly he seemed to connect with others.

Beyond his impressive guitar skills, Mugdho was a talented ukulele player and an astonishing beatboxer. He exuded an unyielding spirit, as if nothing could deter him from his pursuits. We became constant companions, dedicated to our academics as well as a myriad of extracurricular activities. From the football field to the cricket pitch, chess, table tennis, and carom board—there was hardly an activity on campus in which

we didn't participate together. Our spirited discussions—"storms over a cup of tea"—became a cherished routine.

I remember some pivotal memories that can offer a glimpse of the extraordinary individual Mugdho was.

In 2019, during our first year at university, I received a wedding invitation from a batchmate in Magura. Hearing about it, Mugdho declared, "Mama, your friend is my friend too. Let's go to Magura together." We embarked on the journey, attending the ceremony for a mere 15-20 minutes. Yet, in that brief period, his spirit created an enduring memory. As we prepared to return to Khulna, he boldly said, "I'll get us back to Khulna for free!" I scoffed at the impossibility, but Mugdho, undeterred, approached the bus conductor. Miraculously, the conductor agreed, with the condition that we ride on the roof. We saved our fare and, with that money, watched a film at Monihar Cinema Hall in Jashore before catching a local train back to Khulna.

On another occasion, Mugdho woke me up one night saying one of our batchmates was seriously ill. "Hurry, we have to go!" he



VISUAL: STAR

told me. We took the university ambulance and rushed our friend to the hospital. The following day we had our semester final exam. Without a hint of hesitation, Mugdho assured our other batchmates, "All of you go.

I'll stay here, no worries." While everyone else headed back to the dorms to study, three of us remained at the hospital with our ailing friend. That day, I realised for the first time how compassionate Mugdho was. He never hesitated to offer help to others.

I also must speak of his remarkable family. One day, Mugdho invited me to his cousin's wedding. I readily agreed. There, I met Snigdho, his twin, and their playful interaction was funny. Though it was my first visit to their home, their inherent warmth and welcoming nature made me feel instantly at ease. What particularly touched me was his aunt's gestures. That explained Mugdho's innate friendliness. Later, meeting his uncle, I understood from where Mugdho had gotten his profound sense of responsibility.

On campus, I witnessed Mugdho consistently raise his voice against corruption and drug abuse. He dedicated himself to the well-being of our batch and the university as a whole. He tirelessly attempted to establish a scout group at Khulna University, but administrative oversights unfortunately thwarted these efforts. Nevertheless, he never

refused anyone in need, offering assistance at any moment.

We were both avid travellers, participating in every tour organised by our mathematics department. We revisited many places, but our most memorable journey together was in 2022. We embarked on a bike tour from Khulna, aiming to explore the northern part of Bangladesh. We traversed 18 districts, ending up in Tetulia where we watched the greatest football World Cup final in history on TV.

The last time I saw him in person was at Uttara North Metro Station in Dhaka. He offered me a ride on his beloved Bumblebee, his bike, to see me off. He used to say, "I'm going to study in Europe so I can travel all over the continent." On our last phone call, he said, "Mama, get your passport ready. We're going to India together." My passport is ready, but Mugdho is no more.

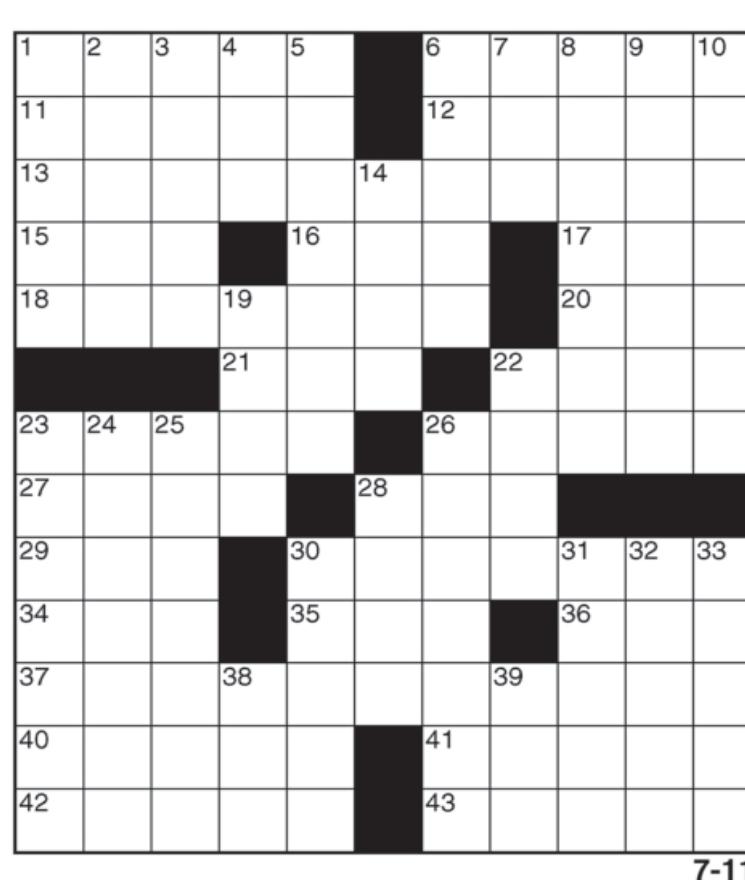
Today marks one year since Mugdho was taken away from us. He now exists solely in our cherished memories, where he will forever smile and playfully ask, "Kire? Ki boosta?" ("Hey! How are things?").

ACROSS

- 1 Following
- 6 Miles of music
- 11 Rich cake
- 12 Decree
- 13 TV network, e.g.
- 15 In the past
- 16 Road goo
- 17 Mahershala of "Moonlight"
- 18 Shaped shrub
- 20 Chess piece
- 21 Tear
- 22 Plane part
- 23 Bike part
- 26 Flexes
- 27 Yale students
- 28 Pot brew
- 29 Shade tree
- 30 Refuses to go along with
- 34 Family
- 35 Pole worker
- 36 In the style of
- 37 Wizard, e.g.
- 40 Useful skill
- 41 Polo, for one
- 42 Exams
- 43 Scout shelters

DOWN

- 1 Chance to swing
- 2 Do without
- 3 Scout group
- 4 Pilot's guess: Abbr.
- 5 Nickname for a Tuskegee Airman
- 6 Sweetheart
- 7 TV spots
- 8 Thiamin or niacin
- 9 Reykjavik's nation
- 10 Orchestra section
- 14 Complain
- 19 Some nest eggs
- 22 Watered down
- 23 Eyes discreetly
- 24 Squashed circle
- 25 Low light
- 26 Northern Ireland city
- 28 Soft mineral
- 30 Karate levels
- 31 Glossy fabric
- 32 Vigilant
- 33 Bakery buys
- 38 Rent out
- 39 That woman
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43



WEDNESDAY'S ANSWERS



WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO
dsopinion@gmail.com

TROPA MAJUMDAR to direct 'Baramkhana' honouring Lalon's legacy

Theatre troupe Theatre will premiere *Baramkhana*, a new production inspired by mystic poet Lalon Shah—on July 19 at 7pm at Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium, Bangladesh Mohila Samiti.

