



## AL gov't's secret SURVEILLANCE STATE

The regime spent at least Tk 1,382cr to equip NTMC, Rab, police with surveillance infrastructure from 2016-24

ZYMA ISLAM, MOHAMMAD SUMAN and MAHMUDUL HASAN

From snooping devices carried in backpacks for locating people through their phones to a massive infrastructure that can intercept even end-to-end encryption from a central command centre, the Awami League government had been on an increasingly aggressive trajectory towards building a powerful surveillance state.

Between 2016 and 2024, the National Telecommunications Monitoring Centre (NTMC), police and Rab collectively purchased surveillance equipment worth

over Tk 1,382 crore, according to import data and a contract agreement.

Over the years, the NTMC developed a sweeping infrastructure called "Integrated Lawful Interception System (ILIS)" that can intercept, decrypt, inspect, and store enormous volumes of national internet and telecom traffic, enabling real-time, centralised surveillance across agencies.

The Rab and police, on the other hand, acquired mostly target-based snooping devices.

Such devices in Rab's possession include mobile and

vehicle mounted jammers, backpack IMSI catchers, and mobile communication analysers, allowing them to block signals and conduct surveillance on mobile activities of specific individuals, documents show.

Police built a broader tactical surveillance capacity, and their purchases included high-end IMSI catchers, GPS trackers, satellite communication analysers, speaker recognition systems, and Man-in-the-Middle tools capable of intercepting encrypted communications and injecting spyware.

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### SPENDING ON SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT



As part of the reform process, NTMC, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, is working on formulating an Act/ordinance related to lawful telecommunication interception with special attention to privacy of the citizens and maintaining international standard. —NTMC

## Big win in banking, lost opportunities in investment, jobs

Says CPD in its assessment of one year of interim govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite progress in the banking sector, exchange rate, remittance, export, and reserves, the interim government has failed to curb high inflation, revive stagnant investment, or generate new jobs, the Centre for Policy Dialogue said yesterday.

It also underlined a lack of reforms in the education and healthcare sectors as major cause for concern.

"One year is a very short time, but the government had ample opportunity to bring positive change to the lives and livelihoods of the people," said Fahmida Khatun, CPD's executive director.

While presenting the think tank's report titled "365 Days of the Interim Government: Economy in Retrospect" at Lakeshore Hotel in Dhaka, she credited the government with averting an "impending economic disaster" through decisive actions in the banking sector.

However, she added, the original promise of building a discrimination-free society with employment at the centre of the economy had faltered without fresh investment.

"The movement aimed to create

Areas of Concern	CPD Assessment
Reform the banking sector	<span style="color: green;">■</span>
Reform the central bank	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>
Remove price fixing	<span style="color: red;">■</span>
Prevent bank plunderers from fleeing	<span style="color: green;">■</span>
Ensure accurate, reliable banking data	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>
Restore trade flows & foreign bank links	<span style="color: green;">■</span>
Reform the bond market	<span style="color: red;">■</span>

■ Substantial progress | 
 ■ Partial progress | 
 ■ No significant progress

a discrimination-free society, with employment as the key focus, and an economy whose fruits of growth are shared by all. But investment was necessary for that. There was stagnation in investment, and Bangladesh must turn around from that stagnation," she said.

While significant local or foreign investment may not come during the interim tenure, the foundation must be laid now so that future elected governments can attract it immediately, she added.

Mustafizur Rahman, Distinguished Fellow at CPD, said the economy was at a critical juncture after the previous government's collapse, burdened by depleting reserves, sluggish growth, soaring inflation, rising unemployment, increasing non-performing loans, and falling remittances.

On August 14, 2024, after a student-led movement toppled the Awami League government, the CPD held a dialogue on macroeconomic,

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## CONSENSUS COMMISSION Talks begin on implementation of July Charter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Consensus Commission has entered the third phase of its work, focusing on securing a legally binding framework for the July Charter and determining how it will be implemented before the next national election.

"We are now seeking a sustainable and strong path through which the charter will be implemented," commission vice-president Prof Ali Riaz told The Daily Star after a meeting yesterday.

