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Anatomy of BGB SHOOTINGS in Rampura

A joint investigation by The Daily Star and Tech Global Institute reveals how a Dhaka neighbourhood became a hotspot of state-sanctioned killings on July 19, 2024

MASHFIQ MIZAN and

NAIMUR RAHMAN

It was 6:4pm on Friday, July 19, 2024. Two Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) personnel were advancing into Banasree G Block in Dhaka.

One, a taller man in a red helmet, carried a shield and a stick. The other, shorter and wearing a tactical vest with "BGB" stamped in bold white letters, carried a 7.62mm Type 56 rifle, the Chinese version of the

his rifle down Road 1 of G Block.

That bullet most likely took the life of 14-year-old Ashiqul Islam, as narrated by two eyewitnesses, and is indicative through photographs and videos from the day.

A single round, most likely from a Type 56 rifle, like the one the officer and other BGB members were carrying, entered below his left ear and tore through the other side of his head.

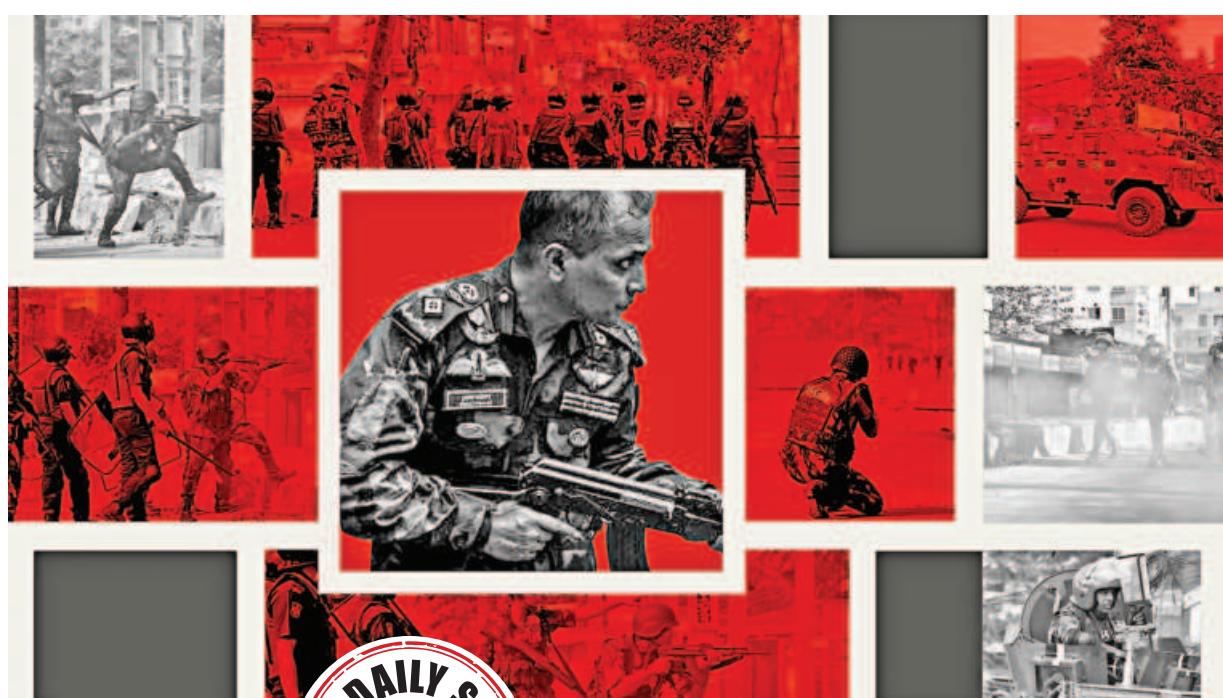
ground identified him as Lt Col Redwanul Islam.

Shah Alam, a young businessman from Banasree, was with Ashiqul when he was shot.

"The incident happened between Asr and Maghrib prayers," Alam said.

This timeline matches with the metadata of the video, which records a short-statured BGB officer opening fire in their direction at 6:41pm.

"I met Ashiqul sometime after



AK variant, according to independently verified footage, and supporting assessment by weapons experts.

Nine seconds into the footage, the shorter officer opens fire. He fires once to his left, then pivots, takes a few steps forward, and takes another shot to his right.

Another picture captured moments later reveals a man lying motionless in front of a shop on the G Block avenue, exactly where the officer had fired the second shot.

In a second footage, the officer repositions himself, first taking a firing stance on G Block avenue to shoot towards Road 1 of F Block. He then moves again, aiming and firing



INVESTIGATION

While forensic in-depth analyses confirmed a match by comparing footage from Banasree and Rampura,

indicating that the same suspected shooter was present in both locations. The Daily Star independently verified his name and identity. Sources in intelligence agencies, the International Crimes Tribunal, and journalists who were present on the

I joined the protest in Banasree following Juma prayers on July 19," Shah Alam recalled. "Though just a kid, he was the most courageous among us. Braving live bullets, he often used to run around, have a peep, and provide information on police and BGB movement to us."

SEE PAGE 8



Top BNP leaders arrive at the party's Nayapaltan headquarters on a truck to take part in a victory rally. The BNP and its affiliate bodies held similar rallies across the country yesterday to commemorate the historic achievement of the July uprising last year.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

CA office writes to EC for polls in February

EC working to declare polls schedule in December

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Adviser's Office yesterday sent a letter asking the Election Commission to complete all necessary preparations for the parliamentary polls before Ramadan in February 2026.

With this letter, the government has formally requested the Election Commission to arrange the election, the CA's press wing said in a press release.

Unlike before, there is no political pressure. In fact, now there will be pressure to work professionally and neutrally.

CEC AMM NASIR UDDIN

In the letter to EC's senior secretary, Chief Adviser's Principal Secretary M Siraz Uddin Miah requested the EC to take necessary measures to organise a free, fair, peaceful, and festive national election of expected standard within the mentioned time frame.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, in his address to the nation on July Mass Uprising Day on Tuesday, said he would write to Chief Election Commission AMM Nasir Uddin, requesting that the EC hold the general election before Ramadan in February 2026.

Referring to the speech, the letter mentioned that the chief adviser had instructed to immediately begin all preparations and

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

BSRM

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How people in Dhaka enjoy rain

REHNUMA SHAHREEN

There's something about rain in Dhaka. It doesn't come politely. It arrives in sheets, in sideways gusts, soaking your bag, your back, and your plans. But once you let go of the instinct to rush for shelter, there's a certain honesty to it -- the kind that peels off layers. You notice the city differently when it's wet and slow. You notice yourself.

Most of us don't look for perfect spots to enjoy the rain, we just find ourselves in them. And yet, when asked, people had places. Some very specific, others more like moods. A few were open and sprawling. Others were tucked away, behind staircases, on quiet rooftops, or through narrow alleys no one else cares to find.

Lakes and parks

Ramna, Suhrawardy Udyana, Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Park -- these aren't secret spots, but they carry a certain silence when it rains. The kind of silence that even Dhaka respects. The trees get heavy. The benches stay wet long after the clouds leave.

"As an introvert, I like places with fewer people," Yasir, a student, shared. "In the storm, the rain in front of the glass tower at Suhrawardy Udyana, mixed with the light and wind, creates a dreamy surreal scene."

"One of my favourite spots is from the deck of Bardhara Lake," said Tasmia, an architect. "The spot is secluded by tall trees, almost invisible from the roads and apartment windows. And the view? Heavenly. Sitting on the wooden seat of the deck -- I plug in my earphones, watch the raindrops falling on the lake as the



PHOTO: STAR

city blurs into the background!"

Muddy playgrounds

Of course, not everyone wants silence. Some go looking for a mess. Starting from a dedicated playground to a random empty space in a park, you'll find boys chasing the rain as if it owes them something.

Kanon, a football enthusiast, said during his admission days, when nothing felt good, playing football in the rain at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Park was the only thing that made him feel alive. "I was a loser in exams, but a hero on the field. I can still score six-seven goals even in rain. You can't really know joy in this city until you've kicked a muddy football barefoot."

Campus rain hits different

Rain changes campuses too. It softens everything. Arguments pause. Crushes walk a little closer. Umbrellas become shared territories. Mishkat, a student at Dhaka University, put it simply: "As a woman, I feel most relaxed and free when I get wet in my own hall. I enjoy the rain in the open courtyard of Sufia Kamal Hall."

Chaita, another student, recalled, "TSC in the rain, swimming pool in the rain, shingara from Chhayanaut's canteen during rainy evenings -- it was all fun. I loved watching the rain from the Chhayanaut balcony."

Rooftops and other escapes

Then there are the personal spots. The ones we don't post about. Rooftops,

stairwells, tea stalls under corrugated tin roofs and many more.

Niloy, an engineer, prefers the indoors, but not entirely. "I find rainy days oddly comforting that Dhaka usually doesn't offer. On days like these, I like going to music events and art exhibitions, or just enjoying some warm food and a cup of tea."

"For me it's about the mental state I'm in," said Rafid. "Sometimes, I like to just sit at a random tea stall during rain and watch the shift -- how everything suddenly looks different. There's movement, but also stillness. The city sort of repositions itself."

Some people don't want to share their spots. And that's fair. Rain can be deeply private. It reminds people of lovers they haven't spoken to in years, or friends they don't call anymore. It asks you to remember things, even when you don't want to.



306 Bangladeshis held by Malaysian immigration dept

STAR REPORT

The Malaysian Immigration Department yesterday detained 306 Bangladeshi nationals and one Nepalese citizen for alleged immigration violations, according to a report by Malaysian state news agency Bernama.

All detainees will face further investigation before being transferred to the Jawi Immigration Detention Depot, the report added, quoting Immigration Department Director-General Datuk Zakaria Shaaban.

He was speaking to reporters after leading a raid at a factory in Simpang Ampat, Penang.

There are around 800,000 Bangladeshis working in Malaysia.

However, allegations of labour exploitation persist, both during recruitment and later by employers and agents.

Malaysia suspended Bangladeshi worker

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

EC seeks details of magistrates in last 3 polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has requested detailed personal information on magistrates who were deployed during the national elections held in 2014, 2018, and 2024.

On Monday, letters, signed by Deputy Secretary Mohammad Monir Hossain, were sent to the divisional commissioners of Dhaka and Chattogram, as well as all deputy commissioners across the country, seeking information under eight categories.

The EC has made the move at the request of the Police Bureau of Investigation.

The data requested includes each magistrate's full name, parents' names, permanent and present addresses, national ID number, passport number, and mobile phone number.

The three polls in question had drawn

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Govt to shuffle the top cops by lottery to curb polls bias

FROM PAGE 1

including the army and police, and Ansar, will be deployed during the upcoming general election.

According to insiders, the meeting discussed the possibility of pulling the armed forces back to the barracks for a few months and then redeploying them before the polls schedule is announced.

The home adviser told the meeting that the government believes the law and order situation is gradually improving, and if the trend continues, it will consider withdrawing the armed forces, added the meeting sources.

A meeting source told The Daily Star, "Although the issue was discussed, any decision in this regard will have to come from the chief adviser."

The meeting, convened to finalise action plans for law enforcement to ensure smooth conduct of the upcoming polls, was participated by the Special assistant to the chief adviser (for the home ministry), the principal secretary to the chief adviser, the senior secretary of the public administration ministry, the senior secretary of the home ministry, the finance secretary, the information

secretary, and the senior secretary of the Election Commission, along with secretaries from at least 11 ministries and divisions.

The meeting was also attended by the inspector general of police (IGP), the director generals of Border Guard Bangladesh, Ansar, and Coast Guard, and a representative from the Armed Forces Division. According to sources, Rapid Action Battalion was not invited at the meeting.

The CA office yesterday wrote to the Election Commission, asking it to complete all necessary preparations for holding the polls in February, as announced by Chief Adviser Prof Yunus in his address to the nation on Tuesday.

Following CA's announcement, Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin said the election schedule may be unveiled in early December, and in that case, reshuffle of the SPs and OCs may take place in November.

At yesterday's meeting, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam observed that some field administration officials tend to act in favour of certain candidates.

Agreeing with the observation, Mokhles Ur Rahman, senior secretary of the public administration ministry,

said officials will be repeatedly cautioned about this during the election training sessions.

The Election Commission monitors polling centers through CCTV cameras during elections. However, in the upcoming election, the chief adviser himself is expected to be present at his office to monitor the situation via CCTVs, according to discussions at the meeting.

Meeting sources said the chief adviser has instructed the home ministry to speed up the ongoing recruitment process under its jurisdiction, aiming to deploy the newly appointed personnel to the field after short-term training.

This directive comes in the view of the Election Commission's plan to announce the polls schedule in December.

At the meeting, instructions were also given to complete the training of all government officials from election-related offices and agencies without delay. The home adviser said no separate training allowance should be necessary for government officials participating in the training.

The meeting also discussed withdrawing 21 DCs who were

recently promoted to the rank of joint secretary from field duties by next week. Typically, officers with the rank of deputy secretary serve as DCs.

According to sources, the meeting discussed receiving the list of polling agents several days before the election day, rather than on the day before, as is currently practised.

The meeting also stressed the need to ensure that polling agents do not leave the centres during voting hours. Additionally, they will not be allowed to approach the booths too closely while on duty, to prevent them from identifying which symbol a voter is choosing. The idea of setting up separate booths for voters under the age of 30 was also discussed.

The home boss asked the information secretary about the ministry's actions regarding the spread of fake news from various platforms. He requested the ministry to launch campaigns to increase voter interest ahead of the elections.

He also instructed relevant officials to devise necessary strategies to maintain heightened vigilance regarding the possibility of a major political party boycotting the upcoming parliamentary elections.

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In the statement, Fakhrul said BNP welcomes the July Declaration.

"BNP believes that the promises made by political parties in this declaration will begin the journey towards a new democratic Bangladesh. It will create a chance to build a truly progressive and prosperous Bangladesh based on equality, values, and justice."

Responding to queries on their objections about two "student-advisers", the BNP leader said, "The work of Prof Yunus shows that he won't do anything in the future that would make the election questionable."

In a statement, Gono Odhikar Parishad said they would boycott the July Declaration if the background of the July uprising is not included.

Party General Secretary Md Rashed Khan said, "The movement against discrimination of 2024 began in demand for reinstating the 2018 circular abolishing the quota system."

These matters must be resolved clearly before the election."

Meanwhile, BNP called upon all other parties and people to come forward to ensure a successful election and to build an effective parliament.

BNP Secretary General Mirza

Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said the party

CA office writes to EC

FROM PAGE 1

institutional arrangements in this regard.

In the context of people not being able to vote in 15 years, the chief adviser emphasised making the upcoming election a memorable day of joyous voting.

The letter also informed the EC of the government's full commitment to providing all necessary support for organising a desired free, fair, peaceful, and festive election, alongside the importance of using appropriate technology.

Earlier yesterday, CEC Nasir said the Election Commission was preparing to announce the schedule in December so that the parliamentary polls can be held in February next year as declared by Yunus.

Speaking with reporters at the EC headquarters in the capital, he said, "Despite the challenges of holding an election in February, we are moving ahead with our preparations. There will be no shortcomings on our part."

CEC Nasir said, "The election schedule may be announced in early December. The road map will be revealed in phases," he said.

"Over the next month, we will hold discussions with political parties, civil society, media, and other stakeholders," the CEC said, adding they want the media to play a role in making the election more transparent.

The CEC also said they were considering revising the media guidelines based on journalists' feedback.

The EC aims to complete tasks like voter registration, training of officials, and procurement of election materials by September, according to him.

About delimitation of parliamentary constituencies, the CEC said, "A draft has been published. After receiving objections and holding hearings, we will make adjustments

where necessary. The work is being done impartially, scientifically, and free from influence."

Regarding the registration of new political parties, he said, "The process is ongoing. We will make decisions after document verification, scrutiny, and hearing objections. Our goal is to complete this process by September."

The CEC said their goal is to ensure a level playing field and have instructed deputy commissioners, SPs, the administration, police, DGFI, and NSI to work impartially and without political bias.

"Unlike before, there is no political pressure. In fact, now there will be pressure to work professionally and neutrally," he said.

"Restoring voter confidence and bringing them back to polling centres have become a major challenge as they've lost faith in the EC, the electoral process."

"The EC's goal is to hold a participatory election -- one where political parties and voters can freely participate. That's why we will launch a massive awareness campaign," Nasir said.

The CEC warned about the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI), saying, "Fake news, doctored videos, and false propaganda are now major concerns. I'm not worried about law and order as much as I am about the misuse and abuse of AI. Every day, it's being used for spreading disinformation."

When asked about the role of returning officers in past national elections, the CEC said, "We are giving this matter serious thought. Measures are being taken to ensure that those who were previously biased remain neutral this time."

Replying to another query, he said the Awami League as a whole cannot participate, since its political activities have been banned, but individuals may run as independent candidates and supporters can cast their votes.

Trump raises India tariffs

FROM PAGE 16

prepares for his first visit to China in over seven years, suggesting a potential realignment in alliances as relations with Washington fray.

India's national security adviser was in Moscow yesterday, media in New Delhi reported, coinciding with US envoy Steve Witkoff's visit.

Last week, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent warned China that continued Russian oil purchases could trigger new tariffs, as Washington prepares for the expiry of a US-China tariff ceasefire on August 12.

Trade between the United States and India, the world's biggest and fifth largest economies, respectively, is worth over \$190 billion.

The increased duties place Indian exporters at a 30-35% disadvantage versus trade rivals in Vietnam, Bangladesh and Japan.

"We still have a window," said a senior Indian official, requesting anonymity. "The fact that the new tariffs take effect in 21 days signals the White House is open to talks."

Another official said there were no immediate plans for Modi or senior leaders to travel to Washington, nor were any retaliatory measures being considered.

A sharp drop in US-bound shipments could drag India's GDP growth below 6 percent this year, down from the central bank's 6.5 percent forecast, said Sakshi Gupta of HDFC Bank.

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

Daylong traffic chaos paralyses the capital

Commuters suffer as protests, rallies plague Dhaka



Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue around 9:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several parts of Dhaka experienced severe traffic congestion yesterday due to protests, road blockades, and political programmes, causing immense suffering for commuters throughout the day.

The gridlock disrupted the movement of office-goers, students, and even ambulances, bringing parts of the capital to a standstill.

Speaking to The Daily Star, DMP Additional Police Commissioner (Traffic) Md Sarwar Hossain said the congestion was caused by a combination of factors, including political programmes, student protests, and road blockades.

He said BNP supporters had started gathering in the Paltan area from different parts of the city, resulting in significant traffic congestion around Shantinagar, Paltan, and Shahbagh.

Earlier in the day, a group held a

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

COX'S BAZAR TRIP
NCP serves
show-cause
notices on
five leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party (NCP) yesterday served show-cause notices on five of its senior leaders for their "unannounced" visit to Cox's Bazar on the first anniversary of the July mass uprising.

The party issued five separate letters, signed by its joint member secretary Saleh Uddin Sifat, in this regard.

The five leaders are NCP Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary, Chief Organiser (North) Sarjis Alam, Chief Organiser (South) Hasnat Abdullah, Senior Joint Member Secretary Tasnim Jara, and her husband Khaled Saifullah, who is also a joint

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Childhood laced with lead

Out of 500 surveyed toddlers in Dhaka, 98% have alarming blood lead levels, finds study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 98 percent of 500 surveyed children aged between two and four in the capital were found to have concerning levels of lead in their blood, posing serious health risks, according to a joint study by icddr,b and Stanford University released yesterday.

lead, and household exposures such as lead containing cosmetics, cookware, and paint.

Jesmin Sultana, assistant scientist at icddr,b, presented the findings at a discussion titled "Fighting Lead Poisoning in Bangladesh - Progress Made, Challenges Ahead" held at icddr,b.

There is no safe level of lead in the

behavioural issues, hearing and speech problems, lower IQ, decreased attention levels, and poor academic performance, according to the CDC.

Speaking at the programme, Tahmeed Ahmed, executive director of icddr,b, said, "Lead poisoning is silently robbing our children of their future potential."

It hinders brain development



HEALTH HAZARD

Lead exposure harms brain and nervous system, causes lower IQ and developmental issues

Children near industrial zones at highest risk

No safe level of lead in blood, says CDC

Lead exposure during pregnancy can affect unborn children

and causes nutritional deficiencies, ultimately setting back the future of Bangladesh itself, he said.

"We must act with resolve to eliminate all sources of lead emissions so that every child can grow up healthy and intelligent, and play an active role in national development," he added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Classes begin at Milestone



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Milestone School and College in Uttara resumed its academic activities for the students of class nine to twelve yesterday following the July 21 deadly air force jet crash.

The regular classes began since morning, followed by group counselling and mental wellbeing sessions over the past two days, said Shah Bulbul, public

relations officer of the institution.

"We are communicating with the guardians of the junior classes alongside providing counselling. We hope that academic activities of the other classes will also resume soon," he said.

Apart from academic activities, psychosocial counselling will continue for the next two to three months to help students cope with the trauma,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Shaheen Anam receives honorary MBE from British envoy

STAR ONLINE REPORT

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Sarah Cooke formally presented the insignia of the Honorary Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) to Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, at a ceremony at British High Commission in Dhaka today.

