

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 Mangla, 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 Peshkabil 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 -- Hashed 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

Deadliest day yet in quota protests

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surrounding areas; and one each in Badda, Savar, and Dhanmondi. A journalist of Dhaka Times, Mehedi 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.

Gopalganj reeling from four deaths

FROM PAGE 1

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 blocked public transport to a standstill.

Transport workers near Police Lines intersection said there were no passengers. Bus services on Gopalganj-Tekerhat, 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 Sharaf Uddin 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 been buried without autopsies,

death certificates, or official inquest reports.

Of them, clothing trader Dipta 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 Sohul 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 Dipta 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.

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 Nawngkhio 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.

Nawngkhio 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 Nawngkhio 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".

Nawngkhio 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.

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.

The statement also noted that the general public in Gopalganj showed restraint and cooperated with the army.

Those who had taken shelter at the office of the superintendent of police were later relocated to Khulna under the army's supervision.

"The Bangladesh Army remains steadfast in its commitment to upholding the country's sovereignty and ensuring public safety," the ISPR said, urging people not to pay heed to rumours.

On Wednesday, violence broke out in the southern district, ancestral home of Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina, when members of AL tried to disrupt a rally by the National Citizens Party (NCP), which is made up of students who spearheaded the unrest that toppled the leader last year. At least 4 people were killed and dozens were injured in the clashes.

Meanwhile, the Chief Adviser's Press Wing yesterday released a police report detailing Wednesday's events and the background behind the violence.

It said the NCP rally in Gopalganj was part of the newly formed party's

month-long "July March to Build the Nation" programme to mark the July Uprising.

Around 10:30am, NCP leaders, including Nahid Islam, Akhtar Hossain, and others, departed from Barisal for the rally. By then, security forces were already deployed.

However, around 9:30am, suspected Awami League activists attacked police at Ulpur in the sadar upazila, injuring three officers and torching a vehicle.

At 11:00am, another group reportedly blocked the Gopalganj-Tekerhat road by felling trees and setting them ablaze. The vehicle of the Upazila Nirbahi Officer was vandalised during the obstruction.

Meanwhile, Awami League supporters blocked roads in other areas, including Kotalipara and Satpara, it said.

At 1:40pm, before the rally began, 50-60 activists of Chhatra League, which has been banned by the government, attacked the stage with crude bombs and weapons. They vandalised the stage and chairs.

Despite the assault, NCP leaders took the stage at 2:01pm.

Meanwhile, violence spread to other parts of the district, it added.

The NCP rally concluded around 2:50pm. As the leaders departed under security escort, their motorcade was again intercepted at Gopalganj Launch Terminal by another group. The attackers reportedly used sticks, bricks, and sharp weapons against the police, army, and rally participants. Several government facilities, including the district jail, were also attacked simultaneously.

The police report said that four people were killed, and over 50, including 45 police members and several journalists, were injured in the clashes.

Joint forces initially escorted the NCP leaders to the Gopalganj SP's office and later to Khulna via Bagerhat.

The report also said that around 7:30pm, a group of people allegedly took away the bodies from the hospital to prevent autopsies.

The situation in Gopalganj is now under control, the report said.

Voter sign-up now open

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EC sources said the updated supplementary voter list, which might include another 44 lakh new voters, would be published soon.

Until March 2, there were 12.37 crore voters in the country.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on July 9 ordered the authorities to complete the preparations for the upcoming national election by December.

The polls are likely to take place in

February or April, he told a meeting with law enforcers in the capital.

On June 13, after a meeting between Yunus and Tarique Rahman in London, where the BNP acting chairman suggested that polls could be held before Ramadan, Yunus said it was indeed possible to hold the polls the week before the month of fasting if all preparations are completed.

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

23 more pushed in from India

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Twenty-three people were pushed into Bangladesh from India through the Malkadanga 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 Malkadanga 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

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 Tasfia 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 Majlish 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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Star wins two accolades at WAN-IFRA Digital Media Awards



STAR REPORT

The Daily Star has earned regional recognition at the South Asian Digital 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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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.