Adapted from Sunil Gangopadhyay's *Moner Manush*, the play explores Lalon's philosophy, resistance, and spiritual community.

Written by Pantha Shahriar and directed by Tropa Majumdar, it marks the group's 41st production.

The cast includes Ramendu Majumdar, Tropa Majumdar, and Tanzum Ara Palli, among others. Music direction is by Kartik, Bishwajit Bairagi, and Tanmoy Ghosh, blending Baul traditions with modern composition.

Shaiful Islam handles set and lighting, Wahida Mallika Jolly designs costumes, and Saidur Rahman Lipon directs choreography. Khurshid Alam manages the production.



Lili Reinhart to lead and produce film adaptation of 'The Love Hypothesis'



Lili Reinhart is set to star in and executive produce the film adaptation of Ali Hazelwood's bestselling novel *The Love Hypothesis*. Developed by Amazon MGM Studios and MRC, the romantic comedy follows a PhD student who fakes a relationship with a brilliant professor, challenging their views on love.

Claire Scanlon (*Set It Up*) will direct, with Sarah Rothschild writing the screenplay. Elizabeth Cantillon will produce, alongside executive producers Reinhart, Hazelwood, and Catherine Hagedorn.

The novel, published in 2021, spent nearly a year on the New York Times bestseller list and was named Amazon's Best Romance of the Year. Reinhart recently starred in *Hal & Harper* and has several upcoming projects, including *Fake Wedding* and *American Sweatshop*.

Channel i to celebrate Kabori's birth anniversary with film festival

Sarah Begum Kabori, a beloved icon of Bangladeshi cinema, graced the silver screen for decades. Her radiant smile earned her the endearing title of the industry's "Mishti Meye."

To commemorate her 75th birth anniversary this year, Channel i will host a three-day film festival from July 19 to 21. The event will showcase a selection of films featuring Kabori in her finest roles.

The lineup includes *Masud Rana* on July 19, *Bodhu Biday* on July 20, and *Biniinoy* on July 21, as confirmed by the organisers.

Channel i will also broadcast a musical special titled *Ebong Cinemar Gaan*, highlighting songs from Kabori's films throughout the three-day celebration.

Bangladeshi short 'Sole Mate' earns spot at Antares Int'l Film Festival

Bangladeshi short documentary *Sole Mate* has earned a spot in the competition segment of the Antares International Film Festival, set to take place in Moscow from August 6 to 10.

Directed by first-time filmmaker Adel Imam Anup, the four-minute film stands out with its unique concept—imaging the emotions of a pair of shoes. It features no faces, relying solely on foot movements and a voiceover by Rezwan Kabir Kallol to tell its story.

Out of 2,400 submissions, 104 films from 29 countries were selected. The screenplay was co-written by Anup and Kallol, with Sheikh Qorashni penning the script. The film had its premiere at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy during the Friendly Neighbourhood Filmmaker Fest.



James Gunn unveils first look at 'Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow'

James Gunn has unveiled the first look at *Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow*, the next major chapter in the DC Universe following the success of *Superman*.

Scheduled for release on June 26, 2026, the film stars Milly Alcock as Kara Zor-El, with Craig Gillespie directing. The teaser poster, shared by Gunn, features the iconic House of El symbol and swaps the "Look Up" tagline for "Look Out", hinting at a more intense tone.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Sharmee and Eastwords'

Eastwords, an emerging indie band in Dhaka's music scene, will perform at Jatra Biroti, presenting a blend of original compositions and reimagined Bangla classics. The lineup features a tribute to the martyrs of July through a special musical segment including musicians from diverse backgrounds, united by a shared artistic vision.

Date: Today | July 18
Time: 7:30pm onwards
Venue: Jatra Biroti, Banani



NEWS

Dhaka turns to Boeing

FROM PAGE 12
on August 1.

"We are trying to reduce the trade gap between Bangladesh and the US by increasing imports from America," said Rahman. He noted that his ministry has been consulting with business leaders from the crucial garment and pharmaceutical sectors, as well as trade experts, ahead of the negotiations.

Rahman declined to provide further details, citing a bilateral non-disclosure agreement.

The government also plans to include private sector representatives in the upcoming talks, a move businesses have recently advocated for. In addition to government-led purchases, private sector importers are being encouraged to source more goods, such as soybeans, from the US. The effort to rebalance trade follows earlier proposals from Dhaka. In April, Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus wrote to Trump offering to increase imports of US cotton, wheat, LNG, and soybeans. A similar offer was made by Commerce Adviser Sk Bashir Uddin to US Secretary of State Jim Mattis.

Bangladesh currently exports goods worth more than \$8 billion annually to the US, its single

Hunt for outdated vehicles from Sunday

FROM PAGE 12
For instance, in 2010, the BRTA banned buses over 20 years old and trucks over 25 years old from operating in the capital. However, many of these old vehicles shifted to inter-district highways instead.

A special committee formed by the National Road Safety Council in March 2019 recommended setting a maximum usable life for commercial vehicles to reduce road crashes and bring discipline to the transport sector.

In May 2023, the then government fixed the economic life of buses and minibuses at 20 years and trucks and covered vans at 25 years.

But following pressure from transport associations, the government backed off from its decision and put the order on hold, allowing outdated vehicles to remain on the roads.

In a stakeholder meeting on October 24 last year, the government gave a six-month deadline—until May 2024—to remove all such outdated vehicles from Dhaka.

Experts say old and unfit vehicles are a major cause of road accidents. In addition, older vehicles tend to emit more toxic gases due to incomplete fuel combustion, contributing significantly to air pollution.

Experts say old and unfit vehicles are a major cause of road accidents. In addition, older vehicles tend to emit more toxic gases due to incomplete fuel combustion, contributing significantly to air pollution.

Four arrested

According to the case statement, the girl had been staying at a relative's house after attending a fair on the night of the incident. The six men allegedly broke into the house, tied up the relative, and raped her.

She did not initially tell anyone about the incident out of fear, but on July 12, she attempted to take her own life. After being hospitalised, she shared the details with her family.

A doctor at the hospital said her condition is critical.

Another Bawm prisoner dies

conducted around 7:00pm.

Earlier, another prisoner, Lal Yan Bawm, 30, an accused in one of the bank robbery cases and also a suspected operative of the KNF, died in prison custody on May 15.

Arrest the culprits, spare the innocent

FROM PAGE 12
League's student wing, Chhatra League, must be brought to trial for their role in the July atrocities.

"We are on the streets demanding justice, and we will not leave until justice is ensured."

Nahid said that the NCP has been ensuring peaceful political programmes.

"But if fascists come at us, we will not hesitate to resist. We are ready to take up sticks, even arms, if needed."

"We promise the people of Bangladesh. By August 3, we will complete the march across all districts and gather at the Shaheed Minar to declare our July Charter."

Nahid and the NCP leadership arrived at Faridpur Circuit House at 1:40pm via Khulna, Jashore, and Magura.

Heavy security was deployed in Faridpur for the rally. Besides regular police, personnel from the army, Rab, Coast Guard, and Ansar were stationed at key points.

After the rally, the group proceeded towards Rajbari.

At Rajbari, Nahid addressed a rally, saying, "We cannot counter the Awami League just by imposing a ban. This party must be confronted on legal, political, cultural, and intellectual fronts."