She was named an Honorary MBE by King Charles III in February 2025 in recognition of her outstanding contributions to social justice, inclusion, and gender equality in Bangladesh - values that are deeply shared by both the UK and Bangladesh,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), receives Honorary MBE from British High Commissioner Sarah Cooke at a ceremony at the British High Commission in Dhaka yesterday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Political will and press unity key to media freedom

Speakers call for reform, reflection and responsibility at CGS dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ensuring media freedom in Bangladesh demands more than government initiative -- it requires active responsibility from media owners, editors, journalists' unions, and all segments of society, said National Consensus Commission Vice President Prof Ali Riaz yesterday.

Reflecting on the past year, he said despite political unrest and violence, Bangladesh avoided a large scale political collapse.

"This is an achievement that deserves recognition, especially for the political parties that acted with restraint. Though more could have been done, we must acknowledge that the worst was avoided."

He made these remarks during a dialogue titled "Media Freedom: Exploring Grievances and Self-Regulations," organised by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) at the CIRDAP auditorium in the capital.

Riaz warned of emerging "social forces" beyond traditional players that are exerting growing influence over the media.

"These forces are not always visible, but they significantly shape the democratic landscape.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Announcement

Qatar Airways in Bangladesh is pleased to announce that we are in the process of appointing a General Sales Agent (GSA) for Airline Passenger Services, in accordance with government regulations.

Interested parties are invited to submit their applications and relevant company documents via their company email to:
qragsaproject@bd.qatarairways.com

The deadline for application submission is: 12:00 p.m. on 15 August 2025.

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted with further details regarding the next steps in the selection process.

QATAR
AIRWAYS

Shaheen Anam

FROM PAGE 3
says a statement of the UK High Commission.

The UK has maintained a longstanding partnership with the Manusher Jonno Foundation for over two decades, working collaboratively to advance human rights and empower marginalised communities across the country.

Through this partnership, the UK government has supported over 460 grassroots organisations, enabling

Daylong traffic chaos

FROM PAGE 3
transformative work that promotes dignity, inclusion, and justice for all.

In the statement, Sarah Cooke said, "I am delighted to present this award to Ms Shaheen Anam on behalf of His Majesty The King.

"Her tireless dedication and commitment to human rights, social justice and gender equality have made a lasting impact in Bangladesh, reflecting the shared values and enduring partnership between our two countries."

Classes begin

FROM PAGE 3
Bulbul said.

Earlier on August 3, Milestone School and College reopened on a limited scale after 12-day closure, aiming to support students' mental well-being in the wake of the plane crash that left the campus into mourning.

"The entire campus has been grieving since the July 21 plane crash. At this moment, our priority is the

psychological recovery of our students and bringing them back to regular life," Principal Mohammad Ziaul Alam had said after reopening the institution.

At least 34 persons, mostly students, were killed and more than 150 others injured after an Air Force jet crashed on the campus on July 21. Following the tragic crash, the authorities had announced the closure of the institution.

Vehicular movement came to a halt in the area, causing tailbacks on nearby roads. Police later intervened, and the students cleared the intersection after about 30 minutes.

Around 2:00pm, job seekers who passed the written test of the 18th Teacher Registration Examination demonstrated in front of the Non-Government Teachers' Registration and Certification Authority (NTRCA) office in Eskaton.

They demanded a re-evaluation of viva results and approval for candidates with valid certificates and

documents. "I went to Aziz Super Market in Shahbagh around 1:00pm and then returned to Labaid Hospital in Dhanmondi. From there, I came to Kalabagan," said Kader Ali, a trader.

"There was severe gridlock on most streets and alleys, which caused a much longer delay than usual," he added.

In the afternoon, traffic conditions worsened further as BNP held its scheduled "Victory Rally" to mark the first anniversary of the July uprising. The rally began at 3:00pm in front of the party's central office in Nayapaltan.

As a result, traffic congestion intensified in Nayapaltan, Bijoynagar, Shantinagar, and around the Purana Paltan intersection. Vehicular movement in these areas remained suspended for nearly two hours.

"I left for Gulistan around 3:30pm, but even after an hour, I couldn't reach Paltan intersection," said Rajib, a commuter. "So I started

walking. All vehicles were at a standstill."

Elsewhere in the capital, leaders and activists of the Jatiya Ganatantrik Party (JAGPA) blocked a road in Badda, demanding that ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina be sent back to Bangladesh from India. The protest was part of the party's previously announced programme to besiege the Indian High Commission.

The demonstration caused severe congestion in Badda, Badda Kitchen Market, Hossain Market, Merul Badda, and Rampura, leading to gridlocks and suffering for commuters.

On the Traffic Alert group on Facebook, social media users warned others about which roads to avoid and shared photos and videos of gridlocks from across the city.

As of 8:15pm, when this report was filed, severe congestion was still seen in both directions between Shahbagh and Farmgate, with vehicles moving at a snail's pace.

Dr Sarah Salway, senior director of Health Systems and Population Studies Division at icddr,b, said lead pollution is a major yet often overlooked public health issue in Bangladesh. Children living near polluting factories are among the worst affected.

KEY FINDINGS

Jesmin Sultana said the study, conducted between 2022 and 2024, surveyed 500 children aged two to four in Dhaka. Every child had lead in their blood, and 98 percent had levels above 35 micrograms per litre, which is considered a concerning level.

Children living within one kilometre of battery manufacturing, recycling, or other lead-related industries had 43 percent higher BLs than those living more than five kilometres away.

Those living within 1km to 2km had 24 percent

higher levels than those living 5km away.

Spending over six hours outdoors daily raised BLs by 18 percent among children living within 2km of such sites, said Sultana.

If household members smoked indoors, children had 12 percent higher

related or lead-smelting industrial sites face a higher risk, said Sultana.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends relocating small cottage industries and larger factories that deal with lead-acid battery manufacturing or smelting outside Dhaka city.

It also suggests reducing smoking, especially indoors; regularly mopping indoor areas to reduce dust; and promoting the use of lead-free products like batteries, paint, cookware, jewellery, surma, and amulets.

Individually, people are advised to eat foods that are rich in iron, calcium, and vitamin C.

Citing a Unicef report, Mahbubur Rahman, project coordinator at icddr,b, said Bangladesh ranks fourth globally in the number of children affected by lead, with an estimated 3.6 million

affected.

He also noted a positive development: a sharp decline in lead contamination in turmeric following policy interventions.

After studies by Stanford and icddr,b confirmed turmeric as a major source of lead exposure for pregnant women, national actions followed, led by Bangladesh Food Safety Authority, which included awareness campaigns, regulations, and enforcement.

As a result, contaminated turmeric samples dropped from 47 percent in 2019 to nearly zero in 2021, he said.

Political will and press unity key

FROM PAGE 3
Their influence has gone underreported and underanalysed."

In Bangladesh, media outlets have not evolved as independent corporate entities solely pursuing journalistic interests. Most are embedded within larger business conglomerates with vested interests. As a result, the media often serves to protect broader financial or political goals."

He added, "Most people cannot name the owners of The New York Times, The Guardian, or Le Monde. But in Bangladesh, everyone knows who owns which newspaper, along with their political ambitions. That's a problem."

"As long as you identify newspaper owners by name and their business or political roles, true press freedom will remain elusive."

He said, "Many local journalists are handed an ID card and left to 'figure things out.' This is not how responsible journalism is sustained."

Turning to political divisions within journalist unions, he said, "Our unions are split along party lines. They function neither as genuine trade unions nor as

protectors of professional rights. This severely weakens their ability to advocate for journalists."

He questioned the integrity of journalists during key moments like the July uprising.

"When the then prime minister held meetings with journalists during the July protests, can we truly say those present were upholding journalistic principles -- or were they part of political campaign machinery?"

He urged, "Now is the time for collective soul-searching. An interim government is in place -- this is an opportunity to reflect, restructure, and renew our commitments."

"One full year has passed. Has any group -- owners, editors, unions -- come together to evaluate the media's role over the past 16 years? Why haven't we had that conversation?"

"We cannot sit around waiting for a commission, or an external actor, to come and save journalism. Institutions must be built from within, with a sense of ownership and urgency."

Matiur Rahman Chowdhury, editor of the Manabzamin, said, "To ensure true freedom of

journalism and media, political freedom must come first. Without political freedom, journalism can never truly be free."

He also noted ongoing legal harassment of journalists and said, "In such a fragmented reality, how can we even talk about press freedom?"

He criticised political divisions in journalist associations. "If the Editors' Council is issuing statements on behalf of journalists, then what is the role of journalist unions?"

He lamented the loss of past unity over issues like the wage board: "That collective spirit is now missing. In pursuit of our own political interests, we have compromised the values of journalism."

"If we truly want to reap the benefits of the change we once fought for, we must show responsibility, courage, and unity."

Gono Forum Executive President Subrata Chowdhury said journalists are underpaid and lack benefits, making quality journalism difficult.

"Judicial independence and media freedom now seem like an impossible paradox."

DHAKA University Prof SM Shamseem Reza stressed that self-regulation shouldn't replace legal protections for journalists.

CGS Executive Director Parvez Karim Abbasi said, "Constructive criticism often triggers pressure from social and political forces."

Rezwanul Haque Raja, editor-in-chief, Maasranga Television and chairman, Trustee Board, Broadcast Journalist Center, Reaz Ahmad, executive editor, Dhaka Tribune; Moudud Hossain Alamgir Pavel, convener, BNP Media Cell; Asif Bin Ali, PhD Candidate, Georgia State University,

He said major rivers such as the Hari, Hamkura, Salta, Bhadra, and Shohomari should be dredged to address the persistent flooding in the beel areas.

Ashraful Islam, executive engineer of the Khulna Water Development Board, said,

"We have informed higher authorities about the need to repair non-functional sluice gates. Many gate mouths are tilted up, so simply fixing the gates won't be enough -- we also need proper channels to restore water flow."

They said the group then headed to the five-star Sea Pearl Beach Resort & Spa (previously the Royal Tulip) in Inani, about 20km from the airport.

Their sudden visit has triggered rumours in political circles that the NCP leaders were there to meet former US ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas.

Haas is currently serving as a strategic adviser to the US multinational company Excelerate Energy, which exports liquefied natural gas (LNG). He served as the US ambassador to Bangladesh from January 2022 to July 2024.

However, speaking to The Daily Star, Nasiruddin dismissed the rumours, saying they were visiting Cox's Bazar for vacation.

He termed the reports of a meeting with Haas "false and defamatory".

NCP serves

FROM PAGE 3

convenor of the party.

"Yesterday, on August 5, the first anniversary of the July uprising and a nationally important day, you and four other central party members went to Cox's Bazar on a personal visit. No prior information or explanation regarding this visit was communicated to the political council," read the letter.

They were asked to appear in person and provide a written explanation to Convenor Nahid Islam, and Member Secretary Akhtar Hossain, within the next 24 hours regarding the reasons and context of their decision.

Sources at the Cox's Bazar airport said the NCP delegation landed there around 11:30am on August 5 on a Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight from Dhaka.

They said the group then headed to the five-star Sea Pearl Beach Resort & Spa (previously the Royal Tulip) in Inani, about 20km from the airport.

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PRAYER TIMING

AUGUST 7

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4:20 12:45 5:00 6:47 8:15

JAMAAT 4:55 1:15 5:15 6:50 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Date: 06-08-2025

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer

Education Engineering Department

Chapainawabganj

Memo No. 04/e-GP/EED/Chapai/4931/SHED/2025-26

e-Tender Notice No. 04

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works under EED Chapainawabganj as mentioned below:

Tender ID	Name of works	Publication date/time	Closing date & opening date
1135947	Repair and renovation of floor with ceiling of old building at Shibganj Model Govt. High School, Shibganj, Chapainawabganj. (FY:2024-25)	06.08.2025 18:15pm	21.08.2025 11:00am
1135948	Repair of existing 10 Nos. old toilet at Shibganj Model Govt. High School, Shibganj, Chapainawabganj. (FY:2024-25)	06.08.2025 18:15pm	21.08.2025 11:00am
1135949	Repair and renovation of south side boundary wall at Shibganj Model Govt. High School, Shibganj, Chapainawabganj. (FY:2024-25)	06.08.2025 18:15pm	21.08.2025 11:00am

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be acceptable in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Md. Anwer Hossain
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Chapainawabganj

GD-1739

Childhood laced with lead

FROM PAGE 3

Prof Steve Luby of Stanford University emphasised that lead exposure severely impairs brain development and causes cognitive deficits and IQ loss that can affect future generations.

"Lead enters the body in multiple ways -- through the air we breathe, the food we eat, contaminated soil or dust, and even during pregnancy through the placenta. That's why it's nearly impossible to avoid lead exposure unless we address the root causes in our environment, especially those we can manage and control," he said.

Dr Sarah Salway, senior director of Health Systems and Population Studies Division at icddr,b, said lead pollution is a major yet often overlooked public health issue in Bangladesh. Children living near polluting factories are among the worst affected.

KEY FINDINGS

All 500 surveyed children had lead in their blood

Children in Dhaka south had higher BLs than those in north

Living within 1km of lead-related industries increased BLs by 43%

3.8m live within 2km of high-risk lead zones in Dhaka

RECOMMENDATIONS

Relocate lead-related factories, cottage industries outside city areas

Reduce indoor smoking, household dust

Promote lead-free products including batteries, cookware, cosmetics

Encourage diets rich in iron, calcium, and vitamin C

lead levels. A 50 percent increase in household lead dust led to a 2 percent rise in BLs.

Children living within one kilometre of battery manufacturing, recycling, or other lead-related industries had 17 percent lower BLs than those living more than five kilometres away.

Those living within 1km to 2km had 24 percent

lead levels. A 50 percent increase in household lead dust led to a 2 percent rise in BLs.

Children living within one kilometre of battery manufacturing, recycling, or other lead-related industries had 17 percent lower BLs than those living more than five kilometres away.



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Inadequate, faulty sluice gates leave farmlands inundated

Waterlogging damages Aman seedbeds across Khulna's Batiaghata upazila

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

A lack of adequate sluice gates and poor maintenance of existing ones are causing widespread waterlogging in Khulna's Batiaghata upazila, significantly affecting Aman paddy cultivation -- the region's only major crop. Around 40,000 farmers are

straining on livelihoods already battered by climate variability and infrastructural neglect.

The area has over 68 canals and is connected to four active rivers. But there are only 15 sluice gates in the entire area, and just eight of them are currently operational.

chairman of Batiaghata's Sadar union, said, "Eight functional sluice gates are not enough for Polder 30, which contains 53 beels and 68 canals. Proper water management is impossible. As a result, crop yields have declined dramatically in recent years.

paddy is the only dependable crop in the area, but farmers can no longer grow it reliably due to poor water management.

"We live in a saline zone. In the dry season, the local water becomes too salty to use. If the existing sluice gates were functional, we could have allowed sweet water from rivers to enter the canals and stored it for cultivating vegetables and other crops," he said.

Palash Roy, a farmer from Khalashibinia village, said the main sluice gate at Parbatiaghata has been ineffective for years. Several key canals -- Hetalbuniya, Dashkathia, Parbatiaghata, and Patharighata -- remain clogged and unmaintained, affecting over 20 villages.

According to data from the Khulna Agriculture Extension Department, the district received 628 mm of rainfall in July 2025 -- more than triple the 192.37 mm recorded in July 2024. This excessive rainfall has destroyed seedbeds in most beels across the region, especially in Batiaghata and neighbouring upazilas.

Out of 575 hectares of total seedbed area, 106 hectares have

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



As a result, floodwaters from the recent heavy rainfall cannot be discharged properly. This has left large portions of agricultural land inundated, causing irreparable damage to paddy seedbeds and even early-winter vegetable fields.

Manoranjan Mondal, former

Excess rainwater causes flooding, while in the dry season, farmers cannot retain sufficient water for vegetable or watermelon cultivation."

Local farmer Bibhash Mondal from Amtala village in Gangarampur union said Aman

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Around 40,000 farmers are struggling to manage floodwaters, leading to seedbed damage and the risk of missing this year's cultivation window.

struggling to manage floodwaters, leading to seedbed damage and the risk of missing this year's cultivation window.

Locals said unless urgent action is taken, thousands of farmers in Polder 30 area and beyond risk losing their main harvest season, placing further

pressure on the already strained

DSCC unveils Tk 3,841cr budget

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka South City Corporation yesterday unveiled its budget for the 2025-26 fiscal year, with a total outlay of Tk 3,841.38 crore.

DSCC Administrator Md Shahjahan Mia, presenting the budget at the Nagar Bhaban, called for stakeholders' support to ensure its successful implementation.

The budget, which was approved earlier in the 7th meeting of the DSCC Governing Committee, sets a revenue income target of Tk 1,320.43 crore. The corporation has estimated operating expenditures at Tk 635.33 crore. A significant portion of the budget is allocated for development, with Tk 876.64 crore from DSCC's own funds and Tk 1,469.24 crore from government and foreign aid.

Key allocations in the budget include Tk 365.11 crore for roads and traffic infrastructure, Tk 115 crore for canal development and waterlogging mitigation, and Tk 57.20 crore for waste management.

Railway staffer stabbed to death in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

An employee of Bangladesh Railway was stabbed to death by unidentified miscreants in Netrakona's Purbadhalia upazila early yesterday.

The victim, 28-year-old Md Kakon Mia, worked as a pointsman at Gauripur Railway Station, said OC Nurul Alam of Purbadhalia Police Station.

"The incident occurred around 1:00am when Kakon was returning home from Dapunia Bazar. As he reached a deserted area, miscreants intercepted and stabbed him with a knife," the OC said.

Locals took him to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries. The body has been sent to the morgue for autopsy.

Six killed, 4 hurt in road accidents
STAR REPORT

Six people were killed and four others injured in road accidents in three districts yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Sunamganj, three people were killed in a head-on collision between a bus and a CNG-run auto rickshaw.

The accident occurred around 1:00pm on Sunamganj-Sylhet highway in Bahadurpur area, said Mohammad Abul Kalam, officer-in-charge of Sunamganj Sadar Police Station.

The deceased are as Afsana Khushi, 17, a student of Sunamganj Textile Institute; Sneha Chakraborty, 18, a student of Sunamganj University of Science and Technology; and Shafiqul Islam, 50, a resident of the upazila.

The bus driver fled the spot after the accident.

In Mymensingh, two passengers of a battery-run auto rickshaw were killed and two others injured as the vehicle collided head on with a human haulier at Kazipara in Bhaluka upazila. Monju Mia, 40, and Alal Uddin, 50, from Gafraoan were declared dead at a local health complex.

In Faridpur, a motorcyclist was killed and two others injured when a Khulna-bound bus hit the motorcycle near the Bhanga intersection on the Dhaka-Bhanga Expressway.

Billal Khan, 35, died on the spot.

US to work with govt on regional peace, security

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Washington wants to work with Bangladesh's interim government to advance ties and regional peace and security, said US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Allison M Hooker.

She shared her comment on X after a meeting with Bangladesh's National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman in Washington on August 4.

"I had a great meeting with Bangladeshi National Security Advisor Rahman to discuss US policy priorities and advance US-Bangladesh ties. I look forward to continuing to work with the Interim Government to advance regional peace and security," she said.

Khalilur was in Washington as part of the Bangladesh delegation to negotiate the tariff talks with the US Trade Representative.

3 more die of dengue, 428 get hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least three dengue patients died while 428 others were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.



The deaths have been reported in Chattogram division, Rajshahi division and Dhaka North City Corporation.

With the new deaths and cases, the total number of deaths rose to 92, while total cases rose to 22,812.

Among the total cases, a total of 21,461 dengue patients have been released, of whom 16,833 were from outside Dhaka.

Currently, 1,259 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country, 895 of whom are from outside Dhaka.

Health experts have warned that the current weather is highly conducive to the spread of Aedes mosquitoes, the primary vector of the disease, and have urged immediate action from the authorities.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
প্রধান প্রকৌশলী (পূর্ব) এর কার্যালয়

বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে

সিআরবি, চট্টগ্রাম-৮০০০

ফোন: +৮৮০৩১২৮৬৩১৬২, ই-মেইল: cee@railway.gov.bd

ই-জিপি টেক্সার নোটিশ (Corrigendum)

নং-সি.ই/ই-জিপি/০১/২০২৪-২৫;

তারিখ: ০৮.০৮.২০২৫ খ্রি

প্রধান প্রকৌশলী (পূর্ব), বালোনি রেলওয়ে কর্তৃক National Electronic Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) এ নিম্নলিখিত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা হচ্ছে:

ক্রমিক নং	টেক্সার রেফারেন্স নং	Tender আইডি নং	ক্রয়ের ধরণ ও কাজের নাম	Field Name	Old Value	New Value
১	xenpne/ea ste-tender /24-25/173	1129622	Works: At CTG (CRB) Repairs to Flat Bungalow No. F/27 (C, D, E & F) 4 unit with sanitary works, septic tank, drain including garage and other allied works	Document last selling date & time	05/08/2025 17:00 PM	11/08/2025 17:00 PM
				Closing date & time	06/08/2025 12:00 PM	12/08/2025 12:00 PM
				Opening date & time	06/08/2025 12:00 PM	12/08/2025 12:00 PM
				Last date & time for tender/proposal security submission	06/08/2025 11:00 PM	12/08/2025 11:00 PM

বিঃ স্তঃ

১. শুধুমাত্র ই-জিপি সিস্টেমে নির্বাচিত eligibility শর্তবদী পূরণকারী দরদাগত সরাসরি অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন।

২. দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য দরপত্র দলিল ও দরপত্র আয়ন্ত ব্যাপক আর্থ নির্বাচিত যাকে জয় করতে হবে।

এস (২৫) (৩)

GD-1738

মো: আব্দুর রাহিম
নিম্নাংশ প্রকৌশলী (পূর্ব)
পক্ষ-প্রধান প্রকৌশলী (পূর্ব)
বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, চট্টগ্রাম

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS)

Ministry of Education

Establishment of 160 Upazila ICT Training and Resource Centre for Education (UITRCE) Phase-II, Project

Memo No: HobanE&C/bd/ad/202508-002

Date: 07 August, 2025

NOTICE FOR INVITATION OF QUALIFIED CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES

Project Title:

Establishment of 160 Upazila ICT Training and Resource Centre for Education (UITRCE) - Phase II

1. Project Overview

The Consortium invites qualified and experienced construction companies to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for participating in the construction of 160 ICT Training & Research centers across various Upazilas in Bangladesh. Each center will be a two-storyed RCC (Reinforced Concrete Cement) building with a total floor area of approximately 411 m².