"Many alternatives were discussed today [yesterday], but nothing was finalised. We want to review all options and their implications thoroughly before moving forward."

The third phase of discussions began yesterday at the Jatiya Sangsad LD Hall, where the commission met with leading legal experts, including former Supreme Court Justice MA Matin, Justice Moinal Islam Chowdhury, Dhaka University Law Faculty Dean Mohammad Ikramul Haque, Senior Supreme Court Advocate Sharif Bhuiyan, Barrister Tanim Hossain Shawon, and Barrister Imran Siddique.

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## Education left behind

Govt struggles to reform the sector; institutions see unrest, forced resignations of teachers post-July uprising

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

One year into its tenure, the interim government is struggling to bring stability to the country's educational institutions, beset by campus unrest and disruptions to academic activities.

Many of the institutions have seen student protests, politically influenced appointments, forced resignations of teachers, and public humiliation of educators, underscoring the administration's lack of resolve to restore order in the education sector.

Upon assuming office, the interim government pledged to initiate sweeping reforms across key sectors through the formation of 11 reform commissions. However, education sector was left out.

Some educationists have described the past year as a lost opportunity, urging the administration to form a specialised, non-partisan commission to stabilise the sector and draft a long-term policy roadmap to guide the next government.

Following the fall of Awami League government, nearly all vice-chancellors of public universities resigned — many under pressure from protesters due to their ties with AL. Their sudden departure disrupted academic and administrative activities at the universities.

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## RMG work orders rebounding

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh has been witnessing a rebound in garment work orders from American clothing retailers and brands for the next season after securing a competitive tariff rate from the Trump administration in the final settlement.

Buyers are also confirming the pending work orders with a much more favourable tariff rate of 20 percent.

India and Vietnam, Bangladesh's competitors in the apparel trade in the US, secured 50 percent and 20 percent tariff respectively.

**It is expected that a significant volume of work orders will shift from China and India to Bangladesh due to higher tariffs levied by the Trump administration.**

"We can sense the rebound of work orders, the buyers are coming here and confirming the pending work orders and negotiating for next season," Mohammad Sohel Sadat, chairman of Shin Shin Group, an exporter to the US, told The Daily Star.

The inflow of work orders for the next season looks good, said SM Khaled, managing director of Snowtex Group, one of the major garment exporters.

It is also expected that a significant volume of work orders will shift from China and India to Bangladesh due to higher tariffs levied by the Trump administration.

However, the prices of apparel may go up in the American market as the buyers will have to pay a higher tariff on the import of goods, he added.

The retailers and brands are still offering lower prices, and in some cases, some of the buyers are asking for a

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**A HISTORIC FEAT:** Bangladesh celebrate scoring the opener against South Korea during their final match of the 2026 AFC Women's U-20 Asian Cup Qualifiers in Laos yesterday. The match, however, ended in a 6-1 defeat but the reigning SAFF champions secured their first-ever spot in the continental finals, advancing as one of the top 11 teams among 32. They will join hosts Thailand in the main tournament, scheduled for April 1-18 next year.

PHOTO: BFF

## MOB ATTACK Wedding plans dashed, family now prepares for funeral

S DILIP ROY, from Rangpur

On Saturday night, Ruplal was hurrying home on a rickshaw van to begin planning for his daughter's wedding. His relative Pradip was driving the van as they were possibly talking about all that was still left to do.

But neither could have imagined that their plans would be shattered by a horrific turn of events.

On the way, an agitated crowd waylaid the two, accusing them of stealing the van. The two tried to explain it was a misunderstanding — that they weren't thieves, and the van was theirs.

But reason found no audience. The mob grew increasingly violent and, at one point, beat the two men to death.

The incident took place around 9:30pm in the Burtirhat area of Rangpur's Taraganj upazila.

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# THROUGH A GERMAN LENS

## When Dhaka posed for Fritz Kapp

RIDWAN AKRAM

Long before Dhaka became a noisy sprawl of rickshaws, traffic, and concrete, it was a quieter, more graceful place. One posing for a German man with a camera and a keen eye for elegance.