The rally was held in front of the Shaheed Smriti Chhatar near Gate No 1 railway crossing in the town.

Fundamental reforms

FROM PAGE 1

At the meeting, Commission Vice-president Prof Ali Riaz outlined the challenges and points where discussions had stalled. In response, the chief adviser offered several recommendations to help overcome the hurdles.

Commission members also informed Yunus that political parties have entrusted the commission with the authority to make a final decision regarding the formation of a bicameral parliament. As a result, the commission is expected to make the decision on the matter soon.

A press release from the chief adviser's press wing said Yunus instructed the commission to keep the process of drafting the "July Charter" transparent and visible to the public.

The chief adviser was briefed on the progress of the consensus commission's work, and members informed him that every effort is being made to finalise the "July Charter" within the shortest possible time.

Yunus also appreciated the commission members for their

commitment and dedication.

"As each session of the consensus commission is being broadcast on television, people at home and abroad are witnessing these historic deliberations. The initiative has received widespread praise."

He said, "The aspirations of the mass uprising will be reflected through this initiative. Therefore, the entire process must be transparent..."

Prof Ali Riaz informed the chief adviser that consensus has been reached on eight issues during the second round of political dialogue. Discussions are underway to have an agreement on seven other issues.

Asked about the meeting, Prof Riaz said the chief adviser wanted to know about the status of the dialogue—specifically, where the agreement has been built and where differences remain.

"We briefed him accordingly, and he expressed satisfaction with the progress," Riaz said, adding that the commission presented the arguments raised by political parties on the unresolved issues.

just the party itself. We have repeatedly pointed out the role of Bashundhara Media. That outlet employs paid intellectuals and pseudo-liberalists who justify the attacks."

"These media outlets, especially Bashundhara's, have reactivated their pens to justify the attack on us yesterday," he added.

The rallies were also addressed by Member Secretary Akther Hossain, Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwari, and other local leaders.

After the event, they departed for Manikganj in the evening.

Minimum age lowered to 21

FROM PAGE 12

previously submitted biased or agenda-driven reports will not be granted registration."

The EC will publish a notice in daily newspapers, giving observer organisations 15 days to apply for registration.

"A notice will be issued shortly to initiate the new registration process," said Shariful Alam.

Under the new policy, the commission has decided that "Observer ID" cards will be issued three days prior to the polling day.

A new provision has been added allowing the observers to remain in the field and monitor the election for up to three days.

Representatives of local observer organisations will be allowed to observe the elections on the day before the vote, on election day itself, and the day after the vote.

Meanwhile, the EC has also written to the European Union to send observers.

Govt can't skirt the responsibility

FROM PAGE 12
constitution and is therefore absolutely unacceptable, it said.

ASK said the inspector general of police (IGP) claimed in a statement to the media that police did not use lethal weapons during the Gopalganj incident.

It, however, said videos circulating on social media clearly show the use of firearms and the sound of gunshots, asking: "If the police did



Rebuilding life with quail farming

MASUK HRIDAY, Brahmanbaria

When Monir Hossain returned to his village home after spending five years abroad, he was unemployed and disheartened. Little did he know that a random video on YouTube would soon change the course of his life. It was a video about quail farming, and it sparked an idea that has since transformed his livelihood.

Monir, a resident of Chhoygoria village in the border union of Mogra under Brahmanbaria's Akhaura upazila, started small. With 500 quails raised beside his home, he launched a modest farm that now not only sustains his family but also inspires many others in the area.

"After returning from abroad with no job in hand, I spent my days exploring options online. One day, a quail farming video caught my attention. I began researching more, speaking with experienced farmers, and eventually invested in a small setup," he said.

Today, around 400 of his 500 quails lay eggs daily. He sells about 100 eggs for Tk 300 at local markets, generating roughly Tk 1,200 in daily revenue. After deducting a daily feed cost of about Tk 500, Monir earns approximately Tk 20,000 per month from egg sales.

"I initially bought 1,000 chicks, but only 500 survived. Still, the business picked up. Recently, I bought another 1,000 chicks, and I expect at least 800 of them to start laying eggs in the next few weeks," Monir said.

According to the Akhaura

officer of Akhaura upazila, said, "Quail farming plays a significant role in meeting the demand for animal protein. With low start-up costs and rising demand, many unemployed youths are showing interest. We are providing training and guidance to help them succeed."

Quails typically begin laying eggs within 42 to 44 days of hatching,



Upazila Livestock Office, quail eggs are low in cholesterol and high in protein, making them increasingly popular among health-conscious consumers. Due to their small size and minimal space requirements, quail are well-suited for farming even in small homesteads. The birds are also highly resistant to diseases compared to other poultry.

Dr Syed Ali Azmal, livestock

and they continue producing for about six to seven months. With low disease risks and manageable care requirements, quail farming is becoming a profitable venture for many.

Monir said, "This farm is helping me run my family and dream again. If someone is committed and willing to work hard, they too can become self-reliant through quail farming."

Dr Syed Ali Azmal, livestock

Organ donation Illegal but abundant

FROM PAGE 3

and ensures the process is lawful," he said.

The press secretary said many Bangladeshis will no longer need to travel abroad for kidney transplants, as the procedure will now be more accessible within the country.

The advisory council also approved the "Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025" in principle.

Shafiqul Alam said the amendment involves a minor change related to the Board of Investment in the existing law. "Some new recruitment can now be made from outside the Board of Investment," he added.

9 of a family

FROM PAGE 4

Ali was first taken to Karimganj Upazila Health Complex and later to Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital. From there, he was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he died on March 29.

His elder sister Parveen Sultana filed an attempted murder case with Karimganj Police Station on March 25.

Later, when Syed Ali died, it became a murder case.

On September 21, 2016, the then sub-inspector of Karimganj Police Station, Shahar Ali, filed a charge sheet accusing the 13.

Illegal but abundant

FROM PAGE 4

Tanvir Ahmed, senior fisheries officer of Mohanganj, said the nets also kill snakes, crabs, eels, mussels, and other microorganisms vital to the aquatic ecosystem, disrupting ecological balance.

Md Tofazzal Hossain Akand, a zoology lecturer at Netrokona Government College, described the net as a "deadly trap". "It doesn't just catch fish; it destroys entire future generations. The mesh is so fine that no fish can escape," he said.

A field investigation across all ten upazilas of the district found both professional fishermen and seasonal hunters openly using these nets. From vast haors to backyard ponds, China Duari and other prohibited nets were seen in use.

Contacted, Netrokona Deputy Commissioner Banani Biswas said several China Duari nets have already been confiscated and destroyed. "We will soon intensify regular enforcement drives and legal action," she added.

Need to ensure

FROM PAGE 4

Referring to the Judicial Reform Roadmap, Justice Reafat said it offers a comprehensive blueprint for institutional transformation rooted in independence, integrity, and accountability.

He described the Supreme Judicial Appointment Ordinance, 2025 as landmark legislation and a direct response to

District Fisheries Officer Shahjahan Kabir said the use, sale, or storage of China Duari nets is banned under the Fisheries Act and is punishable by up to two years in jail and fines. "We are conducting raids and destroying seized nets," he said. "But without public awareness, we can't win this battle."