2. Submission Details

Government Ordering Agency: Ministry of Education, BANBEIS

Issuing Entities (Consortium):

• Tahan Cable & Solution Co., Ltd.

• Hoban Engineering & Construction Co., Ltd.

• Ublion Co., Ltd.

Funding: Financed under the EDCF loan from the Export-Import Bank of Korea (Korea EXIM Bank)

3. Required Documents

Must submit the following documents in Hardcopy (2 Copies) & Softcopy (1 Pen drive) format:

1) Company Profile (including company overview and organizational structure)
2) Last 5 years' Construction Turnover with supporting certificates (only Building Construction)

3) Audit Reports for the last 3 fiscal years (with DVC)

4) Valid Trade License, TIN, VAT Registration, and Incorporation Certificate

5) CVs and IEB Certificates of proposed technical manpower (Civil Engineer, Electrical Engineer)

4. Submission Address & Drop-off Locations

1) BANBEIS Office: 3rd Floor, Eden Lake, BANBEIS Bhaban, 1 Jahir Raihan Road, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh.

2) Hoban E&C Office: A6, House-9/B, Road-117, Gulshan-2, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.

Submission Duration: 18 - 20 August, 2025, 10:00 - 16:00 (Bangladesh Standard Time)

Remarks: Companies that have already submitted an EOI for this project cannot apply.

Please submit your documents to only one of the two drop-off locations.

Modi to visit
China for first
time in 7 years
India's security
chief visits Moscow

REUTERS, New Delhi

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit China for the first time in over seven years, a government source said yesterday, in a further sign of a diplomatic thaw with Beijing as tensions with the United States rise.

Modi will go to China for a summit of the multilateral Shanghai Cooperation Organisation that begins on August 31, the government source, with direct knowledge of the matter, told Reuters. India's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

His trip will come at a time when India's relationship with the US faces its most serious crisis in years after President Donald Trump imposed the highest tariffs among Asian peers on goods imported from India, and has threatened an unspecified further penalty for New Delhi's purchases of Russian oil.

Modi's visit to the Chinese city of Tianjin for the summit of SCO will be his first since June 2018. Subsequently, Sino-Indian ties deteriorated sharply after a military clash along their disputed Himalayan border in 2020.

Meanwhile, India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval is in Russia on a scheduled visit and is expected to discuss India's purchases of Russian oil in the wake of Trump's pressure on India to stop buying Russian crude, according to another government source.



An Israeli excavator demolishes a building in the West Bank village of Judeira yesterday, citing lack of a construction permit in Area C—territory designated by the 1995 Oslo Accords as part of the occupied Palestinian lands under full Israeli control.

PHOTO: AFP

US IMPORTS OF RUSSIAN CHEMICALS, FERTILISERS 'Don't know anything about it': Trump

THE HINDU ONLINE

US President Donald Trump on Tuesday stated that he had no knowledge that the United States imports Russian Chemicals and fertilisers. The rebuttal came after India claimed that US continues to import from Russia uranium hexafluoride for its nuclear industry, fertilisers, as well as chemicals.

When asked by the ANI about US imports of Russian chemicals and fertilisers during a press conference

at the White House, Trump said, "I don't know anything about it. We will have to check." ANI has reached out to the President's press team and awaits for a response.

The comment came a day after Trump announced that the US would "substantially raise" tariffs on India over its purchase of Russian oil.

"India is not only buying massive amounts of Russian Oil, they are then, for much of the oil purchased, selling it on the open market for big

profits. They don't care how many people in Ukraine are being killed by the Russian War Machine. Because of this, I will be substantially raising the Tariff paid by India to the U.S.A. Thank you for your attention to this matter!!!" Trump had said in a post on Truth Social on Monday.

Trump's statement was rejected by India, with external affairs ministry calling the targeting of India "unjustified and unreasonable."



There is no
military
solution to
the conflict
in Gaza or
the broader
Israeli-
Palestinian
conflict.

Says Miroslav
Jenca, UN assistant
secretary-general for
Europe, Central Asia
and the Americas

বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোৱা কল্যাণ ফ্রাণ্ট
স্বাধীনতা ভৱন, ৮৮ মতিবিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১০০০।

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"সীমিত দরপত্র পক্ষতির আওতায় কার্য ক্রয় ও পণ্য সরবরাহের জন্য টিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী
তালিকাভুক্তির বিষ্ণু"

শুক্রিয়ক বিষয়ক মন্ত্রালয়াধীন বাংলাদেশ মুক্তিযোৱা কল্যাণ ফ্রাণ্ট-এর আধীন পাবলিক প্রক্রিউরমেন্ট বিধিমাল-২০০৮ এর আলোকে সীমিত দরপত্র পক্ষতির আওতায় অভ্যর্থনী কার্য ক্রয় ও পণ্য সরবরাহের লক্ষ্যে ২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থস্থলের জন্য টিকাদার/সরবরাহকারীদের সালিকাভুক্ত করা হবে। সিপিটিইউ কর্তৃত নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফর্ম ট্রান্স্টের অর্থ বিভাগ (৪৭ তাৰ্কা) হতে আগস্টী ০৭/০৮/২০২৫ খ্রি হতে ২০/০৮/২০২৫ খ্রি পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সরবরাহ করা হবে। মানি রিসিপ্টের মাধ্যমে ১০০০/- টাকা ট্রান্স্টের অর্থ বিভাগে পরিবেশ্বর ক্ষেত্রে নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। নির্ধারিত আবেদনপত্র (ডকুমেন্ট) সঠিকভাবে পূর্ণপূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্রসহ (বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, টিআইএন এবং ভ্যাটি নিবন্ধন সার্টিফিকেট), ২০২৪-২০২৫ অর্থ বছরের আবেদন প্রদানের প্রমাণক, সংশ্লিষ্ট বাস্তির এনআইডি এবং পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ০৩ কাপ ছবি, হানানগাদ বাক সলভেলি সার্টিফিকেট) আগস্টী ২১/০৮/২০২৫ খ্রি: তারিখ বিকাল ৪.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ট্রান্স্টের প্রক্রোশণ শাখা (২য় তলা) জমা প্রদান করতে হবে। বাছাই করে তালিকাভুক্ত টিকাদার/সরবরাহকারীকে তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য ৫০০০/- টাকা ও নির্ধারিত হারে ভ্যাটি প্রদান করতে হবে। পিপিআর-২০০৮ এর সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষি অনুসরণযোগ্য হবে। এ তালিকাভুক্তি কাজ প্রদানের নিচ্ছয়তা বিধিন করেন না এবং কোন কারণ দর্শনো ব্যতিরেকে আবেদনসমূহ গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার সম্পূর্ণ ক্ষমতা ট্রান্স্ট কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষ করেন।

অঙ্গ: পরিচালক (বাণিজ্য ও উন্নয়ন)

GD-1728

Tribunal records testimony

FROM PAGE 16

Hasina labelled protesters "descendants of Rajakars", sparking outrage on university campuses across the country. Activists of Chhatra League, pro-Awami league student body, attacked students nationwide that night.

On July 15, BRU students announced a protest rally near the university's gate-1. Chhatra League called a counter- rally, led by their leaders Pome Barua, Shamim, and Babul, with many wielding machetes, sticks, rods, and locally made weapons. They attacked a student procession, leaving several injured, said Rina, who was injured during the mass uprising.

Rina said it was not true. The lawyer further said the government during the movement called the demonstrators for a discussion when Rina said yes, but it was after the government failed to tackle the situation.

"You're not telling the truth. Hasina stood by the protesters and she is not responsible for the incident," the lawyer insisted.

"That's not true," Rina replied.

Tribunal member Justice Md Shofiqul Alam Mahmood addressed the defence at one point:

"You'll try your best to save your clients from the gallows," Amir responded. "I'm trying, but not sure if I'm doing enough."

"You appear before the court fully prepared," said Tribunal Chair Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder.

During cross examination of journalist Moinul, the defence lawyer said the video clip, which was telecast live and submitted to the tribunal, was AI-generated.

Moinul said it was not true.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Bangladesh Police
Office of the Director
Central Police Hospital (CPH)
Rajarbagh, Dhaka
www.cph.gov.bd

Invitation for Tender

Sealed tender are hereby invited from the experience competeted construction contractor in their official pad for the Construction work on the 2nd Floor structure of the cancer unit of the 20th floor building under Central Police Hospital (CPH), Rajarbagh, Dhaka for the year of 2025-2026.

1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs, Public Security Division
2. Agency	Central Police Hospital (CPH), Rajarbagh, Dhaka
3. Procuring entity name	Director, Bangladesh Police, Central Police Hospital, Rajarbagh, Dhaka
4. Procuring entity code	N/A
5. Procuring entity district	Dhaka
6. Invitation for	Construction work on the 2nd Floor structure of the cancer unit of the 20th floor building under Central Police Hospital (CPH), Rajarbagh, Dhaka.
7. Invitation Ref No.	C.P.H./Tender/Construction-01/2025-2026/ 3978
8. Date	06/08/2025
9. KEY INFORMATION	
10. Procuring method	OTM (NCT)
11. FUNDING INFORMATION	
12. Budget and source of funds	Revenue Budget (GOB)
13. Development partner	N/A
14. PARTICULAR INFORMATION	
15. Tender package name	N/A
16. Tender publication date	07/08/2025
17. Tender last selling date	27/08/2025 At 17:00 hrs.
18. Tender closing date and time	At 12.00pm on 28/08/2025
19. Tender opening date and time	12.30pm on 28/08/2025
20. Office Address Information	
21. Selling tender document	Office of the Director, Admin Block, 1st Floor, CPH, Rajarbagh, Dhaka
22. Receiving tender document	Office of the Director, Admin Block, 2nd Floor, CPH, Rajarbagh, Dhaka
23. Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting	Place: Admin Block; Conference Room; Date: 14/08/2025 at 11.00am
24. INFORMATION FOR TENDERER	
Eligibility of tenderer	
a. The Tenderer must have min. 5 (Five) years of general experience in construction works (year counting from the date of publication of IFT)	
b. The Tenderer must have min. 3 (Three) years specific experience as a prime contractor or subcontractor or management contractor in successful completion of at least 1 (one) RCC Framed structure building of similar nature of civil works with a value not less than Tk. 3.5 crore in a single contract in government/semi-government/autonomous organization of Bangladesh during last 03 (Three) years (year counting from the date of publication of IFT)	
c. The tenderer must have a min. average annual construction turnover of Tk. 5.00 (five) crore over last 5 (five) years (year counting from the date of publication of IFT)	
d. The amount of liquid assets or working capital or credit facilities of the tender shall be min. 5.00 (five) crore.	
e. The Tender capacity shall be min. 4.00 (four) crore.	
f. The tenderer shall submit updated (i) income tax clearance certificate (must in company/firm name); (ii) VAT registration certificate (B/N Certificate); (iii) Trade licence as construction firm;	
g. The tenderer shall be enlisted with PWD/LGED/HED as 1st Class Contractor License (Other terms and conditions describes in PW3 Schedule)	

25 Brief Description of Works:

26. Pakage No.	Name of project	Tender security in Taka (refundable)	Price of tender document (non-refundable)	Completion time in days
Lot-1.	Construction work on the 2nd Floor structure of the cancer unit of the 20th floor building under Central Police Hospital (CPH), Rajarbagh, Dhaka.	Tk. 7,00,000.00	2,000.00	150 (one hundred fifty) days
27. Brief description of related services	Details described in PW3			
28. Name of official inviting tender	Md. Humayun Kabir			
29. Designation of official inviting tender	Superintendent of Police (Admin & Finance)			
30. Address of official inviting tender	Central Police Hospital (CPH), Rajarbagh, Dhaka			
31. Contact details of official inviting the tender	Tel: 88-02-8312075 Fax: 88-02-9342297			
32. Special instructions:	<p>a) No tender will be received after the deadline for submission.</p> <p>b) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender proceeding.</p> <p>c) The procuring entity should follow the PPA, 2006 and PPR, 2008 or latest amendment.</p> <p>d) If it is not possible to receive/open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstances, the same will be received/opened on the next working day at the same time & same venue.</p>			

REUTERS, Moscow

Putin-Witkoff talks on Ukraine 'constructive'

Says Kremlin ahead of US sanctions deadline



Talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US special envoy Steve Witkoff were "useful and constructive," Kremlin foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov said yesterday.

Witkoff held around three hours of talks with Putin in the Kremlin, two days before the expiry of a deadline set by President Donald Trump for Russia to agree to peace in Ukraine or face new sanctions.

Ushakov told Russian news outlet Zvezda that the two sides discussed the conflict in Ukraine and the potential for improving US-Russia relations. He said Moscow had received certain "signals" from Trump and had sent messages in return.

Trump, increasingly frustrated with Putin over the lack of progress towards Ukraine peace, has threatened to impose heavy tariffs on countries that buy Russian exports.

Iran executes man convicted of spying for Israel

AFP, Tehran

Iranian authorities yesterday executed a man convicted of spying for Israel by passing on information about a nuclear scientist killed during the 12 day war with Israel in June, the judiciary said.

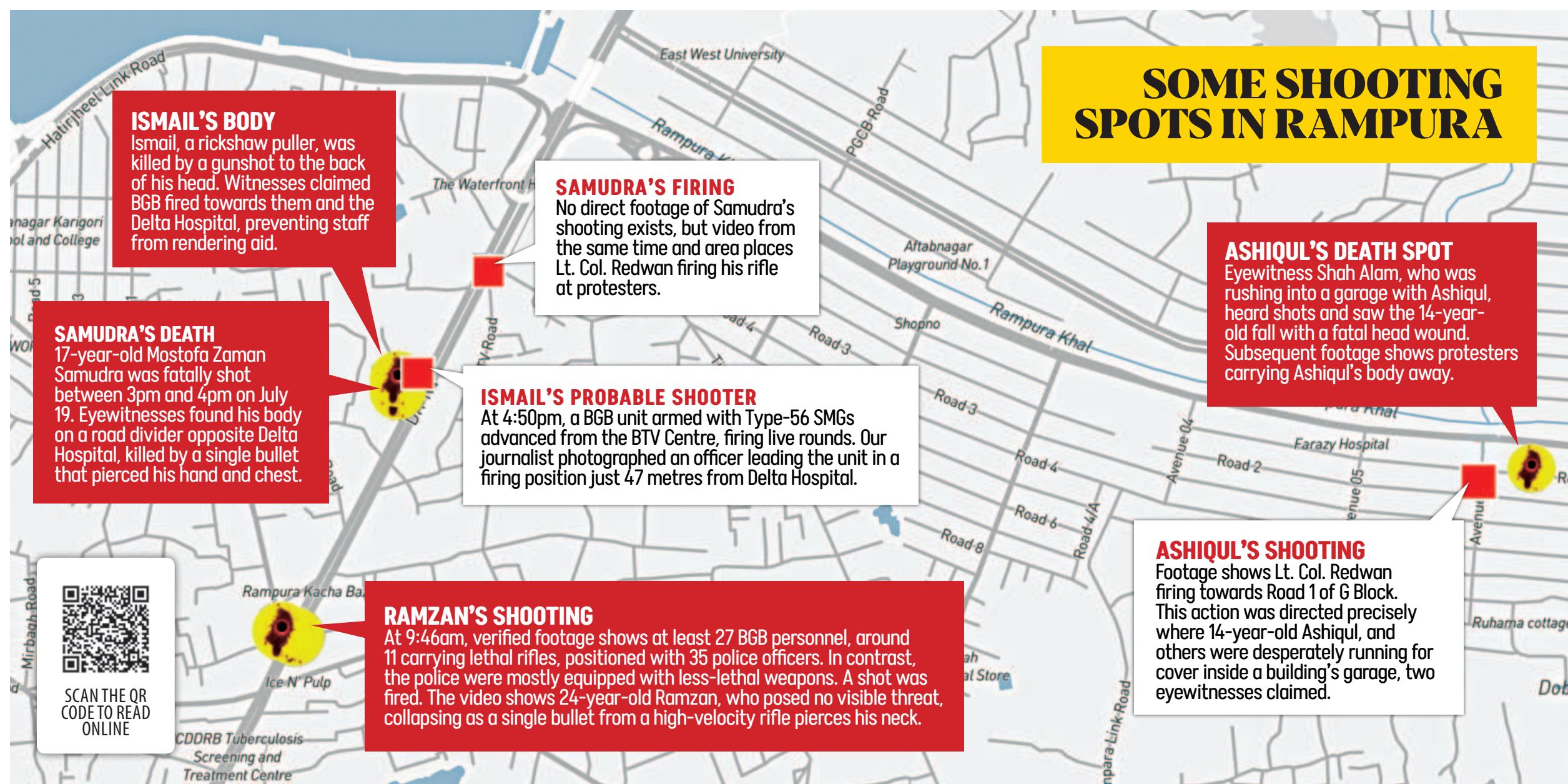
"Roozbeh Vadi... was executed following judicial proceedings and confirmation of his sentence by the Supreme Court," the judiciary's Mizan Online website said, adding that the man had leaked information about a "nuclear scientist who was assassinated during the Zionist regime's recent aggression." The execution was carried out by hanging, it added.

ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Ministry of Religious Affairs
Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.islamicfoundation.gov.bd

Invitation for e-Tender (Open Tender Method)

Memo No : 16.01.0000.000.001.22.421</div



SOME SHOOTING SPOTS IN RAMPURA

ASHIQUL'S DEATH SPOT
Eyewitness Shah Alam, who was rushing into a garage with Ashiqul, heard shots and saw the 14-year-old fall with a fatal head wound. Subsequent footage shows protesters carrying Ashiqul's body away.

ASHIQUL'S SHOOTING
Footage shows Lt. Col. Redwan firing towards Road 1 of G Block. This action was directed precisely where 14-year-old Ashiqul, and others were desperately running for cover inside a building's garage, two eyewitnesses claimed.

Anatomy of BGB shootings in Rampura

FROM PAGE 1

He said a BGB Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) stopped near the entrance of G Block after protesters created a barricade with tree logs and other items on the main road. By then, most protesters had abandoned the main road and retreated into the residential blocks of Banasree.

At one point, while other BGB personnel were clearing the road, two soldiers, one visibly armed, entered Banasree, Alam added. Footage we verified also confirmed his account.

"I saw a man fall right beside a shop in G Block," he said.

He, along with Ashiqul and about 15 others, ran for cover down Road 1 of G Block.

"The gates of all the buildings were closed, but an aunty from a nearby house opened their residence for us. We were all rushing towards the garage of that building. Ashiqul was just behind me. I entered, and then I saw Ashiqul... I don't know what got hold of him; probably he wanted to have another look at where the BGB personnel were."

"He ran a few steps back, took a glance towards where the two officers were, and then tried to return to the building. As far as I can remember, I heard one shot, and I looked back and saw Ashiqul falling with blood pouring from his head, face, and mouth," Alam said.

This newspaper also spoke with Mahbuba Kayes Lucky, the woman Shah Alam referred to, who shared a similar account.

With Lt Col Redwan positioned on the main road to Ashiqul's left, a distance of just 84 metres, and Ashiqul turning to glance back before trying to re-enter the building, the boy was caught in a fatal perpendicular line of fire. The bullet striking him below his left ear suggests he was moving laterally at the exact moment the shot was fired.

The death certificate issued by Banasree's Advanced Hospital shows he died from a "gunshot wound".

Recalling the last time she saw her son, Ashiqul's mother, Alisha Afzole, said Ashiqul joined the protests after 3:00pm that day. She was worried that he was not coming home, but she could not step outside to find him as the sounds of gunfire kept rocking the Banasree area till about 9:30pm.

"After 10:00pm, a protester came to our house and showed me footage of a body lying unclaimed at the hospital. I immediately recognised it was my Ashiqul. I raised him with tears, sweat and blood as a single mother. My world revolved around him. Seeing his body, I fainted."

She collected the body from the hospital around 11:00pm, hired an ambulance, and set out for Dinajpur, their ancestral home, to bury her son.

TURNING POINT IN KILLING SPREE

Ashiqul's death was the brutal climax of a day that saw the Rampura-Banasree area of Dhaka being turned into a killing zone.

From July 16 till August 5, the BGB deployed nearly 4,000 members to 58 locations across the country, according to the UN fact-finding report published in February 2025.

