

## Stronger laws, awareness

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tougher enforcement, regulation of street vendors, and corporate social responsibility.

Mostafizur Rahman of Waste Concern stressed accountability from households, as well as from policymakers.

PRISM Bangladesh Director Rakib Uddin Bhuiyan said waste management is a shared responsibility.

Dr Jasim Uddin of Dhaka University suggested integrating waste education into curricula and exploring bio-based energy technologies.

Mahbubur Alam, executive engineer at Dhaka South City Corporation, said, "Without citizen awareness, collection and

disposal efforts will fall short."

Sanitation worker Mohammad Ali Hossain said people continue dumping waste in streets and drains. "Awareness campaigns are needed, and where PRISM cannot operate, city corporations must act."

Speaking as chief guest, Mohammad Azaz, administrator of Dhaka North City Corporation, proposed developing policy-based guidelines and a realistic, actionable roadmap.

"The question is: where do we start? We must set short, mid, and long-term goals and clearly define responsibilities at the city level."

He emphasised the need for prioritising

waste segregation but acknowledged public resistance to locating secondary transfer stations near residences.

Azaz proposed creating "Waste Parks" where private companies can operate and contribute to a formal waste management industry. "We need a unified strategy, increased campaign funding, and long-term planning."

He called for the formation of a dedicated police unit under city corporations to enforce fines and waste management laws — a proposal already under consideration by DNCC.

ESDO President Shahriar Hossain and Rakibul Hasan, a Keraniganj social worker, also spoke.

## Two-thirds

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yesterday.

Prof Tanvir Hasan, head of the research team, and Limia Dewan, technical adviser, said the survey included 414 persons with neurodevelopmental disabilities from 33 districts.

The participants included people with autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

The researchers also conducted in-depth interviews with 37 individuals, including carers and caregivers, and reviewed 49 policy documents.

According to the study, 157 participants (around 38 percent) had ever been enrolled in school at any point in their lifetime, with most reaching only the preschool or primary levels.

Of those, around 61 percent were male. Most of them (69 percent) attended mainstream schools that didn't have specialised support.

Around 20 percent went to special schools, while only 8.71 percent reported having access to a special educational plan at their schools, shows the study.

Among the 278 participants aged 18 and above, only 16.48 percent had reported engaging in any kind of work during their lifetime.

Of those employed, 88.71 percent were male and 11.29 percent female. The most common occupation was day labour (41 percent).

About 33 percent of participants reported having coexisting health conditions, the most common being gastrointestinal issues, followed by epilepsy and asthma.

Among them, a total of

73 participants had sought healthcare services they raised concerns about the quality of care, citing short consultation times and negative attitudes from healthcare providers.

The survey also found that only 11 percent of participants used assistive devices such as spectacles, hearing aids, walking sticks, wheelchairs, and prosthetics.

The study made several sector-wise recommendations, including the need to make healthcare, education, and training infrastructure more accessible for persons with disabilities.

It also called for a comprehensive, rights-based approach involving stronger policy enforcement, cross-sector collaboration, and community engagement.

Speaking at the event, Social Welfare Adviser Sharmin Murshid stressed the need to expand the resource pool, citing a severe lack of skilled manpower in the sector.

She also called for stronger collaboration among organisations working with people with disabilities.

Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director of CAMPE; Prof Mushtaque Chowdhury, senior adviser to James P Grant School; and Mahmud Hasan, chief executive of Apasen UK and Apasen International, also spoke at the programme, among others.

Several persons with neurodevelopmental disabilities also shared their experiences at the programme, which was moderated by Bulbul Hasan, head of communication and policy at Apasen UK and Apasen International.

## Trafficked, tortured

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from BRAC, they returned to Bangladesh on July 9 — alive, but empty-handed.

"We've lost everything — our land, our savings. All that remains is debt. I want justice and compensation," Tanjir demanded.

The local broker, Rafizul, was arrested and is now in jail.

Tanjir's story is alarmingly common.

Md Alamgir Hossain, 45, from Noakhali, was also trafficked to Libya in 2022. After two years, a militia group abducted him and sold him to a Bangladeshi mafia group.