He also noted that the Fish Conservation Act, 1950 (Section 5), and the Fish and Fish Products (Inspection and Quality Control) Rules, 1989, allow for both fines and imprisonment for such offences.

Netrokona Deputy Commissioner Banani Biswas said several China Duari nets have already been confiscated and destroyed. "We will soon intensify regular enforcement drives and legal action," she added.

long-standing demands for depoliticisation.

However, he acknowledged that achieving full judicial independence remains a challenge. "While the interim government has shown some interest, the long-term success of these reforms hinges on sustained political will across all branches of government."

Star wins two

FROM PAGE 3

While digital services expand rapidly across Bangladesh, many mothers, especially from older generations, continue to face barriers in accessing and using digital tools.

With the insight that "Moms can do everything – except maybe tech without us," the campaign invited younger audiences to teach their mothers a new digital skill and to share their experience on a dedicated campaign platform.

The campaign engaged the young audience through a heartfelt video, a series of educational content, influencer collaboration, and interactive storytelling that resulted in the campaign reaching an audience of over 38 million across digital media and garnered over 200 heartfelt stories.

This recognition places The Daily Star alongside leading publishers such as BBC, Deutsche Welle, The Hindu, The Quint, and HT Media, who were also awarded across various categories this year.

Having won gold, The Daily Star has also qualified to compete at the WAN-IFRA World Digital Media Awards, held at the World News Media Congress 2025 in Krakow, Poland.

WAN-IFRA is the global organisation of the world's press, representing more than 3,000 media companies and 18,000 publications in over 120 countries. Its Digital Media Awards recognise publishers who lead the way in digital transformation and innovation.

23 more

FROM PAGE 3

from Bagerhat and Narail districts, said a BGB press release.

They had entered India illegally around ten years ago in search of work and had been living there.

Indian police had recently detained them in Gujarat and Delhi and handed them over to the BSF, who pushed them back into Bangladesh, the press release added.

Later in the afternoon, BGB handed over 17 of the detainees to Boda Police Station and six to Panchagarh Sadar Police Station.

Police at both stations are verifying their identities before handing them over to their families, said the respective officers in charge.

July dengue

FROM PAGE 3

rise simultaneously, the disease spreads rapidly," he said.

Bashar called for targeted hotspot management around the homes of dengue patients and respected community members to kill adult mosquitoes and prevent further breeding.

He also highlighted the need for mosquito control in hospitals where patients are being treated.

"Hospitals can become easy sources of transmission if Aedes mosquitoes bite infected patients and then others," he warned.

"Without active community involvement in removing breeding sources at the household level, dengue will be difficult to control," he added.

Regarding the situation outside Dhaka, Bashar warned that all 64 districts are now vulnerable. "Aedes mosquitoes have spread across the country," he said.

He called on the Local Government Ministry to instruct deputy commissioners, municipalities, and city corporations to launch immediate mosquito control campaigns.

"The ministry should supply insect growth regulators (IGRs) to local bodies or allow them to procure and distribute these with proper guidance," he said.

The house in question never

FROM PAGE 3

records, the land belongs to the government and has no link to the Ray family.

Local senior citizens and respected community members also confirmed there is no known historical connection between the Ray family and the house.

The house is not listed as an archaeological monument either, the statement continued.

However, the road in front of the house, "Harikishore Ray Road", is named after Satyajit Ray's great-grandfather, Harikishore Ray, who was the adoptive parent of Satyajit Ray's grandfather, Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury.

The Ray family did once have a house on Harikishore Ray Road, which they sold long ago and thus no longer exists. A multi-storeyed building was constructed there by the new owner.

Meanwhile, the building which is being demolished was dilapidated, risky, and unusable. Since 2014, the Shishu Academy had shifted to a rented property elsewhere in Mymensingh city, and the abandoned building became a place for unlawful activities, said the foreign ministry.

Hence, an initiative was taken to construct a semi-permanent structure at the site in the first half of 2024. Following proper

procedures, the Shishu Academy allowed district authorities to remove the old building through an auction. As per the decision of the auction committee, the public was widely notified through national and local newspapers on 7 March 2025.

On July 16, the deputy commissioner of Mymensingh held a discussion with senior citizens, literary and cultural figures, journalists, and other respected members of the community.

During the meeting, eminent writer Kangal Shahin explained that the dilapidated building does not belong to Harikishore Ray or Satyajit Ray. All attendees unanimously supported the construction of a new building for the Shishu Academy to benefit the children of Mymensingh and urged the project to proceed without delay.

All attendees were in unequivocal agreement that the abandoned Shishu Academy building has no historical or family ties to Satyajit Ray or his family, said the statement.

The Chief Adviser's Office last night shared minutes of the meeting.

The meeting reviewed all the records of the land and found that it had no link to Satyajit Ray or his ancestors.

The government urged

everyone to avoid spreading misleading or factually inaccurate narratives that cause confusion and disrupt harmony among the people.

Jamaat to rally

FROM PAGE 3

Parwar apologised in advance to the city dwellers for any possible inconvenience caused by the rally and urged the public to consider the matter with tolerance.

To ensure proper management of the July 19 rally, Jamaat will deploy 6,000 volunteers, set up 15 medical booths at the venue, and designate 15 parking spots for vehicles arriving from different districts. Parwar also mentioned that Jamaat has formed eight sub-committees to implement the rally under the supervision of these committees.

The main rally will begin at 2:00pm on Saturday, while cultural performances by Jamaat's cultural wing will start at 10:00am. Leaders from various Islamic and political parties, families of July martyrs, and those injured in July will be present at the main rally.

Among others, Jamaat's Assistant Secretaries General Hamidur Rahman Azad, Rafiqul Islam Khan, AKM Masum, and Abdul Halim were present at the press conference.

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নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

স্মারক নম্বর-৪৯, ০১, ০০০০, ০৩০, ১১, ০০২, ২০, ১১

প্রবাসী কল্যাণ ও বৈদেশিক কর্মসংস্থান মন্ত্রণালয়ের জনশক্তি কর্মসংস্থান ও প্রশিক্ষণ বৃত্তো কর্তৃক বাস্তবায়নাধীন "দেশ-বিদেশে কর্মসংস্থানের জন্য ড্রাইভিং প্রশিক্ষণ প্রদান (১ম সংশোধিত)" শীর্ষক প্রকল্পের আওতায় ১০৮ টি কারিগরি প্রশিক্ষণ কেন্দ্রে ড্রাইভিং প্রশিক্ষণ কোর্স চালু কর্তৃত্বে শূন্য পদে সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ডিভিতে প্রকল্প মেয়াদকালীন সময়ের জন্য জনবল নিয়োগের নিমিত্ত প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে আবেদনপত্র আন্তর্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

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					খ) ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্সধারী প্রার্থীদের অগ্রাধিকার প্রদান করা হবে।
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"Sir [BFF President Tabith Awal] has already said that there will be no shortage of support. But what we need are better facilities: proper ground, nutritious food, and a well-equipped gym. We also want more friendly matches against strong teams if we are to achieve good results in the Asian Cup final round."



Bangladesh captain Afeida Khandokar



Glory echoes across eras, cries constant

As the years rolled on, that fervent popularity gradually waned. Now, after 46 long years, a Bangladeshi team has once again broken through to the Asian Cup finals. This time, though, it's the women who have made history.