The man's name was Fritz Kapp. At the turn of the 20th century, photography was still a novelty in Bengal. It had arrived in India just a year after its European debut in 1839, brought in by British officials and missionaries eager to document their empire. By the 1860s, Kolkata was already buzzing with studios -- both European and local.

It was a common sight to see the city's elite line up for portraits in formal attire, framed by velvet curtains and classical backdrops.

But Dhaka? It remained largely outside the frame.

That changed when Nawab Ahsanullah, the powerful patriarch of Dhaka's ruling family, decided he didn't need to go to Kolkata to be photographed. Instead, he brought the photographer to him.

Fritz Kapp, already established in Kolkata and Darjeeling, accepted



PHOTOS: FRITZ KAPP

the Nawab's invitation and opened a studio in Wise Ghat, just a stone's throw from Ahsan Manzil.

It wasn't just a business venture -- it was the beginning of a visual archive.

Kapp photographed the Nawabs, their palaces, their gardens, and the very mood of Dhaka before the world

changed. He had a second studio in Nawabpur and produced portraits, architectural shots, and scenes that combined European technique with Eastern grandeur.

Then came February 1904. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, visited Dhaka. Kapp was summoned once more, this time to document history.

The result was "The Curzon Collection" -- an album of 30 photographs, 19 of which featured the Nawab family and their estates. The rest captured Dhaka's landmarks like Chawk Bazar,

Ahsan Manzil, Mitford Hospital, Shahbagh Garden, and even the old iron bridge.

But Kapp wasn't the first to photograph Dhaka. A few images exist from the 1870s, though their creators remain unnamed. In the 1880s, the studio Johnston and Hoffmann published "Architectural Views of Dhaka". Yet those efforts were fleeting.

Kapp, by contrast, immersed himself in the city and, in doing so, left behind more than images -- he left influence.

By 1910, inspired by his presence, Dhaka's own photography scene began to grow. R C Das opened a local studio. Even members of the Nawab family -- Khwaja Afzal and Khwaja Sulaiman Quader -- launched their own. Soon after came names like Charuchandra Guha, Technical Art, Dos & Co, and Musical Mart. They would go on to define Dhaka's visual culture for decades.

Fritz Kapp eventually closed shop after Nawab Ahsanullah's death in 1901, but his impact remained. He showed Dhaka to itself -- stately, composed, and radiant under the gaze of a foreign lens.

In an era before reels and Instagram filters, Kapp gave the city its first real moment of stillness. And in doing so, he helped Dhaka find its photographic soul.

## RMG work orders

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certain portion of the additional tariff.

For instance, of the 20 percent reciprocal tariff, the US retailers are asking the fabric suppliers to bear one-third of the amount and the manufacturers another third; the remaining portion will be borne by the retailers and brands themselves, exporters said.

However, the retailers and brands are asking for such a facility for next season as they are planning on purchasing in big volumes, the suppliers said.

The reciprocal tariff by the US has put indirect pressure on the suppliers in their dealings with the European buyers, said Kalpan Hossain, managing director of Dekko Legacy Group, which mainly exports garments to the European markets.

One of the major garment suppliers asking not to be named said a few of his American buyers have already requested for further price cuts to adjust the additional tariff rate.

He is yet to respond as his profit margin is too low as it is.

The volume of work orders for yarn with the spinning mills is on the rise with the increase in work orders from the US buyers, Showkat Aziz Russell, president of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, told this correspondent.

The local garment exporters are expecting a good volume of work orders would shift from China, the leading garment supplier worldwide, after it was levied a 55 percent tariff.

## Starvation claims

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of at least 600 trucks daily to address the dire situation in Gaza, which has seen more than 200 people die of starvation, reports Al Jazeera online.

Shehata, a senior fellow with the European Council on Foreign Relations, said: "complicit countries" are participating in parachuting aid into Gaza, "not to address the hunger, not to end it, but to sustain it [and] cover it up" with "headline grabbing gestures".

Israel's offensive has killed more than 61,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's health ministry, figures the United Nations says are reliable.

The Israeli military has warned that expanding the offensive could endanger the lives of hostages Hamas is still holding in Gaza, believed to number around 20, and draw its troops into protracted and deadly guerrilla warfare.