His family had already paid Tk 3.5 lakh to send him abroad. But to save his life, they were forced to borrow an additional Tk 5.5 lakh to meet the ransom demand.

Alamgir finally returned home in February this year with support from the IOM, the Bangladesh Embassy in Libya, and BRAC.

His brother filed a case in January this year seeking punishment for the traffickers and compensation. Two local brokers were arrested, but they are currently out on bail.

There are many more such stories.

According to the Monitoring Cell for Combating Trafficking in Human, Police Headquarters, 10,917 human trafficking cases were filed between 2009 and January 2025.

Of these, 5,450 cases are still pending, while 5,467 have been resolved — a number migration experts call alarmingly low.

In this period, a total of 7,517 cases were registered involving 13,424 trafficking

victims. 10,579 victims were rescued, and 14,583 traffickers were arrested — though most are now out on bail. Only 247 cases have resulted in conviction.

In 2023 alone, 1,589 new cases were registered. The same number was filed in 2024. Despite that, only 109 cases were disposed of, and just 345 individuals were convicted.

In January 2025, another 93 cases were filed.

Shariful Hasan, associate director of BRAC's Migration and Youth Platform, warned that the trafficking landscape has shifted significantly over the last decade.

"Bangladesh has ranked number one for the past three years among countries whose citizens try to enter Europe by crossing the Mediterranean Sea," he said.

"Trafficking is happening in the name of migration. While cases are being filed, they're not being resolved because the relevant government agencies are not treating them as a priority."

He said the lack of teamwork among ministries and law enforcement agencies is one of the main reasons behind the slow progress.

"If this continues, our future migration prospects will collapse. Destination countries will stop hiring Bangladeshi workers, which will severely impact our economy," he warned.

Tasneem Siddiqui, founding chair of the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), pointed to the lack of specialised trafficking tribunals as a major obstacle.

"These tribunals exist in only a few locations. Most

districts don't have one, which delays proceedings," she explained.

"Additionally, many victims and witnesses don't feel safe testifying due to fear of retaliation. That's another major reason for the slow pace of justice."

She urged the government to establish more tribunals, ensure effective witness protection, and improve coordination between agencies to expedite justice.

## Classes

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newly appointed Vice Chancellor Professor Md Maksud Helali officially instructed the resumption of academic activities and issued a formal notice.

Rahatul Islam, a civil engineering student, said, "We just want to return to our studies. All we hope for is a stable academic environment."

On February 18, clashes broke out on the campus centring the demand to ban student politics on the campus.

Following the unrest, both the VC and pro-VC were removed from office. On May 1, Cuet Professor Dr Hazrat Ali was appointed as interim VC, but he resigned on May 22 amid opposition from the teachers.

Kuet remained closed for 160 consecutive days — from February 18 to July 28 — with all academic activities suspended.

On July 24, the government appointed Helali, a retired Buet professor from the Department of Mechanical Engineering, as Kuet's new VC.

## Handa to invest \$250m create

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Investment Development Authority), BEZA (Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority) and BEPZA (Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority)," said Han Chun.

BDA, BEZA and BEPZA officials said this is one of the largest single Chinese investments in Bangladesh's textile

sector.

The chief adviser welcomed the investment plan of Handa Industries Ltd. "You take the leadership in Chinese investment in Bangladesh's textile sector and encourage other Chinese investors to come here," he said.

Han Chun also presented the chief adviser with a design of their factory that they are going

to set up in the Mirsarai economic zone.

The land lease agreement for the garment factory in Mirsarai will be signed on Wednesday, with an investment value of 80 million USD in phase 1.

The finalisation of land and other facilities for phase 2 is in process now and is expected to be finished by the end of 2025.

Meanwhile, 60,87,739 new voters have been added

and over 20 lakh deceased voters have been removed from the list, according to the EC's report on its NID wing.

On January 20, the EC began the process of

updating the voter list by collecting information through door-to-door visits.

Among them, a total of

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## EC to publish final voter list

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