RAMIN TALUKDER

Bangladesh's latest women's football triumph has rekindled a 46-year-old legacy.

Year 1979: just around eight years into its independence, Bangladesh was still rising from the ruins of war. Amid all the struggles, and despite lacking structure or international experience, football emerged as a rare and unifying joy in the red and green hearts of a young nation.

At the time, Bangladesh hosted its first major international tournament in the form of the Asian Cup Qualifiers. All eyes were on Dhaka Stadium as Qatar and Afghanistan arrived.

While preparation was thin and infrastructure limited, footballing dreams burned bright here. With fierce determination, the nation earned a place in the Asian Cup final.

It's a milestone still treasured with pride.

Back then, a 14-inch black-and-white TV was a luxury, drawing the entire neighbourhood around it; and where TVs were absent, the radio saved the day.

then – it just happened. We played against Qatar and Afghanistan. We drew with Qatar and beat Afghanistan. We were thrilled. In those days of black-and-white TV, we were promised a 14-inch set if we qualified for the Asian Cup. And later, they kept that promise."

Bangladesh began with a 2-2 draw against Afghanistan, followed by a 1-1 draw with Qatar. In a do-or-die return match, they edged Afghanistan 3-2 to seal a historic place in the finals, despite a 3-1 loss to Qatar in their last group game.

In the main round, Bangladesh couldn't notch a win – falling to North Korea and Syria in hard-fought battles, and suffering heavy defeats to Iran and China. Yet, that journey stands as a golden chapter in Bangladesh's football legacy.

Reflecting on their struggles at the main stage, Yusuf explained: "Look who we played: teams like Iran, regulars at the World Cup. We also used to play South Korea, Japan, Iraq; and they invited us regularly."

"Because of those strong opponents, our ranking suffered. Nowadays, Bangladesh plays against much weaker teams we never even faced before. Now we have to play a qualifier for the qualifiers."

Though the team struggled in the main round, the nation's love for football only deepened. The players became household names – idolised like heroes.

"Our popularity was sky-high back then," recalled Chunnu. "Every player was a star. But over time, that faded. Back then, it didn't matter if you played for Abahani or Mohammedan, as everyone gave everything for the country. Football was something unparalleled – almost unreal – and words can't truly capture it."

As the years rolled on, that fervent popularity gradually waned. Now, after 46 long years, a Bangladeshi team has once again broken through to the Asian Cup finals. This time, though, it's the women who have made history.

For the first time ever, Bangladesh will feature in the final round of the Women's Asian Cup – set for March 2026 in Australia. The nation is awash with pride and celebration, as this landmark achievement becomes a unifying symbol of national triumph.

One of the finest defenders of that time, Mohammad Abu Yusuf, recalled: "If I speak of the excitement and popularity of football back then, people could think I'm telling stories. National team matches or Abahani versus Mohammedan – they felt like Eid celebrations."

"People came by truckloads from Chattogram, Khulna, Sylhet, Rajshahi. The number outside the stadium was equal to those inside. Those who didn't get tickets would force their way in. Even mounted police couldn't handle the crowd. Tear gas had to be used at times."

Chunnu, the only Bangladeshi to score in open play in an Asian Cup, was overcome with emotion remembering those days.

"We didn't have time to think too much back

Still, a tinge of regret lingers among the

heroes of the past: football should have advanced much further by now. Instead, it almost disappeared.

And Bablu pointed fingers at the administrators.

"We played when football was incredibly popular. But the downfall began slowly – for many reasons. Mainly politics."

"Every new government used football to push their own agenda. They tried to claim even the smallest successes as their own, losing sight of the real goal. Win one game out of ten, and they'd say Bangladesh football has turned around; we're ready for the World Cup! This hunger for political mileage has destroyed our game. That political hijacking of our rare successes – that still hurts," he explained.

Chunnu added that the officials of the time failed to capitalise on football's popularity.

"They had no long-term vision. They thought football would automatically progress as the country progressed. But football needs a plan – a target. And they never thought that far. That's why the game lost its grip."

Yet all three former stars hope that this recent women's success can help football reclaim its former glory. But for that, the government must take the lead, Yusuf stressed: "Football still has fans. But we don't have heroes like we used to."

"Who will the supporters lift onto their shoulders now? We must first know why we play."

"These days, people don't even go to play – no physical activity, no fields. Even the annual school sports are gone – and when they happen, it's only on paper. We must get boys and girls back to the fields. The authorities must act first."

Chunnu called for a proper plan from BFF's new leadership. "We need proper direction, and we need to move forward wisely. We must not be content with small gains. This is just the beginning."

"It needs proper management and a long-term plan: one that spreads football beyond Dhaka, across the whole country. With the right plan, anything is possible."

Bablu sees this as a major challenge for the new leadership.

"This journey, started by the women's team, must continue. Maintaining this momentum is the federation's greatest challenge. If the men's team can perform well too – if we can get a few good results – then our efforts to revive football will finally succeed."

In the long gap between two triumphs, one thing echoes consistently: the cry for long-term planning, and the lingering question of whether we can truly capitalise on success and momentum.

'This success should motivate us all'

After Bangladesh women's football team's historic qualification for the AFC Women's Asian Cup in Australia, questions are being asked about whether the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) can turn this moment into long-term progress. In this exclusive interview with The Daily Star's Anisur Rahman, the BFF president Tabith Awal addresses the challenges, plans, and prospects for the women's game.

DS: How does BFF view this qualification?

Tabith Awal [TA]: This is not beyond expectations – it's the result of analytical preparation. We now study both opponents and our own players in depth. The team's performance reflects what Bangladesh is capable of. All credit goes to the girls for their physical and mental strength. It's not a miracle – it's the fruit of proper planning.

DS: How will BFF capitalise on this?

TA: In three ways. First, we want players to get chances in overseas leagues. Second, we'll use this moment to attract sponsors and government attention. Third, we must admit past failures – like not having a structured women's league. This success should motivate all of us. We also need a women's football complex with training facilities and a physio centre.

DS: How challenging is year-round training?

TA: Very. Our current model is like a military camp – strict and result-oriented, but unsustainable. Long term, we must shift to a league-based system. Right now, we need camps for 'Mission Australia'.



but we can't rely forever on one coach or a handful of players.

DS: What's the sustainable plan?

TA: A proper women's league is key. We'll also support BKSP, cadet colleges, and service teams like Army and Police to develop women's squads. This will expand the player pipeline and access to training grounds.

DS: Why has there been limited visible progress since the SAFF win?

TA: A lot happened behind the scenes. We improved gear and organised friendlies to boost confidence. But now, we must improve off-field conditions – housing, nutrition, gym facilities – all tailored for women. These directly affect performance.

DS: Players are demanding better facilities. What's your response?

TA: We've made repeated appeals to the government and NSC [National Sports Council] – but received only promises. We didn't get funding, housing, or fields. Even just one district stadium or a government guest house could help. Without such support, quality suffers. FIFA and sponsor funds mostly go to tournaments; even day-to-day costs are tough now.

DS: Has BFF submitted proposals?