An investigation by The Daily Star found that on the evening of July 18, ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina

Identifying a potential shooter: METHODOLOGY

Multiple eyewitnesses in Rampura said they saw BGB personnel wearing vests, particularly a small-statured officer, shooting at unarmed protesters. To verify the direction of movement, and the role of BGB personnel that fired shots towards Ashiqul were achieved through a multi-step forensic analysis of 15 different videos and images during a joint investigation by The Daily Star and Tech Global Institute (TGI), a technology nonprofit whose forensics investigation arm has been documenting digital evidence related to the Monsoon Revolution.

While TGI's forensic analysis confirmed a match by comparing the Banasree and Rampura footage, indicative that the same individual was likely present in both locations on that day, The Daily Star independently verified his name and identity by speaking with sources in intelligence agencies, the International Crimes Tribunal, and journalists who were present on the ground.

The forensic analysis was based on two primary methods: chronolocation and reconstruction, and pattern configuration. The premise of the latter is based on identifying similar or the same patch configurations on uniforms at a given time, allowing us to distinguish an individual's uniform from others.

Using multiple images of BGB officers from the day and location, TGI's forensics investigators identified a unique combination of patches and shapes on specific areas of their uniform: the upper chest, chest, right wrist, and right and left thighs.

This distinct pattern was then compared to footage of soldiers filmed shooting in Banasree, where Ashiqul was killed on the same day and time. The analysis of the uniform's camouflage pattern confirmed an exact match with the patch configuration for one individual's uniform. We consistently found the same patch configuration on one uniformed BGB officer of small stature, who appeared in multiple footage recorded on the same day in Rampura-Banasree, indicating they are likely the same individual.

To confirm the distinctiveness of the camouflage patches, it was compared against the camouflage patterns on uniforms of other BGB soldiers at the scene on the same day. None of the other uniforms shared this specific combination of patches.

gave a "shoot-on-sight" order that the UN report confirms was part of a broader government directive to use lethal force. From the following day, BGB, Rab, and police acted on these orders, carrying out extrajudicial killings in different parts of the

This analysis was further supported by observing that the small-statured BGB officer was consistently accompanied by an accomplice wearing a red helmet, and hand gloves in multiple footage from Rampura and Banasree on that day.

To further corroborate, this investigation used facial reconstruction and matching techniques to assess whether the distinct facial features for the suspect could be matched throughout different footage using open-source tools.

We used three different facial recognition and matching models that generate high-dimensional embeddings of unique facial features. All three models produced positive matches for the suspect.

To reduce risks of false positives, the analyses were replicated with facial features of other BGB soldiers present at the scene. It consistently returned a negative match for all other personnel.

While facial reconstruction, recognition and matching shows



Lt Col Redwan Islam

promise, the method has several limitations, including the quality of images or footage available, restricted negative testing, and environmental factors. To address ethical and privacy considerations, the analysis only used publicly available materials used for journalistic or public awareness purposes, and strictly limited data collection, processing and retention throughout the process.

The Daily Star shared clear footage of the small-statured officer with three high-level sources who confirmed the person in question is Lt Col Redwan. One photojournalist present at the scene on July 19 said he also saw the name plaque, which read: Redwan.

country, the UN report said. In Rampura, our reporters witnessed the BTV building being vandalised around 1:00pm on July 18. The first BGB unit arrived at the scene around 4:30pm, but they were significantly outnumbered by

thousands of protesters.

Video footage from this period shows protesters chanting slogans while standing on top of a BGB armored carrier. At one point, the BGB unit had to fall back.

As evening fell, things took a fatal turn.

Around 7:30pm, our reporters saw a second, heavily armed BGB unit arriving at Rampura via Hati Jheel. First, they seized control of the Rampura bridge area by firing blank shots to disperse the crowds. Then, around 8:00pm, they advanced on the BTV building, clearing the area with live ammunition. By 9:00pm, the BGB had secured the Rampura TV centre area.

This sequence of events matches with information from two high-level official sources who are investigating the Rampura killings. The first unit was the BGB's 5th Battalion, they said.

The second unit, called in as reinforcement, was the 26th Battalion, commanded by Lt Col Redwan Islam, sources in the International Crimes Tribunal said.

The Daily Star also spotted an Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) from the 62nd (Narayanganj) Battalion at Aftabnagar Gate at 5:00pm on July 19, suggesting that the government ordered a large-scale BGB deployment in the area.

The UN fact-finding team found that after the attack on BTV station, the BGB was used as a "strike force" to reinforce orders to use lethal force. The instruction was issued by both the Prime Minister's Office and home ministry on the evening of July 18 and again on July 19, leading to a near-tripling of reported deaths.

The UN report gives an overview of the violence in this area, classifying "Rampura and Badda (19 July)" as a specific case of indiscriminate shooting. The UN found that BGB and police shot lethal ammunition directly into crowds.

One witness recalled how security forces "cornered" protesters from three sides and fired simultaneously.

"Bullets were dropping down on us like rain," the UN report quotes him.

The UN report also documents how hospitals in the area were overwhelmed, with one receiving over 600 injured patients and 20 dead bodies that day.

The Daily Star saw 13 bodies in three hospitals of Rampura-Banasree in one hour from around 4:00-5:00pm that day.

Separately, a TGI & ITJP investigation documented at least 23 killings in Rampura-Banasree area on July 19, according to a report published in January 2025.

In a report sent to the UN, BGB claimed they only fired warning shots and caused no casualties.

However, this directly contradicts evidence and reports from other government intelligence agencies such as the NSI. The NSI report sent to the UN mentions three killings by the BGB on July 19 in and around Rampura-Banasree.

"At that point, there was a gunshot by the BGB. The boy just fell," he added.

Just about 2:38 minutes later, Ramzan collapses, as a single bullet pierces his neck. He was shot from the front, where a contingent of 27 BGB personnel was positioned. At least 11 of them were carrying assault rifles, our forensic analysis finds.

In contrast, 35 police personnel were nearby, but only six carried weapons, mostly non-lethal (shotguns and gas guns). Twenty-one police officers carried only shields and sticks.

The shooter is not visible, but the distance and wound are consistent

journalist of The Daily Star who was on the ground tracking the BGB's movements and the unfolding bloodshed on July 19 in the area also took his photos and videos.

The eyewitness account of our journalist and the photographs provide a direct trail of evidence.

He said a BGB unit, armed with Type 56 SMGs, was advancing from the BTV Centre towards the Abul Hotel area around 4:50pm.

They were accompanied by police, who were mostly equipped with less-lethal shotguns and tear gas canisters.

WEAPON DISTRIBUTION RAMPURA, JULY 19, 2024

Weapon Category	BGB	Police
Lethal (primary) (Type 56 Assault Rifles)	91	5
Lethal (sidearm) (pistols)	0	3
Less-lethal (impact) (shotguns, tear-shell guns)	0	35
Less-lethal (defensive) (shields & sticks)	15	105

Note 1: 7.62MM TYPE 56 SMG AND 7.62MM CHINESE RIFLE:
The Type 56 is a Chinese-manufactured assault rifle based on the design of the Soviet AK-47. It is the standard-issue service rifle of the Border Guard Bangladesh and is widely used in military contexts across the world. The weapon fires 7.62x39mm cartridges, which are high-velocity military rounds. The effective combat range of the Type 56 is between 300 and 400 meters.

Note 2:
Counts are based on documented instances in the provided visual evidence and represent the number of times personnel were visibly identified with specific equipment, not a total census of all officers present.

with a shot from a high-velocity rifle.

According to an eyewitness, who watched the events unfold from a window nearby, protesters began congregating on the streets from 6:00am. An initial police advance around 7:00am led to a cat-and-mouse dynamic.

"When the police came up the main road, the protesters went inside the lane to hide," he said. "Then the police went away... the protesters came back into the street."

This pattern repeated until a joint BGB and police force advanced from the Rampura Bridge road.

He described how the police advanced as far as the Al Kadiya restaurant and then began to pull back. "When they started going back, people came out from the alleys. They thought the police had gone," he recalled.

"At that point, there was a gunshot by the BGB. The boy just fell," he added.

WHO KILLED ISMAIL?

An image of rickshaw puller, Md Ismail, lying in a pool of blood in front of Delta Hospital in Banasree, went viral after the July protest. A

The journalist, who was positioned just behind the BGB contingent, said that the unit was "firing live rounds while advancing."

In multiple footage, we see a BGB officer leading the pack. He was holding an assault rifle. It was about 47 metres from Delta Hospital.

Our journalist, while slowly moving behind the BGB police contingent, suddenly turned right and saw the blood-soaked body of Ismail. Before that, he took a photograph of the BGB officer in question in a firing position a little past Delta Hospital. The photo was taken from behind, so the officer's face was not visible.

Md Nazim Uddin, a security guard of the hospital who witnessed the killing, said Ismail was shot in the back of the head as he tried to flee from bullets coming from the direction of Rampura TV centre around 5:00pm.

This matches the description of our journalist. Photographs he took from the scene document a catastrophic exit wound that shattered the back of his skull, leaving brain matter visible in the pool of blood on the pavement.

SEE PAGE 9

Anatomy of BGB shootings in Rampura



ASHIQUL ISLAM, 14

SHOT AT 6:14PM ON JULY 19
BANASREE, G BLOCK, ROAD 1
FATAL GUNSHOT TO THE HEAD

"I raised him with tears, sweat, and blood as a single mother. My world revolved around him. Seeing his body, I fainted. Will we ever get justice?"

ALISHA AFROZE, MOTHER OF ASHIQUL

SCAN THE QR CODE TO WATCH VIDEO



RAMZAN, 24

SHOT AT 9:46AM ON JULY 19
DIT ROAD, RAMPURA
FATAL GUNSHOT TO THE NECK

"Ramzan used to live in his uncle's house at Omor Ali Lane in Rampura. Around 10:00am on July 19, our relatives called us and said Ramzan had been shot. I asked, 'Will he survive?' They replied, 'He is already dead.' A bullet struck his neck. Later, witnesses told me the BGB shot him."

LITON MIA, FATHER OF RAMZAN



MOSTOFA ZAMAN SAMUDRA, 17

SHOT AROUND 3:30PM ON JULY 19
NEAR RAMPURA TV CENTRE
FATAL GUNSHOT TO THE TORSO.
THE BULLET PIERCED HIS ARM AND
PENETRATED HIS CHEST

"He took money from me to buy Kufli, just like every Friday. When he did not return home, I called him around 2:30pm and said, 'Baba please come home. I have cooked your favourite dish [polao and meat] for you. He replied, 'Ma, don't worry, I'll be back in two minutes.' That was the last time I heard his voice."

MASUDA ZAMAN, MOTHER OF SAMUDRA



ISMAL, 46

SHOT AROUND 4:50 ON JULY 19
IN FRONT OF DELTA HOSPITAL,
RAMPURA
FATAL GUNSHOT TO THE HEAD &
CHEST

"The ambulance carrying his body was intercepted by BGB personnel twice. Once in Meradia and later after crossing Trimohoni bridge. They asked how he died. They let us go after we told them he died in a rickshaw accident."

LUCKY BEGUM, WIFE OF ISMAIL



MD KAMRUL, 21

SHOT AROUND 3:30PM ON JULY 19
BANASREE END OF RAMPURA CANAL
A BULLET PIERCED HIS LEFT
LEG, WHICH LATER REQUIRED
AMPUTATION

"Police stopped the ambulance that was carrying me... they wanted to arrest me... I had to return home. By the time I reached the hospital, 48 hours had already passed. Following two operations, my leg had to be amputated."

MD KAMRUL



PHOTOS: STAR

about 1km from Meradia and the exit point of Dhaka towards Kachpur.

"They asked us how he [Ismail] died and many other questions related to the protests. They let us pass only after we told them that Ismail died in a rickshaw accident and did not participate in the protests," Lucky added.

THE UNSEEN KILLINGS

"Maa, don't worry, I will be back in two minutes."

It was 2:30pm on July 19 when Masuda Jaman heard those final, reassuring words from her son Mostofa Zaman Samudra, 17. Worried about the escalating violence on the streets of Rampura, she had called to tell him to come home.

But for the mother, the two minutes stretched into an agonising eternity of unanswered phone calls. After 4:00pm, a message arrived from one of Samudra's friends: he had been shot.

The family rushed to Delta Hospital, but their son was already unresponsive. A single bullet had torn through his left hand and lodged near his left lung.

Eyewitnesses told his mother that Samudra was shot near the TV Centre road sometime between 3:00 and 4:00pm. While no direct footage of Samudra being shot has surfaced, the time and location of his death place him squarely in a zone of intense BGB activity.

Our investigation tracked BGB personnel, armed with lethal weapons, operating throughout the Rampura-Banasree corridor that afternoon.

Lt Col Redwan, the officer who was seen shooting in the direction where Ashiqul's body was found, was also filmed firing his rifle at protesters beside an APC and below a footover bridge near the Rampura TV Branch of Agrani Bank, the same area where Samudra was fatally wounded.

An eyewitness told this newspaper that he saw Samudra's body lying on top of a road divider opposite Delta Hospital.

SHIELD OF LIES

The legal framework for the use of lethal force by security forces against civilian assemblies in Bangladesh is strictly defined in Chapter IX of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (CrPC).

It mandates that a force like the BGB can only use force to disperse a crowd after a verbal command from an executive magistrate or a police commissioner.

The use of military-grade force is a final resort, permissible only when an assembly cannot otherwise be dispersed and only upon the explicit order of the highest-ranking magistrate present. Even then, the force used must be minimal, aiming to "do as little injury to person and property" as possible.

Recently, the deputy commissioner's office in Dhaka sent a document detailing the deployment of executive magistrates alongside BGB units to the International Crimes Tribunal. The Daily Star has obtained a copy.

On July 19 in Rampura, it recorded the firing of at least 972 rounds from military-grade weapons like SMGs [Type-56] and rifles. It details a morning shift (8:00am-1:00pm) where 693 rounds were fired, and an afternoon shift (1:00pm-8:00pm) that saw another 279 rounds discharged.

According to this log, Lt Col Redwan fired 17 shots on July 19 under the supervision of a magistrate.

However, our extensive investigation and video footage from the scenes of the shootings in Rampura on July 19 shows BGB forces operating independently, without the presence of any executive magistrates as required by law.

Multiple magistrates we contacted confirmed the list was prepared by the BGB and was submitted to the Dhaka Deputy Commissioner's office. They claim they were pressured to sign the documents on July 26-28, days after the killings, and that their signatures were backdated to July 18 and 19.

They claimed BGB officials coerced them into signing the papers by claiming that only "blank shots" had been fired and that "no casualties occurred."

"The day we had to sign the papers, there was a heavy presence of the BGB on the premises of the DC office and inside our superior's room. Although the military did not talk with us directly, our superiors threatened us with consequences if we did not sign the documents," one magistrate said.

Multiple others we talked to separately echoed the same.

According to the Border Guard Bangladesh Act, 2010, BGB falls under the control of the home ministry.

"The force shall be under the overall superintendence of the Government and the Director General... shall direct and control the force per the general orders and instructions given by the Government from time to time," according to section 10(1).

All other BGB personnel operate under the command of the director general.

During the July uprising, a "Core Committee" operated as the central command-and-control hub for the violent crackdown. This committee, led by then home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, brought together the chiefs of all major

security and intelligence agencies to devise and direct the suppression, the UN fact-finding report found.

The report says BGB director general, Major General Mohammad Ashrafuzaaman Siddiqui, as a regular attendee of these meetings where the operational decisions to commit "systematic and widespread extrajudicial killings" were made.

According to the report, on July 18, the day before the killings in Rampura intensified, "The home minister instructed the BGB, armed with military grade 7.62mm rifles... to use more lethal force to suppress the protests."

Meanwhile, in a recent documentary aired on Al Jazeera, Siddiqui is seen consulting with

Lt Col Redwan in Rampura. Two journalists we talked to said the BGB chief visited the Rampura area for a brief period on July 19 shortly after Juma prayers. The Daily Star could not independently verify this.

A year after the uprising, most key members of the "core committee" are either in hiding or have been sacked. Maj Gen Siddiqui remains in his post.

In a press conference after the fall of the Awami League government, he said he ordered his troops to show restraint, particularly on August 5.

He repeatedly said that the order to deploy did not come from a single source but from "the country's highest, numerous former ministers" and "many senior figures." He said he was operating "from within pressure".

He, however, acknowledged that "one or two incidents happened," singling out a specific officer, but without naming him.

"We identified one officer, a lieutenant colonel who is also a battalion commander, who opened fire directly at protesters," he said.

"We immediately removed him from his post the next day. After an inquiry, he was returned to the army, his parent force, and we have recommended the highest possible punishment for him."

"The punishment will be executed by the army," he added.

Two high-level sources confirmed that the "antedate seniority of Redwan has been receded for six months in a summary court martial" after he returned to his main force: Bangladesh Army.

On August 2, 2025, an ISPR spokesperson declined to comment on the current status of Lt Col Redwan, citing the matter sub judice.

The Judge Advocate General of BGB declined to comment on our findings, directing us to Shariful Islam, the public relations officer of BGB.

The Daily Star contacted him via phone and email and, as requested, sent him questions in writing. On August 3, 2025, he said they would not comment on our findings.

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VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Bangladesh is bound by a number of international treaties that set clear limits on the use of force by state authorities. According to legal experts the following laws have been violated in the case of Rampura shootings:

The Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials (1979)

The United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials (1990)

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)

Convention on the Rights of the Child (1979)

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998)

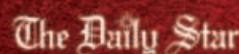


Blender's Choice The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2024
Talented actors, inspired performancesThe Daily Star
OTT & DIGITAL CONTENT AWARDS 2024

Ispahani Tea Limited and The Daily Star return for the fourth consecutive year to honour excellence in OTT and digital media. The nominations for the Blender's Choice The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2024 have been announced, offering the perfect opportunity to celebrate and acknowledge your favourite artistes for their outstanding performances across OTT and digital platforms.

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PRITOM HASAN

Pritom Hasan effortlessly plays the boy next door in Shihab Shaheen's *Kacher Manush Dure Thuiya*, winning hearts with his heartfelt portrayal of a simple young man deeply in love. His journey through the struggles of long-distance relationships and the emotional turmoil of separation resonates deeply, moving audiences to tears. With his sincere and relatable performance, Pritom has rightfully earned his nomination, proving his place among the finest in digital storytelling.



CHANCHAL CHOWDHURY

Chanchal Chowdhury's portrayal of Shafkat in *The Last Defenders of Monogamy*, directed by Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, emerges as the film's most compelling performance, breathing life into a flawed character while masterfully navigating a wide range of emotions. Renowned for his versatility across all mediums, the actor continues to win audience acclaim with each role. His performance has earned him a nomination for Best Actor (Popular Category) at this year's awards.



MOSHARRAF KARIM

The actor plays three distinct roles in Kazi Asad's web series *Adhunik Bangla Hotel*—a humble villager, a fearful clerk, and a morally conflicted killer. Renowned for his acting range, he has earned nominations in both the Popular and Critics categories this year. Mosharraf's powerful performances provide depth and emotional weight, elevating each episode and making the anthology a compelling watch for fans of Bangladeshi web content.



SIAM AHMED

In *Tikit*, the actor delivers a gripping performance as Shalek, a man torn between debt, desperation, and moral choices. Embracing a new look and gaining weight for authenticity, Siam immerses himself in the role, guided by director Vicky Zahed's vision. His performance anchors the thriller, keeping audiences hooked through its emotional depth and unpredictable twists, leading him grabbing the nomination in this category.



ZIAUL FARUQ APURBA

Ziaul Faruq Apurba shines as *Golam Mamun*, reprising his iconic role in this gripping thriller, directed by Shihab Shaheen. Portraying a fugitive police officer accused of murder, he delivers a grounded, powerful performance marked by subtlety and strong physicality. Praised for his restraint in action scenes and emotional depth, Apurba effectively carries the suspenseful narrative. The actor's nomination is much worthy, as despite sustaining injuries during filming, his dedication stands out, making this one of his most compelling OTT roles to date.

NEWS

ICT-2 frames charges against 30 accused

FROM PAGE 16
Similar charges were brought against former VC Prof Hasibur Rashid.

The tribunal said ASI Amir Hossain "killed Abu Sayed without provocation," while Constable Sujan Chandra Roy was accused of carrying out orders from the then government and taking part in the killing.

Meanwhile, Raful Hasan Rasel, Imran Chowdhury Akash, and Anwar Parvez face charges of instigating and abetting the killing.

When asked if they pleaded guilty, all six denied the charges and claimed innocence.

Before reading out the charges, Justice Nozrul said, "We did not find grounds to discharge the accused. There is sufficient material to frame charges, and we have done so accordingly. The charges will be read out to those present in court."

Earlier, on June 30, the tribunal took cognisance of charges pressed by the prosecution, including murder, attempted murder, abetment, complicity, and command

responsibility under crimes against humanity.

While formally pressing charges, Chief Prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam said the former VC, proctor, Rangpur Metropolitan Police commissioner and his deputy bear command responsibility and coordinated the attack that killed Sayed and injured four others.

He said they jointly instructed subordinates, including ASI Amir and Constable Sujan, to carry out the shooting and later altered forensic evidence to conceal the crime.

Tajul added that the remaining accused either actively participated in or assisted with the killing, torture, and cover-up, including manipulating Sayed's inquest and post-mortem reports.