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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 Sohail Taj met with the chief adviser to invite him to join the birth centenary ceremony of their father.

PHOTO: PTD

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

Previously, only parents, brothers, and sisters were allowed to donate organs. With the new ordinance, nieces and nephews will also be eligible donors.

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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 Bhuttu Chattar.

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

	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



PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

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

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.

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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 filters, 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 Refaat 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

বারডেম নার্সিং কলেজ
১২২, কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম এভিনিউ, শাহাবাগ, ঢাকা

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

অধ্যক্ষ, উপাধ্যক্ষ, প্রভাষক ও ক্লিনিক্যাল ইনস্ট্রাক্টর পদে নিয়োগ প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে অগ্রাহী বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট থেকে দরখাস্ত আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। বিস্তারিত জানতে www.bnc-bd.org অথবা www.birdembd.org এ ভিজিট করুন অথবা ০১৩০৭-৯৮৮৭৩৫ নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

D-54 চেয়ারম্যান গভর্ণিং বডি, বারডেম নার্সিং কলেজ

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TENDER NOTICE

01. Sealed tenders are invited from bona-fide vendors for Supply and Installation of Air Conditioners at the Main Branch and Shantinagar Branch of BASIC Bank Limited

02. The participating companies must have at least 5 years proven experience of successfully Supplying, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of Air Conditioners in any Scheduled Bank/Bangladesh Bank or must have previous record of successfully Supplying, Installing, Testing and Commissioning of Air Conditioners in BASIC Bank Limited. Copy of previous work order(s) must be supplied along with the tender as proof in this regard.

03. A pay order of Tk. 45,000/- (Forty Five thousand Taka) has to be submitted with the tender in the name of BASIC Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka as earnest money. Earnest money can be forfeited for reasons mentioned in the tender schedule.

04. The tender document may be obtained from Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of BASIC Bank Limited between 10:00 A.M. and 05:00 P.M. of all working days at a cost of Tk.1,000/- (Non-Refundable) only. No tender document will be sold after 05:00 P.M. of 06/08/2025.

05. Sealed tenders have to be dropped in the tender box kept at Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of BASIC Bank Limited within 07/08/2025 by 03:00 P.M., and the tenders will be opened at 03:30 P.M. on the same day in presence of bidders, if any.

06. Other terms and conditions can be found in the tender document.

Deputy General Manager
Common Services Division, Head Office, Dhaka

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.

Mamunul 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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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 #B, 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

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/B-PL/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 submit:
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 bplt20@bcc-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: bplt20@bcc-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 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

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.



at the mall, days after it opened in Kut – around 160 kilometres (100 miles) southeast of Baghdad.

Footage shared on social media showed people including children standing on the roof, calling for help.

Ali Kadhim, 51, has been shuttling between the mall and the main hospital, where the victims were taken, looking for his cousin, who is missing with his wife and three children.

Back at the mall, he waited anxiously as rescuers searched for victims in the wreckage, with an ambulance on standby.

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,

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

demanding they withdraw and saying Israel aimed to protect Syria's Druze minority.

More than 516 people have been killed since the weekend in violent clashes in Syria's southern Sweida province, a war monitor said yesterday, updating an earlier toll.

Describing Syria's new rulers as barely disguised jihadists, Israel has bombed repeatedly this year, saying it will not allow Syrian government forces to deploy forces into areas

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 Romanelli 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 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 Houthis 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.

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

used as an excuse to create a situation where the government's ability to hold the election could be questioned.

Criticising the interim government's failure to maintain law and order, they also said the failure has allowed fallen fascist forces to re-emerge as part of a "blueprint to disrupt the democratic process".

In a statement issued after the meeting, the party said the government's failure has contributed to the rise of mobocracy, murder, mugging, robbery, extortion and other criminal activities.

"The incompetence and indifference of the concerned departments of the

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

বাইবির দীক্ষা: সবার জন্য উন্মুক্ত কর্মমুখী, গণমুখী ও জীবনব্যাপী শিক্ষা

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

GID-1602

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-serving 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.



বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক
(সেন্ট্রাল ব্যাংক অব বাংলাদেশ)
প্রধান কার্যালয়
মতিঝিল, ঢাকা-১০০০
বাংলাদেশ

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটি সচিবালয়

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর-৭৪/২০২৫

তারিখঃ ১ জুলাই ১৪৩২
১৬ জুলাই ২০২৫

২০২১ সাল ভিত্তিক 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিস্ট্রেটর' (গ্রেড-০৯) (Job ID-10200) এর ২টি শূন্য পদে ৩য় পর্যায় নিয়োগ প্রদান প্রসঙ্গে

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটির তত্ত্বাবধানে সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি-এ ২০২১ সাল ভিত্তিক 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিস্ট্রেটর' (৯ম গ্রেড) (Job Id-10200) এর ০৩টি শূন্য পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে এ সচিবালয়ের বিগত ১২/০২/২০২৩ তারিখের নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর- ১৮/২০২৩ এর প্রেক্ষিতে অনুষ্ঠিত লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় প্রাপ্ত নম্বরের ভিত্তিতে মোধাক্রমানুসারে প্রণীত প্যানেল হতে নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত সরকারি বিধিবিধান অনুসরণপূর্বক ৩য় পর্যায়ে প্রাথমিকভাবে নির্বাচিত ০২ (দুই) জন প্রার্থীর 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।

স্বাক্ষরিত/-
মিজানুর রহমান আকন
পরিচালক (বিএসসিএস)
ও
সদস্য-সচিব, বিএসসি

সূত্র নং ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২৫-১৮০০

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা গেজেট হযরত শাহজাং মন্দির দ্বারা প্রকাশিত।
কোনো অধিবেশন থাকলে ১৬২০৬ নম্বরে কোন কাল।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশিত ফলাফলের সংশোধনের প্রয়োজন দেখা দিলে বিএসসিএস তা সংশোধনের অধিকার সংরক্ষণ করে।

তারিখ: ১৬/০৭

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 daylight 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 Ulpur 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 instil 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 underage girls, as per a March 2024 report by the Bangladeshi Ovbashi 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



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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, Nagorik 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

actors, having their voices replaced by those very actors constitutes the worst kind of substitution.

This misrepresentation becomes particularly dangerous for the youth because it grants political legitimacy to actors they neither trust nor engage with. These actors are then allowed to make decisions that will profoundly shape the younger generation's future. When youth disengagement is rooted in political disillusionment, replacing their silence with the voices of untrusted proxies only compounds the problem. The result may be policies that not only ignore the younger generation's needs and aspirations but also deepen their political alienation. In such a context, the appearance of inclusive dialogue serves only to mask a deeper democratic deficit.

How Iran's authoritarian rule became its greatest vulnerability



Dr Sayeed Ahmed is a consulting engineer and CEO of Bayaside Analytics, 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-Shakdam, a French-born journalist who reportedly spent years infiltrating Iran's top circles, highlights this chilling vulnerability.

Perez-Shakdam 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 Rasoulof'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 Behshash Sanaeieha 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

Rather than earning the youth's 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.

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 borne 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 moments 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 obostha?*" ("Hey! How are things?").

CROSSWORD
BY THOMAS JOSEPH

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

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7-11

WEDNESDAY'S ANSWERS

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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 Samity.

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 “Mishi 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 *Binimoy* 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—imagining 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 Qorashani 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.

Alcock’s costume blends classic comic elements with a brown trench coat, nodding to the *Woman of Tomorrow* comic arc. Introduced in *Superman’s* post-credit scene, her volatile nature contrasts David Corenswet’s Superman, promising an unpredictable take on the Kryptonian legacy.

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 USITR Jamieson Greer.

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

largest export market, while it imports goods valued at over \$2 billion. The high tariffs have caused significant concern among exporters, particularly in the garment industry, who fear losing competitiveness.

President Trump on Wednesday said he intends to send a single letter telling more than 150 countries what tariff rate they will face, according to a report by Politico.

“It’s all going to be the same for everyone, for that group,” Trump told reporters during a meeting with the Bahrain Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa at the White House, as the Politico reported.