TA: Yes, we submitted written requests – including for airfare – but got no support. Even the SAFF-winning girls wrote to the Chief Adviser. Still no result. We haven't lost hope, but time is running out.

DS: What about private sponsors?

TA: Dhaka Bank has helped us a lot. A few others have supported us in small ways – for travel, salaries, or technical staff. But these are short-term. We need sustainable support – and that must include the government.

DS: What does 'Mission Australia' mean?

TA: It's a call to unite everyone behind the women's team. It's also an appeal to those who want to help – this is the time. We've already had offers of support from expatriates in Australia. From now on, everything we do – friendlies, training, salary plans – will align with this mission.

DS: What's the plan for the women's league?

TA: We want 6-10 clubs, running over four to six months. We'll support clubs with facilities, but they must be financially sustainable. Universities or schools can also join. The goal is a competitive and regular league.

DS: What are the plans for the Asian Cup?

TA: Coach Peter Butler, our women's wing, and the players themselves have submitted plans. We'll finalise our strategy once the group draw is out. Our research team also prepared a white paper benchmarking other countries. We'll combine all of this.

DS: Players' pay is a concern. What's being done?

TA: We'll introduce performance-based bonuses and help players get endorsements, like Afeida Khandokar did with Robi. Salary delays happened due to a backlog – we inherited pending payments. We hope to regularise everything in the next two to three months.



We are here today because of teamwork. We, the girls of Bangladesh, know how to fight through adversity. Please keep believing in us. We will not let you down. Our goal is to take Bangladesh beyond Asia, to the world stage.

Bangladesh forward
Ritu Porna Chakma



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Bangladesh forward
Ritu Porna Chakma





PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

BANGLADESH make it 4 in 4

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh kept their impressive winning run intact in the SAFF U-20 Women's Championship with an emphatic 3-0 win over Bhutan in their fourth match at the Bashundhara Kings practice ground yesterday.

Forward Trishna Rani Sarkar struck a brace before substitute Swapna Rani added another to make it four in four for Bangladesh, who lead the four-team table with 12 points, three more than closest rivals Nepal, who beat Sri Lanka 7-0 in the day's first match.

English coach Peter Butler once again pinned his faith on the fresh faces, resting the senior players as he had done in a 4-1 win over the same opponents in the previous match.

His charges once again did not disappoint, keeping the lion's share of the ball possession from the beginning.

Having squandered an open-net opportunity in the 14th minute, Trishna made amends in the 33rd minute by sending the ball over goalkeeper Pema Yangzom's head and into the net, capitalising on a through-pass from Swapna, who was swapped in for the injured Bonna Khatun on the half-hour mark.

After resumption, Butler sent three fresh pairs of legs – defender Joynob Bibi Rita, midfielder Munki Akhter and forward Umehla Marma – to press for more goals but the home side wasted many chances, much like in the previous matches.

Trishna doubled the lead in the 65th minute with a low drive, capitalising on a fumble from Bhutanese defender Sounam Yangchen while Swapna made it 3-0 with a dipping 35-yarder in the 74th minute.

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh squad arrived in the country on Thursday following their 2-1 T20I series triumph against Sri Lanka on Wednesday. The Tigers, however, have little time to adjust to home conditions, with Pakistan already having arrived in Dhaka on Wednesday to play a three-match T20I series.

The Litton Das-led squad put in two fine performances to seize back the series after losing the first T20I timidly against the Lankans. Bangladesh will have an optional session on Friday, followed by a regular session on Saturday. Meanwhile, Pakistan will start their regular sessions from Friday ahead of the first match on July 20 in Mirpur.

Bangladesh can take quite a few positives from the Lankan T20Is, which followed disappointments in the Test and T20I series in Sri Lanka. But a month playing in away conditions may also have seen a few batters get into a certain rhythm – something even home practice surfaces cannot usually offer, especially during this time of year with frequent rain.

Moreover, adding to the challenge would be the fact that Bangladesh have last played at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, the venue for all three Pakistan T20Is, nine months ago. Their last game in Mirpur was a seven-wicket defeat to South Africa in October 2024.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) cricket operations chairman Nazmul Abedeen Fahim conveyed a certain concern regarding how the wickets would turn out for the Pakistan series

BANGLADESH SQUAD FOR PAK T20Is

Litton Das (Captain), Tanzid Hasan Tamim, Parvez Hossain Emon, Mohammad Naim Sheikh, Tawhid Hridoy, Jaker Ali Anik, Shamim Hossain Patwari, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Rishad Hossain, Shak Mahed Hasan, Nasum Ahmed, Taskin Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman, Shoriful Islam, Tanzim Hasan Sakib, Mohammad Saifuddin.

on Wednesday.

Litton also spoke about the series following Wednesday's triumph, and his concerns were similar.

"I don't know how the Mirpur wicket is going to behave for the Pakistan series. I think it's raining in Dhaka every day, so the wicket can be difficult for batting in such conditions. Batters may fail there, but we won't be too disappointed. We will keep trying to give our 100 percent," Litton said at the press conference on Wednesday in Colombo.

"It won't be easy taking on Pakistan in Mirpur. They have variety in their bowling attack. They also play a lot of BPL [Bangladesh Premier League], so they know our conditions quite well. I know that we can win matches against them if we play smart cricket," he added.

Low bounce wickets do not pose as much of a problem to a team from the subcontinent as they do to teams from outside the region. But ahead of major events to come, Bangladesh batters need to hone their confidence to the point where they can finally click as a unit in high-stakes competitions. Wickets at home may not be the best answer for sharpening those abilities.

Bangladesh named an unchanged squad from the Sri Lanka tour for the Pakistan series yesterday. While consistency is now desired in terms of squad makeup, it remains to be seen how much the performances in this series can be evaluated for future purposes, particularly with upcoming assignments such as the Asia Cup in India.



Adjusting to Mirpur surface the concern now

Bangladesh have last played at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, the venue for all three Pakistan T20Is, nine months ago. Their last game in Mirpur was a seven-wicket defeat to South Africa in October 2024.

Young Tigers seal big win

SPORTS REPORTER

A dominating all-round performance by Bangladesh U-19 men's team saw them clinch a massive 130-run win over hosts South Africa in the opening game of their three-match one-day series at Willowmoore Park in Benoni yesterday.

Riding on fifties from Zawad Abrar (70 off 61 balls), Rizan Hossan (63 off 55 balls), and Md Abdullah (63 off 76 balls), the young Tigers posted a decent total of 285 for six in their stipulated 50 overs after being sent into bat first.

For South Africa, left-arm pacer JJ Basson took 4-47 while Vihan Pretorius and Bandile Mbatha claimed one wicket each. Bangladesh could have posted a bigger total as they reached 228-4 in the 41st over, but the hosts fought back strongly in the death overs to restrict Bangladesh below the 300-run mark.

Bangladesh pacer Iqbal Hossain Emon then struck in the second over as he removed opener Jorich Van Schalkwyk for nought, and the hosts never got momentum in the chase, losing wickets at regular intervals.

The only South Africa batter who posed a resistance was their skipper and opener, Muhammed Bulbulia, scoring 72 off 79 balls. He was the last batter to depart as South Africa were bundled out for 155 runs in 32.1 overs. Bangladesh's Emon and Shadhin Islam took three wickets each. The second and third matches of the series will be held at the same venue on July 19 and 22, respectively.