Abu Sayed was shot dead on July 16 last year in Rangpur during a student protest against the quota system in government jobs. His act of defiance before being killed helped ignite a mass uprising that led to the fall of Sheikh Hasina's regime on August 5.

306 Bangladeshis held by Malaysian immigration dept

FROM PAGE 2
recruitment on May 31 last year amid allegations of irregularities in the hiring process.

Negotiations on resuming recruitment are underway ahead of Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus's visit to Malaysia from August 11-13.

According to Bernama, the immigration department also said its officers continue to monitor daily airport operations, with the Malaysian Border Control and Protection Agency handling immigration counters and department staff assisting with intelligence and surveillance.

DG Zakaria assured the department will fully cooperate with the agency to remove officers found involved in misconduct, should any reshuffles be required.

Since 2022, 147 disciplinary cases have been recorded against immigration officers, with 55 resulting in dismissals.

To curb abuse of power, the department is expanding digital systems like auto-gates at entry points to reduce direct officer-traveller contact.

Stay united for the sake

FROM PAGE 16
through reforms. Let us all build this country into a happy, prosperous, and humane nation."

BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed said the party follows only one policy: Bangladesh

first.

"There will be no foreign lords, only friends," he said.

The BNP leader said BNP does not want any division among democratic forces.

"Those who are trying to create division are not forces that stand for Bangladesh. Those who speak against the election are not forces that stand for Bangladesh. Those who are trying to break unity are not forces that stand for Bangladesh..."

Standing Committee member Mirza Abbas expressed his dissatisfaction that the names of Ziaur Rahman and Khaleda Zia were not in the July Declaration.

He called on everyone to start preparing for the polls.

Another Standing Committee member Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain urged everyone to stay alert so that no one can make any conspiracy about the polls.

EC seeks details

FROM PAGE 2
widespread criticism for lacking inclusivity, transparency, and credibility. The 2014 polls were boycotted by the BNP-led alliance, leaving 153 seats uncontested. Voter turnout was officially recorded at 51 percent, but violence and low participation raised questions about the election's legitimacy.

In 2018, the BNP contested under the Jatiya Oikya Front, but the election was marred by allegations of ballot-stuffing, voter intimidation, and suppression of the opposition.

Despite the participation of a major opposition alliance, the Awami League won 288 out of 300 seats. The most recent election, held in January last year, saw another BNP boycott.

The EC had reported a voter turnout of 41.8 percent – the lowest in the country's recent history.

A homecoming that ended in heartbreak

FROM PAGE 16
of sorrow hung in the air as hundreds gathered to grieve and console the survivors.

Bahar, his father Abdur Rahim, 60; father-in-law Iskandar Mirza, 62; and sister-in-law Sweety Begum, 27, survived the accident.

For nearly three years, Bahar stayed connected to them through video calls after leaving in the hope of bringing financial stability to his family. "I saw my child's face for the first time after two years and seven months. I had so many dreams – to celebrate, to travel with her. But now she is gone," he said with an unstoppable stream of tears.

"May the Almighty not inflict such pain on any family," he whispered.

Bahar left for Oman just a month after marrying Kabit. "Now I don't

know how to live without them."

Recounting the accident, he said they had started from Dhaka airport around 12:30am. "When we reached Feni, we sensed the driver was drowsy. We requested him to take a break, but he ignored us. He even drove the vehicle into a pothole at Chomuhami. We warned him again, but he kept driving."

Eventually, the driver lost control of the wheel and the microbus crashed into the canal in the Chandraganj Bazar area at around 5:45am.

Bahar's father Abdur Rahim said the doors were locked when the vehicle sank. "We asked the driver to open the locks, but he didn't. Instead, he fled through a window... The four of us managed to escape by breaking a window, but the others seated at the back couldn't get out. We lost them

Speaking to The Daily Star, Noakhali BRTA's Inspector Mahbub Rabbar said the government would provide the family with Tk 5 lakh for each of seven victims as financial assistance.

According to BB data, the country's balance of payments returned to a surplus in the fiscal year (FY) 2024-25, ending a three-year deficit. The overall balance of payments posted a surplus of \$3.3 billion at the end of FY25, bouncing back from a \$4.3 billion deficit the previous year.

Speaking at the rally, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir thanked the Bangladesh army for its support during the mass uprising. He said BNP leaders and activists fought to establish democracy and did not bow down in the face of oppression and torture.

"The date of the election will be announced very soon. The July Declaration has been announced. The 31 points will be implemented

Time to focus on the election

Fool-proof preparation needed to ensure free, fair polls

It's now official: Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus has announced that the next parliamentary election will be held in February 2026. This marks the interim government's transition into the final phase of its tenure—the "most important chapter," as the chief adviser has put it—while setting the country on a definite path towards the transfer of power to an elected government. The authorities now must work out a fool-proof plan with the Election Commission and all other relevant institutions to ensure a free, fair and credible election.

The election announcement has been reportedly accepted by most political parties. The BNP has welcomed the decision; although Jamaat and the NCP initially demanded visible reforms before holding the elections, they too have accepted the timeline. The NCP has said that it has no objection to a February date, but the government must ensure justice and implement reforms beforehand, as well as guarantee administrative impartiality and a level playing field for all participants. These are not unreasonable demands. That said, we acknowledge the importance of transferring power to an elected government. An election is essential to retain economic confidence and restore investors' faith, among other things. A representative government can offer stability and predictability, which our economy badly needs at the moment.

Our political parties must come to terms with the fact that while reforms are crucial, key ones will take time and dedication. However, in the months ahead, the interim government must focus on ensuring that reform initiatives that should not take time are implemented without delay, especially those related to governance and accountability in key public sectors. The political parties are equally responsible for ensuring that the election is fair and peaceful by rejecting violence and embracing civilised electoral conduct.

Preparations for the election are already underway. The EC has stated that it is ready to hold the election in February, and will likely announce the poll schedule in December. The chief adviser has issued 25 directives to the relevant authorities to complete preparations by then. The EC has been allocated Tk 2,080 crore for this purpose. To ensure a credible election, the government is planning a number of steps, such as law enforcers wearing body cameras and ballot boxes being delivered to the poll centres on the morning of election day. It must also ensure that law enforcement personnel are adequately trained and resourced so that they can maintain law and order effectively.

A free, fair, and credible election is the first step towards rebuilding the state as a democratic and inclusive one. Through this election, we will get a representative parliament that can spearhead the next phase of key reforms. Citizens have been deprived of exercising their franchise for far too long. Let the 13th parliamentary election be a trend-setter for democratically sound, credible and festive elections in the future of Bangladesh.

Why is child labour still rampant?

No minors should be employed in hazardous work

It is deeply frustrating that children continue to be employed in work that is not meant for them, many of which are hazardous. According to a recent report on child labour, children as young as eight years old are working at the Secondary Transfer Stations (STS)—where solid waste is temporarily stored before being moved to landfills—of both Dhaka South and North City Corporations. Many of these children have migrated from outside Dhaka, while others have been residing in the city's slums for years. These children have been driven to these waste management sites by poverty and lack of family and government support.

For instance, 18-year-old Raza began working at an STS in Ward-10 of DSCC when he was just eight years old, following his father's death. He never attended school. Thirteen-year-old Shadhin, driven by poverty, came from Sherpur to work at another STS. Instead of learning and playing, these children toil in rubbish fields, risking their health and sacrificing their futures. This is unacceptable. Engaging children in waste management is not just a breach of their rights, it also poses serious health risks. These children frequently suffer cuts from sharp, contaminated objects, exposing them to diseases like hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS, and chronic infections. Many endure malnutrition, respiratory problems, and skin diseases. The question is, why does child labour continue to persist? Why are 1.776 million children in the country still trapped in this?

We have laws like the Labour Act 2006 and the National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010, but they often remain unenforced. Some provisions of these policies are vague, and inadvertently enable child labour. For example, while the Labour Act sets the minimum employment age at 14, it allows children aged 12-14 to engage in "light work", if that does not affect their education and development. Moreover, the government has declared 38 sectors hazardous for children, banning employment of anyone under 18 in these fields. Yet, 1,068 million children are still working in these sectors, including welding, transportation, auto workshops, tobacco factories, battery recharging. Many more go uncounted, especially in informal sectors like waste management.

If we are truly committed to eradicating child labour, we must address the legal loopholes that allow it to persist and make its elimination a national priority. This means not only enforcing existing laws but also investing in children's education and empowering vulnerable families through robust social safety nets and livelihood support. No child should be forced to choose work over education.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Japanese airfield on Guadalcanal seized by Allies

On this day in 1942, US Marines launched the Allies' first major offensive in the Pacific during World War II by landing on Guadalcanal and seizing a key airfield from Japanese forces, igniting a brutal battle that would rage for nearly six months.

EDITORIAL

The logical anatomy of July Declaration



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

KAZI ASEM NURUL HUDA

On August 5, 2024, students and ordinary citizens ousted the authoritarian Awami regime after weeks of marches, blockades, and brutal crackdowns. The fall of Sheikh Hasina's government was not just the end of a chapter—it marked the beginning of a new one. One year later, on August 5, 2025, the July Declaration was read out by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the South Plaza of the parliament. The declaration, coming as it does after a prolonged wait, should be seen as a foundational document for post-uprising Bangladesh. While public attention may focus on its symbolism and ambition, with analysts also scrutinising its content from historical and political perspectives, I think the logic underlying its formation also deserves attention.

The declaration is structured in a form familiar to students of law and logic alike. It follows a legal-deductive pattern of reasoning often used in charters and constitutions. This structure, commonly referred to as

The declaration rests on a deductive inference that can be summarised as follows: if a people rise up to overthrow a fascist regime in pursuit of justice and democracy, then their movement deserves constitutional recognition. And the people of Bangladesh did precisely that in 2024. Therefore, the 2024 mass uprising deserves constitutional recognition.

the "Whereas to Therefore" format, presents a sequence of premises leading to a normative conclusion. Each "Whereas" clause serves as a premise, and each "Therefore" clause functions as a conclusion. Philosophers often refer to this form as an enthymeme: a type of syllogism

in which one or more premises are implied rather than explicitly stated. It assembles a set of empirical and normative claims that together justify a definitive conclusion. In this case, that conclusion is bold and unequivocal—the 2024 mass uprising must be constitutionally recognised.

At its core, the declaration rests



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus reads out the July Declaration at the south plaza of the parliament on August 5, 2025.

PHOTO: CA PRESS WING

on a deductive inference that can be summarised as follows: if a people rise up to overthrow a fascist regime in pursuit of justice and democracy, then their movement deserves constitutional recognition. And the people of Bangladesh did precisely that in 2024. Therefore, the 2024 mass uprising deserves constitutional recognition.

In other words, any movement that is both a protest against injustice and a legitimate expression of people's sovereignty deserves legal recognition. The mass uprising meets both conditions, so recognition follows.

In a valid deductive argument, if the premises are accepted, a conclusion must follow. Of course, one may challenge the premises. One could argue, for example, that the Awami regime was not entirely illegitimate *per se*, or that the uprising lacked nationwide support. The declaration anticipates such objections by offering a broad evidentiary base: that the scale of public participation,

the intensity of state repression, and the erosion of electoral legitimacy all support its claims.

The declaration also draws strength from precedent, which is itself a form of reasoning. It situates the 2024 mass uprising within a lineage of historic moments when citizens reclaimed sovereignty from illegitimate regimes: the 1971 Liberation War, from which the constitution itself emerged and draws its legitimacy; the 1975 uprising that dismantled the BAKSAL system; and the 1990 movement that ended military autocracy. Each of these ruptures prompted a reimaging of the political order. By aligning 2024 with this tradition, the declaration makes an argument from analogy, invoking past expressions of popular

and obligations, rather than outcome or consequences. It defines what we ought to do, not just what is politically expedient. If the people acted to reclaim democracy, then democratic legitimacy demands that their action be recognised. The claim is not that recognition is a reward. It is that recognition is a moral requirement.

One final layer of reasoning may be the most powerful. According to speech act theory, when a political authority makes a formal declaration with legal force, the act of speaking brings about a change in reality.

This is known as a performative or illocutionary act. The July Declaration operates in precisely this way. It does not merely describe recognition of the uprising; it enacts that recognition.

As the declaration itself states, the student-peoples uprising will get proper state and constitutional recognition, and that the declaration will be included in the schedule of the reformed constitution by the next elected government. In saying this, it does not report a completed fact. It participates in bringing that fact into being. Like a court issuing a verdict, the act of declaring becomes part of the process that constitutes legal and political reality.

Marked by passion yet grounded in principle, the July Declaration weaves together deductive, analogical, instrumental, deontic, and performative reasoning, offering a rare example of political argument shaped by formal reasoning in Bangladesh's recent history. It presents a structured argument, employing multiple layers of reasoning to articulate its claims. Rather than functioning as a symbolic or emotional appeal, the declaration outlines a formal framework through which transitional demands, such as electoral reform, institutional accountability, and the rebuilding of democratic structures, are presented.

The document also articulates a practical necessity. Without a legal and constitutional recognition of the uprising, the goals that inspired it, such as justice, inclusivity, and accountability, cannot be institutionalised. Recognition is not a reward; it is a precondition for reform. This is a teleological argument grounded in instrumental reasoning. If the desired ends are democratic renewal and institutional change, then recognition is a necessary means to achieve them.

Another layer of reasoning is moral. The declaration puts forward an ethical claim about the state's obligation to honour the sacrifices made by its people. In the language of moral philosophy, this is a deontic argument, which concerns duties

Digital progress becomes a threat without cybersecurity



Surja Mandal is an LLB student at the Department of Law at World University.

SURJA MANDAL

In mid-2020, Roxana Akhtar, a garment worker living in the capital's Mirpur area, checked her mobile banking account and discovered that someone had withdrawn Tk 18,000, her three months' savings, through multiple transactions. She had not made any transactions, nor had she shared her password or PIN with anyone. It was later revealed that criminals had cloned her national identity card and mobile number, accessed her account through a "SIM swap" scam, and withdrawn the money. She filed a complaint but received no response. Today, the number of victims like her exceeds one lakh across the country.

Cybercrime in Bangladesh has risen in recent years. Social media fraud, identity theft, phishing, ransomware attacks, and hacking into banking systems are no longer uncommon. Previously, several government websites were hacked, and the personal information of lakhs of citizens was leaked. In 2023, media reported that personal information of over five crore citizens had been disclosed without authorisation from a Bangladesh government website—one of the largest data breaches in the

country's history. The absence of a robust cybersecurity system to accompany the rapid expansion of digital services is an issue in this context. Many government and private organisations continue to operate with outdated firewalls, weak encryption, and insufficient technical staff. A 2024 Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) review found numerous ambiguities and potential for abuse of power in current cybersecurity regulations, rendering them ineffective in preventing cybercrime.

The banking sector is in an especially critical state. In 2016, the hacking of the Bangladesh Bank website drew global attention, yet most banks have since failed to implement effective cybersecurity reforms. According to a study by the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management (BIBM), 52 percent of banks in the country remain at high cyber risk. Many still lack dedicated cybersecurity units or conduct regular security audits. As a result, they have become easy targets for hackers.

The crime is as grave as its impunity. According to a Financial

Express report, despite the increase in cybercrime complaints, most accused are acquitted in court. This is due to the lack of digital forensic technology, inefficient investigations, and legal complexities. The Cybersecurity Act, 2023, which replaced the Digital Security Act, 2018, remains controversial. Many of its problems persist—vague definitions of crimes, file a complaint.

To address this challenge, first, the state must treat cybersecurity as a matter of national security. An effective framework combining advanced technology, skilled manpower, and coordination with NGOs is urgently needed. Second, public awareness must be increased. Citizens must learn to use strong passwords, enable two-factor authentication, avoid suspicious links, and respond prudently to incidents.

Cybersecurity education should be introduced at least from the secondary level. Often cybercrimes are committed by younger people. Educating them in digital awareness and ethical technology use can prevent many crimes before they occur.

investigative delays, and prolonged trials.

The human cost is the most devastating. Behind every hacked account and every instance of stolen data, is a person—someone who is losing money, facing mental distress, and gradually losing trust in digital platforms. Not only urban professionals or tech users, but also expatriate workers, small business owners, and even school students are now victims of cybercrime. Women, in particular, suffer from cyber harassment, photo leaks, and online stalking. Yet in most cases, they do not receive justice, or even know where to

Bangladesh is becoming a digital nation, but its success depends on how securely we manage our digital space. If we cannot protect citizens' data, privacy, and digital rights, this transformation will be technological but not secure. Cybersecurity is not merely a technical issue—it is a question of social responsibility and political commitment.

Let Bangladesh's digital progress continue, but not on a path of mistrust. As technology advances, citizens must not fall into danger. Now is the time for cyber awareness, cyber prevention, and cyber justice.

STARVATION IN GAZA

Israeli lies and the tail that wags the dogs



is the author of *Children of Catastrophe: Journey from a Palestinian Refugee Camp to America, and other books*. He writes frequently on Arab world issues.

JAMAL KANJ

Whenever Israel yields to international pressure and allows aid trucks into Gaza, it devises other methods to ensure that food is never delivered. On July 26, Israel announced airdrops and "humanitarian corridors" for the United Nations convoys. Its forces also murdered 53 people seeking aid in those corridors on the same day. Rather than feeding the starving population, Israel turns the aid distribution points into killing zones. Time and again, Palestinians have been paying with blood for a loaf of bread or a bottle of water.

In less than two months, death by Israeli bullets at the so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) has reached over 1,054, averaging about 20 killings daily. Since July 26, when Israel announced the new "humanitarian corridors," the death toll has more than doubled—325 last week alone—from the number of Palestinians killed daily at GHF distribution centres. Meanwhile, the tokenistic airdrops by Arab collaborators are nothing short of a disgrace.

The \$60 million that Donald Trump brags about giving to GHF is funding the deaths of hungry Palestinians. For the starved, GHF stands for *Gaza Humiliation Front*—not a lifeline, but an Israeli murder line. Instead of wasting American taxpayer money on these death traps, Trump should consider restoring US funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the only agency that has offered real hope to Palestinian children for more than 75 years.

Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff's visit to a GHF centre in Gaza, followed by his statement that there is no starvation, was a textbook case of confirmation bias. His tour did not reveal the absence of starvation, but rather

his willful blindness to see it. Witkoff sought out information that would reinforce his predetermined narrative to whitewash starvation.

To be honest, no one had seriously expected him to witness starvation at a carefully staged (safe) site, far removed from the people. He declined an invitation to visit a hospital in Gaza to see the starved children and hear directly from the life-saving medical professionals. Instead, he chose a photo op and listened to the mercenaries of death at GHF.

The engineered starvation in Gaza, supported by the US, has always been a central pillar of Israel's psychological warfare; a calculated strategy aimed at expelling the population or driving them into a survivalist frenzy. Israel and the US-funded GHF have become the perfect linchpin of this Israeli-designed contraption. Replacing a well-established UN infrastructure that operated 400 distribution centres, GHF offered only four aid points. These limited sites made it easier for Israel to surveil, shoot at the starving, and leave the survivors to fight over the meagre crumbs that remained.

GHF's role was exposed by Anthony Aguilar, a retired US Special Forces officer and recipient of the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. Choking back tears, Lt Col Aguilar recounted the story of a child who "walked 12 kilometres to reach" one of GHF's food distribution sites. "He got nothing but scraps, thanked us for it..." and then he was shot dead by the Israeli army.

Still, the "free" Western media has too often acted as Israel's public relations arm. It downplays Israel's horrific crimes and markets Israeli falsehoods, such as the baseless claim

that Hamas steals food aid. This narrative persisted even after USAID concluded that Israel failed to provide any evidence supporting that food aid was being diverted. Other than for Israeli military hindrance, under UN oversight, there have been no issues delivering food to all of Gaza. Israel's objective is simple: deflect responsibility by blaming the starving for their own starvation.

Early last June, I wrote on the Israeli

is the failed ceasefire talks. Listening to the Western media, one might conclude that the Palestinian negotiators rejected a "generous" offer for a ceasefire. In reality, the talks collapsed because Netanyahu sought only a pause to secure the release of captive Israeli soldiers, refusing to agree to end the war or the starvation blockade.

No rational party would accept, let alone consider, such a half-measure. When

recognise the state of Palestine, although long overdue, signals the growing frustration with Netanyahu's lies and deceit. The European officials made it clear, they were no longer willing to tolerate the Israeli farce. The symbolic act, however, would never atone for Britain's original sin—the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which promised European settlers a homeland in Palestine while failing to enshrine the rights of the indigenous Palestinians on their land. Nor does it exonerate France, which conspired with Britain in the secret 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement to carve up the eastern part of the Arab world.

Still, recognition matters. Fourteen other countries are poised to follow France's lead next month. The growing calls demanding Netanyahu agrees to a ceasefire are also telling. These governments have finally realised what their subjects had long known, that the absence of peace is not due to Palestinian rejectionism, but to Netanyahu's deception and insatiable thirst for the never-ending wars.

Despite the dominance of Israeli-embedded journalists and pundits in Western media, the world is finally waking up to the true face of Israel. Alternative media has, to a great extent, succeeded in piercing through the wall of Israeli lies, offering an unfiltered view into the lived horrors of starvation and genocide. No amount of Israeli propaganda can obscure the images of skeletal ribs jutting from the bodies of dying children. The sight of starving infants sucking on their bony fists indicts the liars.