“They’re not big countries, and they don’t do that much business. Not like the ones we’ve agreed with, like China, like Japan.”

Currently, all countries are paying an additional baseline tariff of 10 percent that Trump set in April. Trump has previously indicated the new baseline could be 15 to 20 percent but did not mention a tariff rate.

Trump has already sent out roughly two dozen letters informing individual trading partners like the European Union, Japan and South Korea of the tariff rate they will face effective August 1, the politico said.

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 backtracked 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.

Four arrested

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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

FROM PAGE 12

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 Chattar near Gate No 1 railway crossing in the town.



The NCP rally at Rajbari town yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Nahid said, “We carry their ideals and dreams of the brave children of Rajbari, who were martyred in July. We know we cannot be defeated because we know who our enemies and allies are. Our goal is to build a new Bangladesh.”

Also speaking at the rally, Hasnat Abdullah, chief organiser (south) of NCP, slammed certain media outlets.

“Those so-called intellectuals and pseudo-analysts sitting in Dhaka and the media have legitimised yesterday’s attack on us in Gopalganj.

“The Awami League’s cultural and media wings must also be resisted, not

just the party itself. We have repeatedly pointed out the role of Bashundhara Media. That outlet employs paid intellectuals and pseudo-liberals 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 Akhter Hossen, Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwari, and other local leaders.

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

Teen stalker kills 2 women

FROM PAGE 12

The deceased have been identified as Laili Bewa, 80, and Habiba Yasmin, 21, according to police.

The women were reportedly trying to save Laili’s 16-year-old granddaughter from an attack and were fatally stabbed in the process.

“[The suspect] was enraged after the girl rejected his advances and stabbed her inside her home. When

her grandmother and sister-in-law intervened, he attacked them with a knife and shot them,” said Sub-inspector Gaziul Haque of Bogura Sadar Police Station.

The girl sustained multiple stab wounds and is currently undergoing treatment at a local hospital in critical condition.

Police said preparations are underway to file a case.

not open fire, who did?”

The rights body believes that without a clear and credible explanation, such contradictions will only deepen public confusion, fear, and mistrust in the administration.

ASK also demanded proper treatment for the injured, prevention of harassment of innocent people, and measures to prevent further human rights violations.

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



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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 finals. 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 Chunnun. “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. The heroes of 1979 are proud too. Former midfielder Bablu reflected: “There was no real culture of women's football here. “Only the federation has nurtured them over the past 15 years. Back then, the same girl would play football, cricket, athletics, handball – everything. But now, after 15-20 years, these girls have come a long way. “People said they couldn't even kick a ball, but they've become SAFF champions and now, Asian Cup qualifiers. It's a point of pride for me as a Bangladeshi footballer. These girls, coming from the poorest of homes, have earned this with their sweat and talent. History is made – and they've made it.” 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. Chunnun 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.” Chunnun 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. **The Daily Star [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 Parna 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.

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.

BANGLADESH SQUAD FOR PAK T20Is

Liton 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 Mahedi Hasan, Nasum Ahmed, Taskin Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman, Shoriful Islam, Tanzim Hasan Sakib, Mohammad Saifuddin.

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 Liton 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

on Wednesday.

Liton 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," Liton 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.



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 Hossain (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 Kluivert, 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 Paltan.

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



PHOTO: AI GENERATED

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.





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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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

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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Teen stalker kills 2 women in their home Suspect arrested, murder weapon recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

The Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday detained the prime suspect in a case filed over the killing of an elderly woman and her granddaughter-in-law in Bogura.

The accused, a 17-year-old, was arrested from the passport office area in the town, said Inspector Iqbal Bahar of DB police.

Following his arrest, police recovered the murder weapon, a knife, from a water body in the area, he said.

However, during the recovery operation, tension mounted as angry locals gathered around the police microbus, demanding that the boy be handed over to them.

Police quickly left the scene with him before the situation escalated further, a witness said.

The murders took place around 8:30pm on Wednesday at Islampur Harigari under Bogura municipality.

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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 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	41,140
OUTDATED	
39,169	
85,198	214,445
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 inspectors 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.

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

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener 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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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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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

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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

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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