Indonesia to face Saudi Arabia in WC qualifying

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Patrick Kuivert's Indonesia were on Thursday handed a tough draw for the final round of Asian qualifying as they try to reach the World Cup finals for the first time since 1938.

Coached by former Barcelona star and Dutch great Kuivert, Indonesia will play hosts Saudi Arabia and Iraq in Group B of the fourth round of Asian qualifying for the 2026 finals.

Indonesia will face a difficult task against Saudi Arabia, who have home advantage and will be heavily favoured to top Group B.

Qatar will host Group A and face the United Arab Emirates and Oman after the six-team draw took place at the Asian Football Confederation's headquarters in Kuala Lumpur.

Matches in both groups will be played in a single round-robin format in October in Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

The two group winners will join the six Asian nations already qualified for next year's global showpiece in Mexico, the United States and Canada.

The two second-placed teams will meet in November, with the winner over two legs entering an intercontinental playoff for the final spot at the 48-team World Cup.

Deadline nears but no clear path yet for BCB polls

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

On July 14, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Aminul Islam Bulbul expressed optimism of holding the upcoming election on time during the opening ceremony of the 39th National Badminton Championship in Dhaka.

This was the first time Aminul openly talked about the election since becoming president on May 30, replacing his former national teammate Faruque Ahmed.

Youth and sports advisor Asif Mahmud had expressed similar sentiment on June 27, when he stated that they are working on the process of amending the BCB constitution and affirmed that for the time being there is no reason to delay the BCB elections, scheduled to be held by October.

From an administrative point of view, the BCB has been in a flux for the last year or so, with three presidents being in charge from July last year and July this year.

This instability has raised questions about how well the board is being run at the moment and the best hope at fixing this issue is getting a new elected body in charge through fresh polls.

Although BCB's current committee is set to expire in less than three months, there have been no significant developments regarding the election.

Many current BCB directors, officials and aspiring councillors and candidates of the upcoming election are in dark about the election, still waiting to know exactly when the polls will be held and will it be held under the current constitution or an amended one.

What's on BCB constitution

According to the BCB's constitution

article 15.1, the term of the executive committee shall be four years from the date of its first meeting. As the previous BCB election took place on October 6, 2021, and the first board meeting was held on the very next day, as per the constitution, the current committee has to conduct the election by October 7.

Meanwhile, 30 days prior to the election, the BCB's chief executive officer, under the direction of the president, must notify the concerned parties for the nomination of councillors to form the next general assembly in accordance with sections 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3 of the constitution.

According to section 19 and chapter 5, the election commission formed by the executive committee will formulate all election rules, announce the schedule, finalise the voter list, and complete all formalities required to conduct the election.

Although there have been speculations over BCB forming an ad-hoc committee for the election, there is no scope to do so as per the current BCB constitution.

What ICC says

According to article 2.4 of ICC's Memorandum of Association, each member nation must ensure its statutes provide a process for free and democratic elections and appointments from amongst its members or nominees from outside its members, for its executive body.

The office-holders have to be determined



through a free and democratic elections in accordance with the process set out in its statutes and the body has to function autonomously and without any government interference.

What's really going on

The Daily Star approached several current councillors and aspiring candidates recently to learn about their plans regarding the upcoming election. Most expressed confusion over BCB's stance on the polls and some even feared a delay.

Debabrata Paul, a councillor from Jahangirnagar University, expects the BCB would begin its election-related activities by the end of August or the start of September but feared the polls might just be an "eyewash".

Observing their current

activities, I fear that they will hold a one-sided election and it will be nothing but a complete eyewash," said Debabrata, who recently sent a letter to the BCB president demanding constitution reform, a corruption-free BCB and good governance.

Rafiqul Islam Babu, a prominent local club organiser, claimed that the BCB can defer the election only if an unavoidable issue comes to the fore.

"If the election is deferred due to the political situation in the country or for under some extraordinary circumstances, the ICC may or may not accept it," said Rafiqul, who claimed that the organisers like him are preparing for the polls.

Sirajuddin Mohammad Alamgir, another prominent local organiser and councillor from Chattogram University, urged amending the

BCB constitution before holding the election.

"I think if you hold the election without amending the constitution, the election will not carry any value. Few faces may get replaced and the political inclinations will probably change, but there will be no change in cricket," Alamgir said.

Faruque, the previous BCB president, had formed a constitution reform committee led by BCB director Nazmul Abedeen Fahim but BCB halted its proceedings in the face of protests from Dhaka clubs after few of the envisaged reforms got leaked in the media.

BCB had announced this decision after their 17th board of directors meeting on January 25, and according to a BCB director, the constitution reform committee has remained inactive ever since, which contradicts what youth and sports adviser Asif had told the media a few weeks ago.

The BCB director, seeking anonymity, said, "As per my knowledge, Fahim bhai is fully concentrating on cricket operations now. He is no longer working on that matter."

Most surprisingly, the current directors, who are supposed to play an active role in holding the election, are also in the dark regarding the election date but majority of them are preparing to run in the polls.

"We only know that the election will take place by October. But we aren't seeing any activities regarding it. We don't feel at ease to talk about it too much as it may bring unwelcome consequences," said another BCB director, who also aspires to run for the election again.

When asked about the BCB polls, the National Sports Council (NSC) secretary Aminul Islam insisted that it will be held as per the board's constitution – another vague statement about an election which still seems far from materializing.



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REDUCING US TRADE GAP Dhaka turns to Boeing, wheat imports

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh plans to buy 14 Boeing aircraft and about 3,00,000 tonnes of US wheat, as Dhaka responds to pressure from the Trump administration to narrow a trade gap of more than \$6 billion.

The government is set to sign an agreement for the wheat imports on Sunday in Dhaka, according to Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman. "This is the beginning of the trade cooperation between Bangladesh and the US," Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday.

Negotiations with Boeing for the aircraft are at an advanced stage, he confirmed, although a timeline for delivery remains contingent on the US manufacturer's production capacity. The total value of the aircraft and wheat deals has not yet been disclosed.

The push to increase imports from the US comes as Bangladesh is engaged in negotiations with the United States Trade Representative to secure lower tariffs on its exports. President Donald Trump has imposed a 35 percent tariff on goods from Bangladesh, a rate significantly higher than that applied to competitors such as Vietnam (20 percent) and Indonesia (19 percent).

Bangladeshi officials are preparing for a third round of talks in Washington next week, aiming to conclude a reciprocal tariff agreement before new rates take effect

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GOPALGANJ VIOLENCE Govt can't skirt the responsibility for deaths: ASK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government cannot avoid responsibility for the deaths of four people during Wednesday's clashes between law enforcers and Awami League followers in Gopalganj, rights body Ain o Salish Kendra said yesterday.

It demanded the immediate formation of an independent, neutral, and comprehensive investigation committee to thoroughly probe the incident.

On Wednesday, at least four people were killed and dozens injured during the daylong running battles between law enforcers and Awami League followers after local AL men attacked NCP leaders and activists and their rally venue.

At one stage of the attack, arson and vandalism also occurred at various places. After the clash spread, members of the law enforcement agencies used force and openly used firearms, leading to the deaths.