To that end, a recent Gallup poll shows a clear shift in the US, where American support for the Israeli military action in Gaza has dropped to 32 percent, and disapproval has soared to 60 percent. For a while, Israel was enabled to "fool all the people some of the time," and it continues to "fool some of the people all the time," but ultimately, and as the latest poll shows, it "cannot fool all the people all the time."

Yet, babies are starving, the genocide continues, and there is no ceasefire in sight. This is only possible because Netanyahu and AIPAC continue to wag the dogs of Washington.



The engineered starvation in Gaza, supported by the US, has always been a central pillar of Israel's psychological warfare.

FILE PHOTO: AFP

scheme to "lie, deny, and distort the truth." In the article, I detailed a long list of Israeli lies and how the US media disseminated the disinformation with little to no effort to verify or challenge. You see, Israel does not just enjoy political impunity from the US administration; it also has the freedom to lie with complete immunity from the US media.

The daunting question remains: how many lies must Israel tell before the media call them out, just as they do with the US President Donald J Trump, or other leaders and nations?

A recent example of how the Israeli-managed "free" media misrepresents facts

Palestinians rejected a proposal short of a lasting ceasefire, Netanyahu cried foul. President Trump and Witkoff rushed to absolve Netanyahu's intransigence to accept a permanent ceasefire, and then blamed the Palestinians.

The reluctance, and perhaps intimidation, of Arab mediators like Qatar and Egypt to publicly challenge Washington's pro-Israel stance has only deepened the media distortions. The mediators' silence allowed Netanyahu's false narratives to dominate international discourse.

Nonetheless, the tide could be turning. France and the UK's recent promise to

stakeholders.

In addition to government initiatives, pharmaceutical industry leaders must step forward to curb aggressive marketing. In reality, due to unchecked and excessive promotional tactics, the marketing expenditure of many companies has ballooned to an unsustainable 60 to 70 percent of total costs, a burden that undermines long-term viability. These inflated costs are inevitably passed onto consumers, making essential medicines increasingly unaffordable and exposing the industry to public backlash.

Currently, the top 10 pharmaceutical companies control about 65 to 70 percent of Bangladesh's pharmaceutical market. The top 20 hold 80 to 85 percent, and the top 30 control nearly 90 percent. If these companies work together—by ceasing unnecessary competition and adopting a joint policy to reduce marketing expenditure—they can easily maintain a sustainable business model without jeopardising their profits.

Moreover, doctors are unlikely to stop prescribing drugs from these top companies, as their products are trusted and well-established. If physicians were to replace these with substandard brands, it could spark public outrage—something no medical professional wants to risk. Therefore, the credibility of top companies will likely remain intact, even without aggressive promotion.

In this context, to ensure a robust and sustainable future, pharmaceutical leaders must voluntarily abandon aggressive marketing and pursue a structured, efficient, ethical, and sustainable marketing strategy. Simply put, the industry must cultivate a culture of internal accountability and self-regulation.

Failure to do so would jeopardise not just profits, but also impact the entire industry, public health, and the well-being of the people.

How aggressive drug marketing can be curbed



is professor at the Institute of Health Economics in University of Dhaka and convenor of Alliance for Health Reforms Bangladesh (AHRB) and Network for Health Care Excellence (NHE).

SYED ABDUL HAMID

The National Drug Policy of 1982 enabled Bangladesh to achieve self-sufficiency in pharmaceutical production. Today, approximately 98 percent of the country's medicine demand is met by local manufacturers, with exports reaching around 150 countries. The pharmaceutical industry has become a major player in Bangladesh's industrial landscape, contributing about 1.8 percent to the national GDP. Currently, over 300 companies are engaged in the manufacturing of allopathic drugs, while 206 firms produce Ayurvedic medicines and 44 companies manufacture herbal products.

However, the sector is now facing a serious crisis, primarily caused by overly aggressive marketing strategies. Through medical representatives, pharmaceutical companies are allegedly spending vast amounts under the guise of offering gifts, honoraria, foreign trips, and participation in scientific conferences to doctors, paramedics, village doctors, quacks, and even salespersons at local drugstores. The situation has now become such that many beneficiaries feel entitled to request household items or even support for their children's needs from pharmaceutical companies.

These marketing practices contribute less to market expansion and more to unnecessary competition, wasteful expenditure, unethical influence over physicians, and most alarmingly, a steep rise in drug prices.

Despite the massive scale of this industry,

Bangladesh lacks an adequate and effective regulatory infrastructure. At present, the sector is regulated by the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA), which oversees drug company approvals, individual drug registrations, raw material certification, pharmacovigilance, regular inspections, pharmacy licensing, and drug pricing.

The DGDA is also responsible for approving bioequivalence and biosimilar tests, which are crucial for assessing the quality of medicines. The Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 2023 has further expanded the DGDA's jurisdiction to include the regulation of cosmetics. Since many pharmaceutical owners are actively involved in politics and some even served as parliamentary members, it has been increasingly difficult for the DGDA, a directorate-level institution, to regulate such a powerful and politically connected industry effectively.

Therefore, it is imperative to upgrade the DGDA into a full-fledged commission or authority, led by an individual of ministerial rank. This body should be supported with a modern organisational structure, an independent pay scale, regular recruitment of qualified professionals, clear career paths, and domestic and international training opportunities. Such reforms would significantly enhance the capacity of the regulatory body to meet current challenges.

However, the DGDA should not be involved in drug pricing. According to the 1982 drug

policy, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is responsible for determining and controlling the prices of 117 essential medicines based on a pre-established formula, with assistance from the DGDA. Yet in practice, this is rarely done. As the ministry is a direct organ of the government, any price hike becomes politically sensitive, impacting the government's image. Consequently, the prices of these essential drugs are seldom revised.

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Without regular, rational price adjustments, producing these essential drugs becomes commercially unviable. As a result, most companies have stopped manufacturing them. The 1982 policy mandated that every drug manufacturer allocate 60 percent of their production to essential drugs. In return, they were allowed to determine the prices of other drugs themselves.

To keep medicine prices within reasonable limits, there is no alternative to formula-based pricing determined by the government. Not only would this ensure affordability, but it would also help eliminate aggressive marketing practices, as the associated costs would then be borne by the pharmaceutical companies themselves. Currently, as drug prices are largely set by companies with DGDA's approval, marketing costs are ultimately passed on to consumers. Therefore, all drug pricing should be based on a transparent, government-prescribed formula.

In this regard, the cost components used in price calculation should be logically categorised. Additionally, the mark-ups for manufacturers and retailers must be regularly reviewed and set rationally. The 1982 policy defined five cost categories for essential drug pricing, which were expanded to nine categories in the 2005 policy.

It is important to remember that medicine is a commercial product, and thus, no company will produce it without adequate profit. At the same time, life-saving drugs must not be a source of excessive profits. However, involving DGDA in drug pricing creates a conflict with its core mandate. Meanwhile, if the health ministry remains directly responsible for pricing, it will find it difficult to update prices regularly. It is also unrealistic to expect that any committee can perform such a wide-ranging task regularly.

Therefore, Bangladesh must establish a powerful, independent authority for drug pricing, similar to India's National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority. This approach would ensure that the responsibility of pricing decisions does not fall solely on the government, sparing it from political and reputational risks. Simultaneously, regular pricing updates would reduce uncertainty for drug companies, and consumers would be protected from abrupt price surges. This presents a win-win scenario for all stakeholders.

In addition to government initiatives, pharmaceutical industry leaders must step forward to curb aggressive marketing. In reality, due to unchecked and excessive promotional tactics, the marketing expenditure of many companies has ballooned to an unsustainable 60 to 70 percent of total costs, a burden that undermines long-term viability. These inflated costs are inevitably passed onto consumers, making essential medicines increasingly unaffordable and exposing the industry to public backlash.

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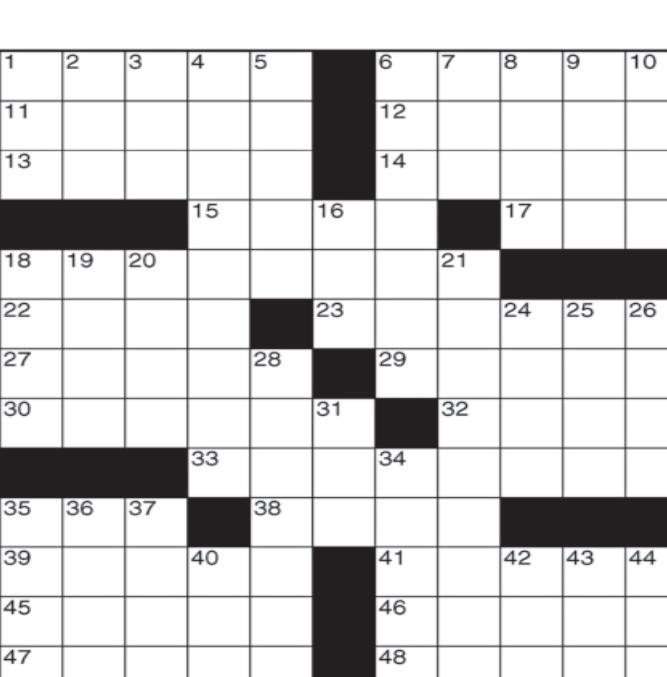
Failure to do so would jeopardise not just profits, but also impact the entire industry, public health, and the well-being of the people.

CROSSWORD
BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS
1 Post-surgery regimen, for short
6 This symbol: ,
11 "Once upon - ..."
12 Be patient for
13 Florida city
14 Slow tempo
15 Continental coin
17 Slangy agreement
18 Appetizers
22 Red-ink amount
23 Cinco de Mayo event
27 Group of top players
29 Online messages
30 Trail mix bit
32 Land in the sea
33 Soaks
35 Femur's upper end

38 Harry Belafonte hit
39 Boise's state
41 Fill with joy
45 Subject
46 Castle part
47 This symbol: /
48 Contemptuous look

16 Game caller
18 Open-handed hit
19 Carryall
20 On the ocean
21 This symbol: ;
24 Robe feature
25 Mosaic piece
26 Pub orders
28 Writer Iris
31 Brewed drink
34 Russian denials
35 Top 10 records
36 Pop star
37 One of a bear trio
40 That fellow's
42 Really impress
43 Golf support
44 Mess up



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BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

When the waters rise and the food disappears

Review of 'A Guardian and A Thief: A Novel' (Random House Large Print), by Megha Majumdar to be released on October 14, 2025

SHAH TAZRIAN ASHRAFI

"Anything, with sufficient intention, could become a weapon."

—Megha Majumdar, *A Guardian and A Thief*

The quote above seems to capture the heart of this novel set in a near-future dystopian Kolkata rendered uninhabitable by political corruption, inequality, and the ominous package of climate crisis—floods, famine, overheating. In Ma and Dadu's desperate attempts to salvage any morsel of happiness and comfort they can for the two-year-old Mishti, in Boomba's relentless struggle to find a sturdy place in the city for his displaced family, one can see the quote peeking out of almost every scene, which rises from the bedrock of urgency.

Ma and her father, Dadu, are scheduled to move to Michigan with her daughter Mishti. Her husband is a scientist there. Because of that, they were eligible to receive a special type of visa called the climate visa after long months of bureaucratic processing. Their passports, however, go missing as Boomba breaks into the house in the dead of night and steals Ma's purse (which carries the passports) alongside food from their stocked pantry. This event triggers a narrative fueled by endless sleuthing and the breathless energy of Bong Joon Ho's 2025 film



ILLUSTRATION: MAISHA SYEDA

The novel also succeeds in writing sentimental scenes without being saccharine. The sentimentality doesn't stem from overdone truisms, though. It's profound and laced with refreshing depth. "Perhaps the true adventure was not only in seeing the world but also in seeing the versions of one's own self that the journey revealed."

Mickey 17. It's a narrative where the stakes are constantly being raised high for the four characters (Ma, Dadu, Boomba, and Mishti). Whenever we see a moment of reprieve, Majumdar is quick to snatch it away. Such a propulsive narrative where the odds are insurmountable seems only right in the context of a South Asian nation ravaged by climate crisis.

As I progressed through the story, I couldn't help but see Dhaka instead of

Kolkata in the pages. Because these cities are similar in many ways, I felt close to home the irascible nature of civilians who are frustrated with the weather and lack of basic things in a hopeless landscape. I certainly hope her portrayal of a depleted and mangled city isn't prescient, although it's hard to not stare at the prescient element if one considers the desolate statistics related to the climate crisis.

One passage particularly stood out to me because of how it conveys a pervasive sense of hunger in this dystopian Kolkata: "Throughout the crematorium grounds, dogs roamed, tongues hanging, ribs sticking to skin, seeking food in the flesh of those who were gone, and it was only when the loved ones of the dead yelled, 'Hut! Hut!' that they retreated."

The novel is rife with passages and scenes like this, not shying away from casting in clear light poignant details of abjection. In doing so, Majumdar's intention of suffusing the pages with nostalgia and longing for a lost time,

a time when all the crises were only looming on the horizon and not a tangible part of everyday life, shines through. Consider, for instance, when Ma and Dadu go to the bazaar and lament the fact that nobody has had real fish and vegetables in a long time because of the intense salinity in the rivers and the uncultivability of large swathes of the country's farmland.

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Another strength of the novel is its economical yet lyrical language that never wanes. It sustains the fast-paced story through and through, making the reader face a difficult choice between savouring the language and turning the pages to see what happens next. This dilemma reminded me of the

similar experience I had while reading Ian McEwan's *Atonement* (2001) and Tahmima Anam's *A Golden Age* (2007) earlier this year.

The big question the novel is interested in grappling with is: What part of yourself are you willing to lose to bring comfort to your family? This question is the heaviest on Ma, who harbours a shameful secret that will ultimately change her life trajectory, and Boomba, whose past mistakes are stalking him as he lurches from one obstacle to another as an uneducated man with no social mobility. Another question that arises from this one, and is also relevant to, is: Who is truly a guardian and who is a thief? Of course, the novel provides no clear cut answers.

It creates a whirlwind through these binaries between guardian and thief, good and evil, pushing the reader to a dizzying intersection where it's hard to decide whose choices are more ethical in this strange dystopia where a billionaire is developing cooling products to sell to the heat-stricken masses, most of whom cannot even afford those products. In propping up these questions, the novel doesn't feel allegorical, like it's trying to lay out a manual of how things should be done. It feels organic and woven into a tight and cohesive plot by the characters' unique reasonings and motivations, all borne on the shifty carpet of uncertainty and fear. I cannot gauge how the novel's plot came to be so (Is the author an arduous outliner? Or does she play by the ear?). But nowhere does the author's artifice (of making us believe that the story world is entirely governed by her characters and not herself) crack or falter.

If this novel isn't longlisted for the Booker Prize next year, it would be a terrible shame.

Shah Tazrian Ashrafi is an MFA candidate and a graduate teaching assistant in Fiction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is the author of *The Hippo Girl & Other Stories* (Hachette India, 2024).

BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

For wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving

A book review of 'White Lilies: An Essay on Grief' (Context, 2025) by Vidya Krishnana

IFFAT NAWAZ

Approximately 105 people die every minute globally. This is nothing but data until in some specific wretched minute, someone dear to us adds a plus one to that digit. When those we love die, their losses dig enormous holes in our beings. Though invisible to the physical eye, these freshly cut hollows ache like any deep wound would, they bleed out more blood than we carry in our veins. A severe soreness spreads over us without any remedies, without offering us a recovery timeline. There is no telling when grieving ends or if it ever actually does.

It is in this unending and often shapeless experience of grief that Vidya Krishnana's *White Lilies* finds its ground. Vidya's nonfiction essay, divided into four parts, explores death and grieving in ways that are at once deeply personal and sharply observational. About a decade ago, she lost her grandmother to old age and her partner to a road accident in Delhi, all in the same life-shattering weekend. Vidya, a journalist and an author, writes about her often blind and at other times illuminated navigation through that dark week, and many weeks, months, and years which followed. She tries to make sense of this grand tragedy as she scrutinises and synthesises her reality along with the world's. And through these years she performs an autopsy of the dead-alive city she blames as the perpetrator—Delhi,

the city of rage and grief, revolution and destruction, old and heavy yet so ready to take on more marks of deaths on her walls.

This focus on the city as a character resonated with me in a particular way. I have a special weakness for books which explore spaces and objects as characters. Perhaps because my birth city Dhaka is a very living and breathing entity for me. A city which is not merely bound by her old rivers and endless traffic jams, Dhaka's pulse is as thick and audible as one wants it to be, as ancient and melancholy as one feels on any given day. In her book, Vidya combs through Delhi's landscape, its wrinkled bloody creases with an unforgiving precision while carrying the heart of the city's most beloved poet, Mirza Ghalib. She digs into Delhi's road rage, mercilessness, injustices, age-old patterns of suffering and violence, making me return to the narratives around my chaotic Dhaka. *White Lilies* left me wondering how our cities can be the reason for our griefs, while grieving with us. A repository of eternal agony, a graveyard of nameless and named martyrs and everyday women and men. Vidya writes

"No story about Delhi is complete without rage turned inwards," and "I believe Delhi hurt him [Mirza Ghalib] into poetry. Delhi remains hurtful still because poetry does not change anything. It simply survives."

From here, my thoughts moved towards a



ILLUSTRATION: AMREETA LETHE

broader reflection: for centuries, poets and writers have penned their versions of grief and grieving, yet there remains a lack of books on the subject. I wonder why it's so. Is it that I have purposely forgotten such narratives on mourning? After all, who wants to remember details of other people's sorrows? Or is it that we don't find a specific balance in storytelling when it comes to grief. Nonfiction narratives on grief can either be too dramatised or around a

individual grief cannot be measured. There are no instruments to document lamentation. It's all a ball of fury and a jumbled up, defeated cry.

Which is why, even though Rumi has become a cliché in recent years, I can't help but repeat his lines when thinking about who should read *White Lilies*. It is here I turn to: "Come, come, whoever you are. Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving. It doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair." If you have known grief personally; if it has lived with you for days or decades; if you come from a place or have left a place where mourning is/was a common element; if you have seen the face of brokenness, in the mirror or around you; if your body has felt chills for bygone shadows, its heaviness or even lightness; if you have not forgiven and don't plan to or you are searching for a reason to forgive—someone, someplace, something; if you want to admit that you are not alone in your grieving; and if you are willing to cry for yourself, and be brave enough to cry for others, then this book is for you.

Iffat Nawaz is a Bangladeshi-American writer based in Pondicherry, India. Her first novel, *Shurjo's Clan*, was published by Penguin India (Vintage) in 2022, and was shortlisted for the "Best First Book" Award by Tata Lit Live/Mumbai Literature Festival in 2023.



What to WATCH

T SPORTS
Zimbabwe vs
New Zealand
2nd Test, Day 1
Live from 2:00 pm
SONY SPORTS 5

The Hundred
Northern Super-
chargers vs
Welsh Fire
Live from
11:30 pm

SAGORIKA BRACE gives Bangladesh winning start

SPORTS REPORTER

Mosammat Sagorika scored a brace as Bangladesh got off to a winning start in their AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers with a 3-1 win over hosts Laos in their first Group H fixture at Lao National Stadium in Vientiane on Wednesday.

Coming off an MVP performance in Bangladesh's title-winning SAFF U-20 Championship campaign, Sagorika scored either side of the break. Munki Akter added another goal to help the women in red and green secure all three points, following South Korea's

dominant 9-0 win over Timor-Leste in the earlier fixture at the same venue.

Peter Butler's charges looked slightly nervous in the opening half, struggling with errant passes and an occasionally exposed backline. Despite several long-range efforts, Bangladesh failed to capitalise early on. Laos forward Vanvaly Bounlamy nearly punished the visitors, but Bangladesh held firm.

The breakthrough came in the 36th minute when Sagorika headed in a left-footed corner delivered by Shanti Mardi. Sinha Jahan Shikha came close to doubling the lead five minutes later,

but her effort struck the woodwork.

Bangladesh looked more composed after the break, controlling possession and creating chances. However, they initially failed to convert, with Shanti Mardi missing a clear opportunity in the 46th minute and Trishna Rani narrowly off-target from close range shortly after.

The second goal arrived in the 58th minute when Munki, played through by Trishna, nutmegged defender Nitzia Sumalit and calmly slotted the ball into the near post past goalkeeper Thongsamoud Vongkhamphan.

Sagorika nearly added another

in the 72nd minute off a cross from Sapna Rani, only to be denied by the crossbar. Laos pulled one back in the 86th minute through Anna Keo Onsy, raising hopes of a late comeback. But Sagorika sealed the victory in stoppage time with a composed left-footed finish from inside the six-yard box.

Bangladesh will take on Timor-Leste in their next match on Friday, while South Korea will square off against Laos. Only the winners of the eight groups along with three best second placed finishers will advance to the final round, which will be held in Thailand in April next year.



PRELIMINARY ASIA CUP SQUAD exposes shallow pipeline

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

A little over a year ago, all-rounder Mohammad Saifuddin inadvertently exposed the sorry state of the players' pipeline in Bangladesh when he told the media, "To be honest, there are 20-25 players in Bangladesh who are capable of playing international cricket... Opportunities will come if I can stay fit."

To his credit, Saifuddin substantiated this statement himself by getting called up for the series against Sri Lanka and Pakistan in this year's July out of the blue.