Taly said Israel should heed its army's warnings. "The invasion of Gaza risks turning into a Vietnam for Israeli soldiers," Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said in an interview with daily Il Messaggero.

# Big win in banking, lost opportunities in investment, jobs Education left behind

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governance, and sectoral reform issues. Over a year later, it revisited those concerns to assess progress, identify gaps, and outline steps for stabilisation, recovery, and institutional improvement.

"We are witnessing some positive developments as efforts are underway to restore stability from a precarious situation," Mustafizur said.

### GAINS AND GAPS

The CPD reviewed 38 major challenges faced over the past year, rating nine green for substantial progress, 18 yellow for partial progress, and 11 red for no significant initiative.

Progress was strongest in banking reforms, including reconstituting bank boards, freezing defaulters' assets, and passing the Bank Resolution Ordinance 2025.

Measures to prevent bank plunderers from fleeing, including with travel bans and frozen accounts, curbed capital flight and restored public trust.

Trade facilitation measures included liquidity support and scrapping LC margins for essential imports.

Support for migrant workers, such as collateral-free loans, revised migration rules, and better airport facilities, reflected commitment to remittance growth, though recruitment fraud and high migration costs persist.

A modest rise in agricultural subsidies bolstered food security, yet deeper modernisation is needed, the CPD observed.

Rehabilitation of protest victims through financial aid and health cards was notable, though psychological and vocational support would enhance outcomes.

In healthcare, strengthening the Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council is expected to improve accountability, and a permanent commission has been formed to address sectoral challenges.

Honouring deceased labourers through compensation was symbolic, but broader labour rights reforms are overdue.

Stopping technology-enabled fraud by regulating mobile financial services to ensure government funds reach rightful beneficiaries and prevent loot was another good initiative of the interim government, the CPD said.

Among the partial steps, the CPD mentioned central bank reforms, which saw the formation of a task force, but some legal amendments and policies remain pending. Banking data standards improved with global auditors and stricter NPL rules. Bangladesh Bank ordered banks and non-banks to allocate 25 percent of loans to MSMEs by 2025 and 27 percent by 2029, easing loan rules and creating dedicated departments. The Youth Entrepreneurship Policy 2025 offers training and financing, but weak enforcement and limited initiatives persist.

The Export Policy 2024 adds new sectors, revises incentives, promotes 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) and green tech, and strengthens quality standards via TBT (Technical Barriers to Trade) measures, though implementation is uncertain.

Fair banking practices widened LC access for genuine importers, ending monopolies. Duty cuts stabilised prices and diversified supply before Ramadan, but monitoring is needed to prevent new monopolies.

The government launched the Support

Areas of Concern	CPD Assessment
Create jobs in MSMEs	Partial progress
Freelancing hubs & IT support	No significant progress
Affordable loans for migrant workers	Substantial progress
Modernise trade policy	Partial progress
Improve informal sector governance	No significant progress
Eliminate monopoly in consumer goods	Partial progress
Increase agricultural subsidies	Substantial progress
Ensure energy security	Partial progress
LDC graduation policies	Partial progress
Prepare a white paper on economy	Partial progress
Increase investment in education & health	Partial progress
Education sector reforms	Partial progress
Align madrasa with mainstream education	No significant progress
Merge education ministries	No significant progress
Make universities autonomous	No significant progress
Separate pay-scale for teachers	Partial progress
Assistance for July victims	Substantial progress
Expose healthcare corruption	No significant progress
Improve quality in private hospitals	No significant progress
Introduce universal health insurance	No significant progress
Regulate drug prices & prescriptions	Partial progress
Strengthen BMDC & permanent health commission	Substantial progress
Recognise workers killed during July protests	Substantial progress
Ensure fair wages & financial security	Partial progress
Strengthen labour governance & justice	Partial progress
Improve workplace conditions & social protection	Partial progress
Abolish industrial police	No significant progress
Prevent internet shutdowns & repeal DSA	Partial progress
Restore international reputation & attract FDI	Partial progress
Regulate mobile financial services	Substantial progress
Increase renewable energy use	Partial progress

to Sustainable Graduation Project to guide Bangladesh's graduation from the LDC bracket through inclusive consultations, capacity-building, and research.