Four people were killed and dozens injured during clashes.

ASK also demanded the identification of those responsible for the attack on NCP leaders and supporters and an investigation to determine any possible negligence on the part of authorities responsible for ensuring the security of their rally.

The rights body believes that the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly is a fundamental right guaranteed by the constitution of Bangladesh. It is the duty of the state and its administration to protect this right and to de-escalate tensions and safeguard lives during any untoward or unexpected situation.

They must also refrain from excessive use of force. The use of force and live ammunition against civilians in Gopalganj constitutes a serious violation of both international human rights standards and the

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Another Bawm prisoner dies in Chattogram

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Another Bawm prisoner of Chattogram Central Jail died after reportedly falling sick inside the prison early yesterday.

The deceased is Van Lal Roal Bawm, 35, a suspected member of the KNF in Bandarban, Md Iqbal Hossain, senior superintendent of Chattogram Central Jail, told The Daily Star.

He was arrested earlier in connection with two cases filed over the bank robberies allegedly carried out by the Kuki-Chin National Front in Bandarban district on April 2 and 3, last year.

The body will be handed over to his family after autopsy, said the jail super.

Iqbal said Lal Roal fell sick inside his prison cell around midnight and was taken to the prison hospital. He was then referred to Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH), where the doctors on duty pronounced him dead on arrival around 2:00am.

Officer-in-Charge of Panchlaish Police Station Md Solaiman told the Daily Star, "The body has been kept at the CMC morgue and the inquest was



With rain setting the scene, three Indian white-eyes enjoy a communal bath in Chattogram's Hazarikhil -- a ritual among birds to build social bonds. These tiny, olive-yellow birds are known for hanging upside down while foraging for nectar, fruit, and insects. Native to South and Southeast Asia, they thrive in forests, gardens, and urban greenery. At night, they huddle in shrubs or trees for warmth. Easily spotted by the white ring around their eyes, they are active, social, and often seen in flocks. Though listed as "Least Concern" by the IUCN, their dependence on tree cover makes habitat loss a silent threat.

PHOTO: KOMOL DAS

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Arrest the
culprits, spare
the innocent
Nahid urges govt after
Gopalganj violence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

National Citizen Party (NCP) Convenor Nahid Islam yesterday called on the government to refrain from harassing any ordinary resident of Gopalganj while demanding the arrest of those he called "fascist terrorists".

"We stand by the common people of Gopalganj. We urge the government to ensure that not even one ordinary person from Gopalganj is harassed. But the fascist terrorists must be arrested, each and every one of them."

Nahid made the remarks while addressing a rally at the Janata Bank intersection in Faridpur town held as part of the party's ongoing "July March to Build the Nation".

Referring to Wednesday's violence, the NCP leader said, "Our peaceful, pre-announced programme in Gopalganj was attacked. The fascists are still using Gopalganj as their safe haven. We've vowed to free the people of Gopalganj from Mujibism."

Nahid further said, "Awami

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Pedestrians walk on the street as vegetable hawkers occupy the entire pavement with their rickshaw-vans and crates of goods. The photo was taken in Azimpur area of the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Hunt for outdated vehicles from Sunday

TUHIN SHUBHRA
ADHIKARY

The government is set to launch a crackdown on outdated vehicles from Sunday in a bid to reduce road crashes and environmental pollution.

The move comes about a month after the government fixed the economic lifespan of buses and minibuses at 20 years, and goods-laden vehicles such as trucks and covered vans at 25 years.

As of May, 299,643 commercial vehicles -- including 85,198 buses and minibuses and 214,445 trucks, covered vans and tankers -- were registered with the BRTA.

Of them, 39,169 buses and minibuses and 41,140 trucks, covered vans and tankers are past their economic lifespan, according to BRTA data updated on July 16.

A significant number of the outdated vehicles are still operating, particularly in rural areas, said a BRTA official involved with the proceedings.

Against this backdrop, the BRTA on July 13 announced a nationwide drive starting July 20, which will continue day and night.

The operation will be jointly conducted by the BRTA, district administrations, police and transport owners' and workers' organisations, reads a letter signed by Hemayet Uddin, BRTA's deputy director for enforcement.

ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF COMMERCIAL VEHICLES ARE PAST THEIR LIFESPAN

SOURCE: BRTA

REGISTERED	OUTDATED
39,169	41,140
85,198	
Buses, minibuses	Trucks, vans, tankers

Contacted, Hemayet said 17 mobile courts will carry out the drive in divisional cities, including nine in the capital.

The BRTA has already issued letters to all police commissioners, deputy inspector generals, deputy commissioners and superintendents of police requesting them to conduct similar drives in their respective areas.

The vehicles seized during the drives will be dumped temporarily as the authorities have yet to finalise a guideline for scrapping outdated vehicles.

The BRTA has selected three locations for temporarily dumping the seized vehicles: the site of the Diabari cattle market, Purbachal Sector-13 and the Jhilmil Project area, according to Hemayet.

A draft scrapping guideline was prepared during the tenure of the previous government, said another BRTA official requesting anonymity.

But it had some shortcomings and has since been amended and sent to the ministry for further action.

It will take some more time as an inter-ministerial meeting needs to be held before the draft can be finalised, the official added.

Previously, many of the outdated vehicles returned to operation after a brief suspension.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Four arrested for rape of a 14-yr-old girl

A CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Police on Wednesday arrested four men over the rape of a 14-year-old girl in Khagrachhari's Sadar upazila on June 27.

The four -- Arman Hossain, 32; Iman Hossain, 25; Enayet Hossain, 35; and Saddam Hossain, 32 -- were arrested shortly after the girl's father filed a case against six named individuals with Sadar Police Station, said Arefin Jewel, superintendent of police in Khagrachhari.

"Four of the six accused have been arrested. We are trying to arrest the remaining two," he added.

The two still on the run are Md Munir Islam, 29, and Md Sohel Islam, 23.

Following allegations by locals that the suspects might be from BNP, MN Absar, general secretary of Khagrachhari BNP, said the accused are not involved with the party or its affiliates.

"These six individuals are not members or leaders of BNP," he said, adding, "Whoever they are, they should be brought to justice. We demand a fair and proper investigation."

Bachchu Mia, president of Bhaibanchhara Union BNP, said the six had previously been members of the party but were expelled on August 5 last year for maintaining communication with Awami League members.

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ELECTION OBSERVERS Minimum age lowered to 21

EC cancels registrations of 96
observers, unveils new policy

AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission yesterday revoked the registrations of all 96 local organisations that monitored the 12th national election.

The EC introduced "Election Observation Policy 2025" replacing the 2023 guidelines under which the 96 observer organisations had been registered.

Under this new policy, the minimum age requirement for local election observers has been lowered to 21 from 25 years.

However, the required educational qualification has been raised from SSC (Secondary School Certificate) to HSC (Higher Secondary Certificate).

EC's Director (Public Relations) Shariful Alam confirmed the matter to The Daily Star yesterday.

Ahead of the 12th national election, the EC had registered these 96 local election observer organisations in two phases.

The registration of an observer organisation remains valid for five years from the date of issuance; the registrations of these 96 organisations were set to expire towards the end of 2028.

Section 4 (6) of the new policy on the registration of observer organisations states that "any group that

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