Saifuddin also features in the recently announced 25-member preliminary Bangladesh squad for next month's Asia Cup – an assortment of players which looks less like a shortlist of the country's premier T20 players, and more like the collection of almost every available white-ball cricketer fit to play for the Tigers.

Barring the players who only feature in Tests – like Mominul Haque, Shadman Islam and Mahmudul Hasan Joy, some domestic performers who have not been able to replicate it in international cricket – Anamul Haque Bijoy, Mosaddeq Hossain, Afif Hossain and Yasir Ali, and some young upstarts yet to break into the national side – Akbar Ali, Jishan Alam, anyone who could have been drafted into the 25-member squad, has in fact, been drafted.

Few of the inclusions are quite baffling, given how they had either failed to prove their mettle in the format in the past or were very recently dropped from the side.

One of those selections was Mohammad Naim, who was picked for last month's T20I assignments against Sri Lanka and Pakistan on the back of good performances in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), the Dhaka Premier League (DPL) and also an 82-run knock against New Zealand A in May.

But the opener could not make the opportunity count, failing to inspire with a 29-ball 32 in the only match he featured in the Sri Lanka series and his lethargic batting in the Pakistan series raised the question of what exactly he has improved upon after being left out of the T20I setup in August 2022, due to a

lack of impactful knocks.

Naim has so far played 38 T20Is which obviously points to the fact that he is not untested in the format. While selectors may feel there is a chance for him to stake a claim in the setup, so far it remains only a hypothesis.

Soumya Sarkar perhaps exists in the opposite end of the spectrum as impact has not been a problem for him but consistency has always been a thorn.

Soumya, who has featured in 87 T20Is, was dropped from Bangladesh's last two series, did not score big for Rangpur Riders in the Global Super League in the Caribbean in July, but perhaps in the spirit of being in the radar, remains in the 25-member squad.

Even former skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto was called up to the preliminary squad after being dropped from Sri Lanka and Pakistan T20Is.

Current ODI captain Mehidy Hasan Miraz could not impress in the three games he played in the last two series, but that didn't affect his status as a player in the T20I radar as he was duly picked in the preliminary squad.

There are also two returnees in the squad in Nurul Hasan Sohan and Saif Hassan, who have not played in T20Is for Bangladesh since 2022 and 2023 respectively, as apparently it was their turn to get reshuffled into the national team's mix after spending a little time at the periphery.

Calling up these players do not necessarily reflect that the selectors are wrong to include them. However, the fact that familiar faces keep circling back into the mix after being out for a few series favours the hypothesis that there just aren't enough players in the pipeline.

BPL, a tournament that was supposed to unearth fresh talents in T20s for Bangladesh, has not been very successful at it and there are hardly any other avenues for players to emerge from.

The dearth of players means less competition for a spot in the side, which is never a good thing. But until new, exciting talents emerge, the selectors have no choice but to shuffle around the same group of players in the hopes of a better outcome.

Fakirerpool's transfer ban lifted

SPORTS REPORTER

FIFA has lifted the transfer ban on Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club, allowing the club to complete its ongoing transfer and participate in the top-tier football in upcoming season.

The world governing body of football had imposed the ban on the Motijheel-based outfit earlier this month over its inability to clear last season's wages of Uzbek footballer Sardor Jakhonov.

"We are all delighted to hear the news. The letter lifting our sanction came to BFF today and they have informed us," Ahmad Ali, the club's general secretary, told The Daily Star on Wednesday noon, claiming that the club cleared Tk 25 lakh in due salaries to the Uzbekistan player.

Fakirerpool had finished eighth in the Bangladeshi Premier League last season, barely avoiding relegation.

The transfer window for the upcoming season is scheduled to close on August 15.



I don't think this [tournament] is a process of learning. We are always learning; it's part of life. Since we are going to play a tournament, I think the main goal should be to reach the final. Every player, along with the team management, shares the same aim - to win the trophy.

Bangladesh A team captain Nurul Hasan Sohan told the media yesterday, prior to the team's departure for Australia for the Top End T20 Series 2025 in Darwin.

Tita takes Bashundhara Kings to FIFA

SPORTS REPORTER

Former coach Valeriu Tita has lodged a complaint with the FIFA against his former owners Bashundhara Kings over unpaid salaries, bonuses and flight tickets.

Having taken up the coaching job at Omani club Al Seeb in June this year, Tita this week took his former employers in Bangladesh to FIFA, alleging the club's reluctance to clear his payments.

"The complaint is about three months' salaries, bonuses and flight tickets that I paid by myself," the Romanian told The Daily Star, adding that his former trainer at Kings, Khalil Charkoun, has filed a similar complaint against the club.

The journeyman coach has also expressed his dismay over the apparent sudden change of fortunes of the club, who have recently appointed Brazilian coach Sergio Farias for the upcoming season and recruited a few quality foreign and local players.

"The conditions that they had before we came there were top and easy to even win the AFC Cup but when we arrived there were only problems: no players, no money, no bonus, nothing and with all of this we won 2 trophies," Tita exclaimed. "Yet they are now recruiting new players and new staff. Everything is strange." Bashundhara Kings are currently preparing for their AFC Challenge play-off fixture against Syrian club Al-Karamah SC on August 12 in Doha.



PHOTO: ZIMBABWE CRICKET

Bangladesh Under-19 cricketers celebrate taking a wicket against their South African counterparts in a league match of a tri-nation series, also involving hosts Zimbabwe, at the Harare Sports Club yesterday. The young Tigers secured a five-wicket win against South Africa in the dress rehearsal of the final on August 10.

It's a fair question. If football is to be taken forward, why does the federation stay fixated on national teams and Dhaka's top-tier leagues, while grassroots football withers? How can development thrive when a tournament of such scale and legacy lies dormant?

The BFF appointed executive member Tipu Sultan as chairman of the Pioneer League committee in November last year, but the rest of the committee is yet to be finalised.

"We plan to resume the Pioneer Football League tentatively from mid-October," Sultan told The Daily Star from Kathmandu yesterday, adding that he will meet board president Tabith Awal to expedite the process once he returns.

But the clock, typically unforgiving in nature, is ticking.

In a footballing culture where women players have had to fight for basic necessities like nutritious food or address unpaid salaries – even after landmark victories – or when women's team head coach describes the living standard in the BFF Elite Academy in "bad shape", something just doesn't add up.

If the roots are diseased, how can the tree bear fruit?

Even with financial constraints or logistical hurdles, youth development cannot be sacrificed.

As Mohanagar Krira Chakra's Alamgir Hossain warned yesterday, "If the league is held irregularly, then you won't find any footballers in the coming days."

Shahadat Hossain of Laizu Football Academy cautioned as well, that time is slipping away, noting, "If they can't start the league in October, it will be deferred by another six months due to the preparation for the national elections and Ramadan."

Bangladesh can no longer afford to let this sleeping giant lie. The youth are waiting, and they don't tend to have the patience to wait for long.

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A homecoming that ended in heartbreak

7 of a family killed as microbus plunges into Lakshmipur canal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

It was meant to be a perfect day of a long-awaited reunion, a joyful ride home, a chance to make up for three lost years.

Abdul Bahar, 25, had just returned from Oman, and was heading from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport back to their home in Lakshmipur Sadar's Choupalli village with 10 of his family members who had gone to receive him.

But everything he waited for was lost in a single, unforgettable moment as the microbus carrying them plunged into a roadside canal in Noakhali's Begumganj upazila early yesterday, killing seven of them except Bahar and three others.

Among the dead were Bahar's wife Kabitা, 24; their two-and-a-half-year-old daughter Samia Sultana Bhabna; his mother Murshida Begum, 50; grandmother Foyzunnesa, 80; sister-in-law Laboni Begum, 30; and nieces Lamia, 9, and Bibi Fatema, 10.

All seven bodies were laid out in a row in the family yard in the village in the afternoon. A hush

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



As they walked into their campus, the students of Milestone School and College could not look away from the remnants of the carnage left behind by the jet crash in one of their school buildings. With full bags and heavy hearts, they returned to their classes yesterday. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

RUSSIAN OIL PURCHASE Trump raises India tariffs to 50%

New Delhi calls move 'unfair, unjustified' as Indo-US ties hit new low

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump imposed an additional 25 percent tariff on Indian goods, citing New Delhi's continued imports of Russian oil in a move that sharply escalated tensions between the two nations after trade talks reached a deadlock.

The new import tax, effective 21 days after August 7, will raise duties on some Indian exports to as high as 50 percent -- among the highest levied on any US trading partner.

Trump's executive order imposing the extra tariff did not mention China, which also imports Russian oil.

Exemptions remain, however, for goods targeted under sector-specific duties, such as steel and aluminium, as well as categories that could be affected later, including pharmaceuticals and semiconductors.

Smartphones are among this list of exempted products for now, notably shielding Apple from a major hit as the US tech titan shifts production from China to India.

India's foreign ministry condemned Trump's tariff announcement, calling the move "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable."

"India will take all necessary steps to protect its national interests," it said.

The ministry previously said India began importing oil from Russia as traditional supplies were diverted to Europe over the war -- noting that Washington had "actively encouraged" such imports to strengthen "global energy market stability."

Analysts said Trump's move marks the most serious downturn in US-India relations since his return to office in January. The tariffs threaten to disrupt India's access to its largest export market, where shipments totalled nearly \$87 billion in 2024, hitting sectors like textiles, footwear, gems and jewelry.

The development comes as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Stay united for the sake of the nation
Tarique urges pro-democracy forces

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday urged all pro-democracy forces to remain united for the greater interest of the nation.

"Political parties will always have different views on various issues. But those differences must be resolved through discussion. In national interest, especially for the sake of democracy, pro-democracy parties should never turn their backs on each other," he said at a rally.

Tarique made these remarks while virtually addressing a rally organised by the BNP in front of its central office in Nayapaltan, marking the first anniversary of the July 2024 Mass Uprising.

Thousands of leaders and activists from the capital and nearby districts attended the event, filling the road from Fakirapool to Kakrail intersection.

"We all need to stay united in

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

Jamaat, NCP okay with polls timeline

Most parties, except BNP, describe July Declaration as incomplete

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most political parties have welcomed Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus announcing national election in February next year.

However, the parties, except the BNP, expressed reservations about the July Declaration, which was unveiled on Tuesday.

They said the declaration was "incomplete" and demanded a complete July Declaration and July Charter, and the promised reforms before the polls.

Jamaat-e-Islami said they had expected that the chief adviser would hold talks with political parties regarding the announcement of the election timeline.

“ The work of Prof Muhammad Yunus shows that he won't do anything in the future that would make the election questionable.

MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR
BNP secretary general



"The nation has been stunned and surprised that he did not," Jamaat Nayeb-e-Ameer Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taher told a press conference at Al-Falah auditorium in the capital's Moghbazar area yesterday.

He, however, said, "We view the chief adviser's announcement positively in the greater national interest."

In reply to a query, Taher said, "As you know, the Jamaat ameer told journalists on April 16 that it would be appropriate to hold the election before Ramadan, which is in the month of February."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

KILLING OF ABU SAYED ICT-2 frames charges against 30 accused

Trial in case to begin on August 27

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal 2 yesterday framed charges against 30 individuals, including Begum Rokeya University's former vice-chancellor Md Hasibur Rashid, senior officials, and police personnel, in a case filed over the killing of student protester Abu Sayed in Rangpur during last year's July uprising.

The three-member tribunal, led by Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury, passed the indictment order after reading out the charges to six of the accused. It then fixed August 27 to begin the trial.

The six, all currently in jail, were produced before the court, which detailed their alleged roles in aiding, inciting, or directly carrying out the shooting that killed Sayed, who was unarmed at the time.

The trial against the 24 others, who remain absconding, will proceed in absentia. State-appointed defence lawyers will represent them.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Forex reserves cross \$25b again

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Country's foreign exchange reserves have crossed the \$25 billion mark for the second time this year, thanks to an increased inflow of foreign currency from remittance and exports.

As per the International Monetary Fund's calculations, forex reserves stood at \$25.05 billion yesterday, up from \$24.77 billion a week ago.

However, according to BB's calculations, forex reserves stood at \$30.07 billion, up from \$29.80 billion a week ago.

At the end of June this year, reserves crossed \$25 billion after two and a half years, thanks to an increased inflow of remittances and the release of funds by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), and other lending agencies.

The forex reserves, however, dropped below the \$25 billion mark following the payment of import bills through the Asian Clearing Union (ACU).

Bangladesh Bank officials said the reserves increased in recent months as remittance inflow grew since the political changeover in August last year. Declining use of hundi, an illegal cross-border transaction, also helped.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

ICT CASE AGAINST HASINA Tribunal records testimony of two more witnesses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two prosecution witnesses yesterday testified before the International Crimes Tribunal-1 against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her two top aides, detailing the killing of Begum Rokeya University (BRU) student Abu Sayed.

"Sayed stood with arms outstretched near the central reservation when two policemen shot him from about 12 yards away. He collapsed," said Rina Murmu, 29, a former BRU student.

She learnt of his death around 3:30pm on July 16 last year.

Giving identical account of the incident, NTV senior correspondent AKM Moinul Haque, who covered the protest live, confirmed the shooting occurred at 2:17pm. He submitted a copy of the raw footage and the footage that was telecast live. The court played the clip.

Sayed's defiance against oppression turned the protests into a mass uprising that eventually toppled Hasina's regime on August 5 last year.

Hasina and co-accused former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal are being tried in absentia in the case. The third accused, ex-IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, who became a state witness, was present in the court during the hearing.

The tribunal also set August 17 for the next witness deposition, having so far recorded statements of five prosecution witnesses.

Rina said their protest against the quota system in government job was peaceful until July 14. That day,

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

BERGER LUXURY Silk WEDDING Glamshoot

রঞ্জ রঞ্জ Maldives -এ ঘূরে এলেন বিজয়ী ও শ্রয়মারাস কামল

সেরা কামলদের শ্রয়মারাস জাতি দেখতে চোখ রাখুন
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Analyze/berger/2025

GREEN FACTORY AWARD 2025

The Daily Star

SUPPLEMENT | DHAKA THURSDAY AUGUST 7, 2025, SRABAN 23, 1432 BS | S1

Greener factories STRONGER FUTURE

PRIYAM PAUL

As Bangladesh strides towards middle-income status, it must confront a reality that few nations can ignore: it is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. From rising sea levels and extreme weather events to resource scarcity and pollution, the environmental threats are severe and persistent. This fragility demands a radical rethinking of how the country industrialises. Fortunately, a green transformation is already underway.

Once criticised for lax compliance and unsafe working conditions—particularly in labour-intensive sectors such as garments and leather—Bangladesh is now emerging as an unlikely leader in sustainable industrial practices. At the forefront of this shift are its garment factories. With more than 200 factories certified by the US Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), Bangladesh now boasts the highest number of green garment factories in the world. This achievement is no longer limited to the RMG (Ready-Made Garment) sector—it is beginning to ripple through other industries as well.

Recognising this momentum, the Ministry of Labour and Employment recently awarded 30 companies with the Green Factory Award 2025, honouring those that have demonstrated

tangible commitments to eco-friendly practices, worker safety, and resource efficiency. The award spans sectors including textiles, leather, pharmaceuticals, electronics, food processing, steel, ship-breaking, and diversified manufacturing.

"It's encouraging to see that these companies are genuinely performing well," said Dr Ainun Nishat, Professor Emeritus at BRAC University and one of Bangladesh's leading environmental experts. "Certifications like this promote energy efficiency, pollution control, and responsible resource use. They also have practical implications—such as maximising natural light—that benefit both the environment and the people working inside these factories."

Among this year's honourees are BSRM and Walton, leaders in the steel and electronics sectors respectively. These companies exemplify how environmentally conscious business strategies can coexist with growth and innovation.

"Our organisation has a longstanding institutional culture that actively promotes and implements environmentally friendly practices," said Aameir Alihussain, Managing Director of BSRM. "We dedicate our time, effort, and mindset to sustainability. If businesses in Bangladesh—from manufacturing to agriculture—do not adopt eco-conscious mindsets, we will face serious generational

consequences."

BSRM's steel operations are known for using modern, energy-efficient processes, while Walton has invested heavily in waste reduction, water reuse, and renewable energy.

"Every year, we recycle over 8,000 tonnes of plastic and safely dispose of more than 62,000 units of e-waste," explained Md Tanvir Anjum, Business Coordinator to the Managing Director at Walton. "Our effluent treatment plant processes more than 330 million litres of wastewater annually, 75%

"Green practices mean becoming resource-efficient, which translates into cost savings," said Fakir Kamruzzaman Nahid, Managing Director of Fakir Fashion Limited, another award recipient. "More importantly, it ensures the wellbeing of workers and long-term growth. We've seen improved employee retention and workplace satisfaction. In today's conscious marketplace, green practices give you a definite competitive edge."

Fakir Fashion has embraced technologies such as Exhaust Gas

With more than 200 factories certified by the US Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), Bangladesh now boasts the highest number of green garment factories in the world. This achievement is no longer limited to the RMG (Ready-Made Garment) sector—it is beginning to ripple through other industries as well.

of which is reused. That's not just sustainability—it's smart business."

Indeed, the business case for green investment is growing stronger. In an era of rising energy costs, increased environmental regulation, and changing consumer preferences, sustainable practices are no longer just ethically commendable—they're commercially necessary.

Boilers (EGB) for steam generation using waste heat, large-scale rainwater harvesting, and a high-capacity Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) with an 8,000 m³ treatment capacity. These investments not only help meet compliance requirements but also align with global sustainability standards—something increasingly demanded by international buyers.

However, not all sectors are progressing at the same pace. The

leather industry, long considered a potential export powerhouse, has struggled due to compliance shortfalls. Without Leather Working Group (LWG) certification—required by many global importers—exports to countries like Italy have dwindled. Addressing these gaps requires urgent upgrades to the Central Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) in Savar, improved tannery conditions, and better waste management. Experts argue that such reforms must be proactive rather than reactionary, driven by national ambition rather than external pressure.

Complementing these corporate efforts is the role of Bangladesh Bank, which has introduced green financing schemes through commercial banks. These facilities offer loans at preferential rates to industries that invest in renewable energy, pollution control, or water treatment. But industry leaders argue that incentives need to go further.

"The government can play a stronger role by providing non-refundable tax credits or direct incentives to companies that go green, rather than relying solely on punitive measures," said Aameir Alihussain.

Sustainability, however, is not a one-time achievement—it's an ongoing commitment. Dr Ainun Nishat cautioned that certificates and awards should not lead to complacency. "The real test begins after recognition.

Companies must continue to uphold these standards through regular audits and ongoing training. And government inspection agencies have a vital role in ensuring compliance is maintained," he said.

As Bangladesh seeks to maintain its competitiveness on the global stage, particularly in export-driven sectors, embracing green industrialisation is not optional—it is essential. From garment factories and steel plants to electronics and leather goods, sustainability is becoming the common thread in Bangladesh's industrial growth story.

In doing so, the country is not only protecting its fragile environment but also future-proofing its industries—ensuring that economic ambition does not come at the cost of ecological destruction. By building on this momentum, Bangladesh could well become a global model for how a developing country can industrialise without compromising the health of its people or the planet.



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Powers

FAKIR FASHION'S GREEN JOURNEY

FAKIR KAMRUZZAMAN NAHID

Managing Director, Fakir Fashion Limited



The Daily Star (TDS): What specific green practices or innovations helped your factory secure the Green Factory Award 2025?

Fakir Kamruzzaman Nahid (FKN): We genuinely believe in the true implementation of the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and are actively working to apply this philosophy wherever possible. Beyond our major achievements in sustainability—such as the 4.5 MW solar power plant and the BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) that stores and utilises solar energy during production—we have proactively introduced several advanced initiatives and machinery.

These include water and steam recovery systems through our fully European dye house, an advanced steam management and condensate recovery system, and significant process savings through production method optimisation. Additionally, we utilise an EGB (Exhaust Gas Boiler) that recycles waste heat to generate steam, maintain a large-scale rainwater harvesting facility, and operate a fully functional ETP with 8,000m³ capacity.

We are also fully compliant with sustainable chemical usage and disposal protocols. However, true sustainability also means sustaining the people behind the operations. In this regard, our extensive employee welfare programmes—covering

benefits, healthcare, and wellbeing—have played a crucial role. Through the proactive efforts and dedication of our employees, we have implemented practices that not only meet industry standards but, in many cases, surpass them.

TDS: How has adopting green practices benefited your company?

FKN: I believe sustainable practices and business success go hand in hand. In many cases, though it may increase the cost of business, the benefits always return, sometimes surprisingly so. Green practices mean becoming resource-efficient, resulting in cost savings, which is a huge benefit. Along with that, it ensures the wellbeing and sustainability of people, for which we have seen employee retention and growth.

In today's conscious world, green practices give businesses a competitive advantage. In this case, I believe we are fully aligned with both the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our buyers' sustainability expectations, continuously optimising our facility and processes towards achieving Net Zero emission goals. I believe our proactive approach and investments will result in many long-term benefits for us in the future, making us more

efficient while also ensuring Bangladesh makes a mark on the world stage as a preferred and sustainable manufacturing destination.

TDS: What challenges did you face in implementing sustainable practices?

FKN: The increase in operational costs is always a challenge in the face of sustainability. But I believe in most cases, these costs are investments into the future, ensuring the long-term survival of the industry. Adopting newer methods and moving away from traditional practices is also sometimes challenging, but with a clear vision, I believe these challenges can be overcome and industries can rapidly adapt and evolve.

Returns on sustainability investments often hinge on recognition and support from buyers and governing bodies. Without this acknowledgement, it becomes difficult to sustain such efforts in the long term. We believe it is crucial for all stakeholders to understand these challenges so that the industry can advance in a sustainable yet profitable manner.

TDS: What are your plans for further expanding and strengthening green initiatives within your operations?

FKN: With the world rapidly advancing in technology, we are moving towards automation and smart factory practices. Through our subsidiary, Fakir Technologies Limited, and many technology partners, we are working on the implementation of Smart Factory 5.0.

Resource efficiency is a cornerstone of sustainability, and I believe process optimisation through technology can play a significant role in that. The implementation of AI-based technologies and big data is the next frontier—enabling us to digitise more processes, handle data with ease, conserve resources and time, and generate useful reports for business success.

We are already implementing this in our operations and have seen great benefits. Increased use of eco-friendly and sustainable materials, sustainable processes, emissions control, and resource efficiency all collectively contribute to reducing our carbon footprint. We are working proactively on these fronts to remain competitive on the world stage and to address the growing responsibility of the fashion industry.

TDS: What kind of policy or institutional support would you like to see from the government to help sustain and scale your green efforts?

FKN: Green finance has been a great driving force for the industry, and we have seen valuable interventions from Bangladesh Bank in this regard. Alongside this, favourable import-export duties and tax benefits for sustainable manufacturers would greatly support businesses in becoming better suited to an increasingly competitive market.

Strategic policies and increased benefits will not only encourage manufacturers to adopt green practices but also give the industry an edge in competing with other key manufacturing countries. Especially after LDC graduation, Bangladesh will lose certain trade benefits. For this reason, we must shift towards sustainable and value-added products and explore new markets.

The government could introduce a benchmark system, listing clear milestones that companies can achieve in order to access specific benefits. Ensuring access to low-cost finance to sustain and scale such operations, opening dialogues with key export destination countries for favourable bilateral trade agreements, and showcasing Bangladesh's strengths as a sustainable manufacturing hub to potential markets will be crucial for us, moving forward, in my opinion.



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WALTON AIMS TO LEAD SUSTAINABLE

Green Industrial Revolution

MD. TANVIR ANJUM

Senior Executives Director & Business Coordinator to MD, Walton Hi-Tech Industries PLC.



The Daily Star (TDS): What specific green practices or innovations helped your factory secure the Green Factory Award 2025?

Tanvir Anjum (TA): At Walton, sustainability isn't just a checkbox—it's a guiding principle that runs through the heart of our operations. Securing the Green Factory Award 2025 is a true honour for us, and it reflects the collective effort of our teams, especially the EHS department, which has worked relentlessly to embed environmental consciousness throughout the organisation.

One of the key milestones has been the installation of our 6.5 megawatt rooftop solar plant, which is already generating renewable power for our operations. But we're not stopping there—we aim to expand this to 50 megawatts by 2026. It's an ambitious goal, but one we're fully committed to.

We've also made significant strides in energy efficiency by deploying technologies such as BLDC fans, inverter-based ACs, LED lighting, and motion-sensor systems. These small changes, when scaled across an industrial footprint, have a substantial impact.

Considering our strong commitment to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Walton adopted the 'Goal Zero' initiative, which implies zero harm to people, the environment, and property, as well as zero net carbon emissions. Thus, we have integrated green manufacturing practices. As part of this integration, several projects have been implemented—and others are ongoing—in coordination with UNDP. We have already completely phased out the use of CFC

and HCFC gases in refrigerators and air conditioners. By using low-global-warming refrigerants like R600a, we have reduced over 330,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

Another area we've focused on is waste and resource management. Every year, we recycle over 8,000 tonnes of plastic and safely dispose of more than 62,000 units of e-waste. Our effluent treatment plants processes more than 330 million litres of wastewater annually, with a 75% reuse rate. That's not just sustainability—it's smart business.

We've also digitalised many of our processes, significantly reducing paper usage—saving the equivalent of over 15,000 trees. All of these initiatives are backed by international certifications such as ISO 14001, ISO 45001, and LEED, which validate our commitment to global environmental standards.

TDS: How has embracing green practices benefited Walton as a company?

TA: It's had a transformative impact—operationally, environmentally, and culturally.

On the operational front, shifting to solar power and optimising water reuse through our ETP system has led to notable reductions in utility costs. These are smart investments with long-term savings. Environmentally, we've significantly cut emissions by using low-GWP refrigerants like R600a, R32, and R410a, and by recycling thousands of tonnes of plastic, metal, and e-waste every year.

These efforts haven't gone unnoticed. Nationally, we've been recognised with the Green Factory Award in both 2023 and 2025, the UNDP SDG Brand Champion Award

2025, the Excellence in ESG Investment Award, and the National Environment Award 2018—each reflecting our leadership in sustainable manufacturing.

Internationally, we've received the British Safety Council International Safety Award and the RoSPA International Safety Award—both highly regarded recognitions of our workplace safety standards and environmental risk management on a global scale.

But perhaps the most meaningful change is internal. These achievements have created a deep sense of pride among our workforce. Employees know they're contributing to a purpose-driven organisation—and that pride translates into stronger performance, innovation, and long-term commitment. For us, sustainability has become a competitive edge as well as a responsibility.

TDS: What challenges did you face while implementing these sustainable practices?

TA: Like any meaningful transformation, it wasn't easy. The first major hurdle was financial. Installing rooftop solar systems, setting up high-capacity effluent treatment plants, and integrating smart energy systems required significant capital investment. These were not decisions we took lightly—but we knew they were essential for the long term.

Another challenge was technical know-how. Many of the green technologies we adopted weren't readily available in the local context, so we had to invest in training and international collaboration. Upskilling our teams was crucial to ensure we could operate and maintain these systems effectively.

Realigning our supply chain was also

complex. Finding vendors who aligned with our sustainability standards for raw materials, packaging, and components required strategic evaluation and strong collaboration. Navigating the regulatory landscape—with its layers of environmental compliance and clearance processes—was complex, but we approached it systematically. With a clear roadmap and unwavering focus, we were able to address these challenges effectively and move forward with confidence.

TDS: What are your plans for expanding Walton's green initiatives?

TA: Our vision is bold—we want Walton to set the benchmark for green industrial transformation, not just in Bangladesh, but across the region.

In the short term, we are laser-focused on expanding our solar power generation to 50 megawatts. At the same time, we're upgrading our water recycling infrastructure to reach 100% reuse of treated wastewater.

We're also working towards electrifying our internal logistics—replacing fossil fuel-based vehicles with electric ones. And we're scaling up our contributions to carbon and plastic credit programmes to further integrate into the circular economy.

On the product side, our R&D team is actively designing more energy-efficient appliances, with a focus on eco design principles—considering environmental impact from the very beginning of the product lifecycle.

We're also committed to process digitalisation, automation, and real-time ESG monitoring. These are not just efficiency tools; they are enablers of responsible

industrial growth.

TDS: What kind of government or policy support would help you scale your green efforts further?

TA: To truly scale industrial sustainability in Bangladesh, we need strategic government backing.

First, we'd welcome green investment incentives—such as low-interest loans, tax rebates, and subsidies specifically for renewable energy, water reuse, and recycling initiatives. These would not only support businesses like ours but also encourage more industries to follow suit.

Secondly, we need streamlined regulatory processes. Obtaining environmental clearances and certifications is often slow and complex. Time-bound, transparent procedures would significantly accelerate green implementation without compromising environmental integrity.

We also encourage the formation of public-private partnerships focused on green innovation, as well as national-level investment in workforce training for environmental management and compliance.

And finally, we'd strongly advocate for a comprehensive national e-waste policy—to ensure industries adopting circular models are supported and rewarded, and that we have a level playing field.

With the right support, Bangladesh can emerge as a global leader and a role model in sustainable manufacturing—and at Walton, we're proud to be part of that mission. In fact, "Walton—Impacting the Community, Impacting the Future, Impacting You."

Greener, Efficient and WORKER-FRIENDLY FACTORY

MAJOR MD MOTAHER HOSSAIN, (RETD)

DGM (Head of HR and Admin), KDS Textile Mills Ltd



The Daily Star (TDS): What specific green practices or innovations helped your factory secure the Green Factory Award 2025?

Md Motaher Hossain (MMH): At KDS Textile Division, we have implemented a wide range of green practices that contributed to us receiving the Green Factory Award 2025. In terms of energy efficiency, we use renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind, and biogas. We have installed high-efficiency lighting systems including LED lights, and we use energy-efficient machinery combined with automation. To manage our energy consumption, we operate with energy monitoring and management systems across our facilities.

In the area of water conservation, we have established rainwater harvesting systems, along with technologies that allow us to recycle and reuse water. Low-flow fixtures are installed throughout our operations to reduce water consumption, and we operate on-site wastewater treatment plants (ETPs) to ensure responsible water discharge.

Our waste management strategy is based on the principles of reduce, reuse, and recycle. We have systems in place for the safe disposal of hazardous waste and composting of organic waste to ensure nothing goes to landfill unnecessarily.

To improve air quality and control emissions, we use low-emission fuels and clean technologies. We also have systems for controlling dust and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), along with proper ventilation and air filtration infrastructure.

Our building design follows eco-friendly standards. We use sustainable construction materials and have integrated LEED

certification criteria. Our facilities include proper insulation, natural lighting systems, and passive cooling designs. We have also introduced green roofing and rooftop gardens as part of our sustainability efforts.

Worker health and safety is a major component of our sustainability vision. We ensure good indoor air quality and maintain ergonomic workplace designs. We've taken measures to reduce noise levels and ensure safe use of machinery. In addition, we provide worker-friendly amenities such as canteens, rest areas, and medical facilities.

We have also secured several environmental certifications, including ISO 14001, LEED, and IFC EDGE, demonstrating our compliance with both national and international green standards. Sustainability monitoring and reporting are conducted regularly through environmental audits, carbon footprint tracking, and transparent public reporting of our environmental performance.

TDS: How has adopting green practices benefited your company?

MMH: Adopting green practices has resulted in significant benefits for our company. From a cost-saving perspective, improved energy efficiency has reduced our electricity and fuel expenses, while our water conservation measures have lowered utility costs. Our efforts in waste reduction and recycling have also cut down on disposal fees and raw material costs.

Our brand image and public reputation have also improved. More and more customers prefer eco-friendly brands, and by demonstrating environmental

responsibility, we have strengthened public trust, increased customer loyalty, and improved our marketability. Certifications such as LEED and ISO 14001 have helped us stand out in a competitive marketplace.

Environmentally sustainable operations have also given us a competitive advantage by helping us attract eco-conscious clients and investors. These practices have opened doors to green markets and allowed us to qualify for government contracts that require sustainability credentials.

We have also benefited by staying ahead of environmental regulations, reducing the risk of penalties, legal action, or shutdowns due to non-compliance. Internally, a clean and green workplace has contributed to better employee health, morale, and productivity. We have found that this helps us attract and retain talent, especially among younger professionals who prioritise sustainability in their workplaces.

Moreover, implementing green initiatives has spurred innovation and efficiency across our operations. These practices often lead to process improvements and encourage creative problem-solving. We are also developing new sustainable products and services that align with global demand.

Ultimately, all of these actions support our long-term sustainability goals by conserving natural resources and reducing our exposure to climate-related risks and supply chain disruptions.

TDS: What challenges did you face in implementing sustainable practices?

MMH: The most significant challenge was the high initial investment required.

Installing solar panels, energy-efficient machinery, and water treatment systems demanded considerable capital, which made decision-making difficult at the outset.

Another challenge was the lack of awareness and expertise. Many employees did not fully understand the long-term benefits of sustainability, and we faced a shortage of skilled professionals or consultants to support the implementation process.

There was also some resistance to change. Employees and even some members of management were reluctant to move away from traditional practices due to concerns about disrupting current operations or harming short-term profitability. However, with patience and consistent communication, we managed to overcome these barriers.

TDS: What are your plans for further expanding and strengthening green initiatives within your operations?

MMH: We have several plans in place to strengthen our green initiatives. We aim to plant more trees within our premises and expand our rainwater harvesting systems. We are planning to install additional solar panels to further increase our reliance on renewable energy.

We also plan to provide more targeted training programmes for our employees, ensuring that sustainability practices are well understood and embedded across the workforce. Increasing awareness among staff about the importance of maintaining green practices will remain a core part of our environmental strategy moving forward.

TDS: What kind of policy or institutional support would you like to see from the government to help scale up your green efforts?

MMH: Government support is crucial if we are to scale our green initiatives meaningfully. Tax incentives would be particularly helpful. For instance, tax deductions or exemptions for investments in energy-efficient machinery, solar panels, and rainwater harvesting systems would encourage more companies to adopt green practices. We also recommend reduced import duties on green technologies.

In terms of financing, subsidised loans or grants from government banks for green upgrades would be highly beneficial. Establishing Green Investment Funds or public-private partnerships could also provide a much-needed financial cushion for industries willing to transition.

We believe the government should establish clear national standards for waste management, energy efficiency, emission limits, and resource usage. It should also mandate Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for all new factories or significant expansions.

To address the skills gap, the creation of technical training centres would be immensely valuable. These centres could offer vocational programmes in sustainable manufacturing, environmental engineering, and green supply chain management. Collaborations with universities and NGOs to support research and development in green technologies would also help promote innovation in this space.

BSRM IS LEADING SUSTAINABILITY

with the lowest utility use and the highest standards

AAMEIR ALIHUSSAIN

Managing Director, BSRM



The Daily Star (TDS): What specific green practices or innovations helped your factory secure the Green Factory Award 2025?

Aameir Alihussain (AA): Our organisation has a longstanding institutional culture where we actively encourage, invest in, and strive to implement environmentally friendly practices. We devote our time, effort, and mindset to this cause. Within the organisation, we regularly hold discussions and meetings to strategise on how we can further implement green practices.

We have an environmental policy that aligns with national laws as well as the UN's SDGs. At our production centres, we have installed modern air pollution control systems and invested in state-of-the-art water treatment plants. These facilities treat used water for reuse, thereby reducing water wastage.

We also place strong emphasis on waste management generated from our production processes. Instead of relying solely on dumping or landfilling, we have invested in ways to reuse and recycle this waste. To this end, we have established a dedicated waste management processing

reduce our carbon footprint. With solar energy, our electricity consumption from the national grid decreases, which also benefits the country. The government, too, has set a target to generate a certain percentage of power from renewable sources within a specific timeframe, and our initiative supports that.

We also regularly conduct environmental risk assessments and take measures to mitigate any potential hazards. This is a continuous process for us. Our organisation is unique in that we have a Chief Risk Officer whose responsibility includes not only business-related risks but also environmental risks. Very few companies in our country have a dedicated position like this.

We are among the lowest consumers of electricity, gas, and water—not just in Bangladesh, but even when compared to internationally recognised companies operating at high standards. We maintain minimal consumption through smart technology choices and an operational culture that emphasises efficiency. That's how we manage to produce every tonne of

process waste, and we now sell it to block manufacturers as a cheaper alternative to stone chips. Their production costs go down, profitability goes up, and at the same time, it contributes to our green objectives and environmental goals.

Another by-product from our process is mill scale, which contains iron content. We reuse some of it internally and export the rest—mainly to China, where large steel plants with blast furnaces can effectively use it. It's highly beneficial for them, and we've developed that export market ourselves. This not only reduces waste but also generates foreign currency income for us.

Similarly, from our air pollution control system, we collect dust particles. We invested in a system to recover those particles, and the dust contains zinc. We export that as well, and it is processed abroad to extract and produce zinc.

Now, to make a domestic zinc-recovery plant viable, a certain volume of input is needed—which our country currently

of any feasibility calculation. If there is no investment, the project should not be done. You invest first, and later you assess whether the steel industry will be able to sell the products, repay bank loans on time, and fulfil financial commitments. This is a normal part of any investment.

The equipment we initially installed did not perform successfully at first. Then we reworked it—identified where the problems were—and redesigned the entire system to manage it better. Eventually, and quite recently, we succeeded. To achieve this, we adopted the latest modern technology at our plant, so that it has minimal impact in terms of carbon emissions and waste generation.

work with the government on how to better use materials. As the country grows, so will the industry. More industry means more waste generation. We must plan how to manage this future waste. Environmental standards will become stricter over time. If we don't prepare beforehand, we won't be ready when the guidelines come.

This is why continuous effort and improvement are vital. At the World Economic Forum, UN, and other global platforms, environmental discussions have begun and are progressing. We are all on this journey together.

TDS: What kind of policy or institutional support would you like to see from the government to help sustain and scale your green efforts?

AA: At the end of the day, what happens in the country and what companies drive must be supported by top-level government policies, philosophies, rules, and regulations. These need to motivate everyone to comply, because if we don't, we won't be able to survive in the market. Customers will question us and may refuse to buy from us if we are not green or environmentally responsible.

This motivation should come from the government. However, what we notice at the institutional level is a missing piece: the government should create a more proactive and supportive environment for environmental initiatives. For example, we have been processing steel waste into slag, that serves as an excellent substitute for traditional materials like bricks and macadam, particularly in road construction and is taking a long time for the government departments to include this item in the construction schedules of the Public Works Department (PWD), the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), the Roads and Highways Department (RHD), etc. In many countries abroad, slag chips are used in road construction and government encourages use of such materials for promoting environment.

We need the government to recognise and include such sustainable materials in official standards and policies. They can support this by providing non-refundable tax credits or incentives to companies investing in green technologies, rather than just imposing fines and penalties. Punishment alone is not a solution; motivation and facilitation are key.

If the government creates a structured policy where companies can get tax credits for positive environmental actions—verified by audits and milestones—it will encourage industries to invest more willingly.

For example, we have invested in new technology with foreign partners to improve processes like reducing lead emissions from furnaces and utilising agricultural waste. These initiatives can lead to better environmental outcomes and protect agricultural lands by reducing chemical usage.

We must foster collaboration between industries, government agencies, and research institutions to share knowledge, host seminars, and develop enforcement mechanisms with clear timelines and consequences—encouraging compliance through support rather than punishment. The government should actively promote green initiatives in business, ensuring that bureaucracy acts not as a barrier, but as a facilitator of sustainable business.



Water treatment plant

plant, which can be seen as a pioneering initiative in the industry. While many industrial facilities in other countries simply discard such waste, we are making efforts to ensure its reuse or export.

Whatever we extract from that process is either reused or exported. As a result, we are no longer generating waste in that way. It has taken us many years to reach this level. We collaborated with a supplier on R&D to figure out how we could better manage our type of waste.

We place strong focus on ensuring that any technology we adopt must be top-tier and environmentally compliant. Otherwise, we don't compromise—we simply don't invest. That's our philosophy.

Additionally, we are now implementing rooftop solar installations as part of our strategy to mitigate carbon emissions. We already have two rooftop solar systems in place, and more projects are in the pipeline. This initiative will continue, so that we can

steel with very low utility consumption—something that is both a best practice and a competitive advantage for us.

We are also currently running another programme in our organisation, which has been underway for about a year—it's part of a long journey. This is our TPM (Total Productive Maintenance) initiative, where safety, health, and environment are integral components. TPM is based on Japanese principles, and we are implementing it with the support of consultants from Japan.

TPM helps our employees organise their workspace better and identify potential breakdowns before they occur. Even a breakdown at the plant has environmental consequences—if the plant shuts down, gas consumption continues even though production stops. So preventive maintenance is a very important practice that also contributes to environmental consciousness.

We've even set up an entire factory to

doesn't generate. But in the future, it might be possible. These types of initiatives make me feel proud and happy—they are a recognition of years of sustained effort by our team.

TDS: What challenges did you face in implementing sustainable practices?

AA: There are always challenges—business challenges and organisational culture challenges. We have put a huge amount of effort into building this culture. There have been extensive training programmes, awareness campaigns, meetings, and discussions. We send people to relevant seminars abroad. Gradually, over time, the culture within our organisation has changed.

The second challenge is the business challenge—investment. Initially, when you look at some investments, you may not see any return. It's an extra investment in the plant. But for us, as an organisation, investment in the plant is a normal part

Eventually, when environmental rules and regulations become strictly implemented everywhere, these suppliers will have no choice but to provide environmentally compliant technology. No investor will accept non-compliant equipment, because their reputation will suffer. This change is already happening, and it will continue.

TDS: How do you see the value of this environmental award for your organisation?

AA: I think the first major achievement of this award is that it serves as recognition of the efforts we've made so far. More importantly, it will encourage and reinforce our commitment to continuing the journey towards environmental compliance. It provides psychological motivation and strengthens our belief that we are on the right path. This is exactly how it should be.

Secondly, our company's image improves. When the image improves, your brand improves, your sales improve. When you comply with government laws, you won't face fines or penalties. Your example encourages other industries to follow your lead and reach this level. This motivates us a lot and helps create a good working environment in the entire country.

These initiatives have also created export markets for us. We sell processed products abroad, earning foreign currency, which benefits the country. Our investments are gradually paying off. The slag chips we provide to block manufacturers reduce their costs and improve their business. This creates a sales market and benefits the entire supply chain.

TDS: What are your plans for further expanding and strengthening green initiatives within your operations?

AA: Our commitment is to remain on this journey—never-ending, always ongoing. We