Despite forming committees and preparing a white paper on the economy, concrete implementation of recommendations remains lacking. Education and health budget increases fall short of international benchmarks.

The rate of RMG workers' wage hike rose from 5 percent to 9 percent, but other sectors saw no hikes. Labour law reforms and an Employment Injury Scheme pilot were launched, yet key laws and fair wage implementation remain lacking.

### MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

The CPD flagged several areas of little or no progress. Among them, the bond market remains prone to fraud despite new guidelines, requiring comprehensive audits and stricter enforcement. The failure to establish freelancing hubs or integrate PayPal represents a missed opportunity for

youth employment and foreign currency earnings.

While the labour information management system registration began for informal workers, the initiative alone cannot meet targeted objectives.

No steps have been taken to merge the two education ministries or grant universities autonomy from the education ministry and UGC. While the pay scale for government primary school head teachers was upgraded, no separate pay scale for teachers was introduced to attract or retain talent.

In healthcare, corruption allegations stalled the High Dependency Unit project at Shishu Hospital, with the World Bank withdrawing.

Despite Health Sector Reform recommendations against patient referrals to private hospitals, no action has been taken. The government lacks focus on introducing universal health insurance. Overall progress remains inadequate, according to the CPD analysis.

Speaking at the CPD event, BNP Standing Committee member Amir

Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said remittances rose automatically once money laundering, which flourished under the previous government, stopped. The earnings of the migrant workers were bought at higher rates to facilitate money laundering during the AL regime, he explained.

He, however, criticised the interim government for adopting a budget that mirrored its predecessor's, continuing mega projects instead of focusing on social sectors. "An interim government's role differs from that of an elected government. Elections must be held to ensure accountability," he said.

He added that excessive regulations discourage investment, citing the 19 approvals needed to open a restaurant. "Such over-regulation has created an oligarchy where only a few can do business," he said.

He also pledged that the BNP would invest 5 percent of GDP each in health and education, create one crore jobs in 18 months, and better integrate farmers, artisans, and craftspeople into the economy.

Labour and Employment Adviser Brig Gen (ret'd) M Sakhawat Hussain agreed that development is "not just about metro rails or expressways, it's about creating jobs".

He said entire institutions collapsed after the uprising and has yet to be rebuilt. Even the law enforcement and administration are still unsettled as they were caught in the grip of fascism.

The interim government is trying to establish some kind of structure so that the next government can at least inherit a functioning framework, Hussain said. "A fragile structure will make it impossible for the new government to work effectively."

Emphasising police reform, the adviser said political interference in recruitment to the force will continue unless the police structure changes.

He warned that conflicts of interest persist in the labour sector when business leaders become MPs or ministers, as they stop advocating for workers.

Showkat Aziz Russell, president of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, said that despite an investment of \$75 billion in the textile and ready-made garment sectors, with annual exports of \$41 billion, the government has increased the corporate tax for textile mills and RMG from 15 and 12 percent to 30 percent.

"Besides, we are struggling to survive due to disruptions caused by extortionists. There is also a shortage of gas and electricity. If the government truly values these sectors, it should take action. I have not seen any wizardly steps in the last 365 days," he added.

Mahmud Hasan Khan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), said garment factories are quietly shutting down every day. A clear indication of this is that BGMEA membership has dropped from 7,200 to only 3,000. The closures are due to unplanned factory expansion, policies of Bangladesh Bank, and the country's overall policy environment.

Referring to the constant policy changes in the country, Khan said, "The budget changes every year. At budget announcements, some policies are made, based on which entrepreneurs invest. But these policies are changed again the very next year."

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It took more than a month for most universities to fully resume academic activities, with political influence continuing to shape university governance.

As appointments to the vacant posts were made, The Daily Star found that at least 30 of the 47 VCs appointed over the past year were affiliated with teachers' organisations linked to BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami.

Following the AL government's ouster, calls for a uniform policy for VC appointments gained momentum. Yet, the University Grants Commission has not introduced any such framework.

Disruptions to academic activities were not limited to universities only. Students staged protests at dozens of schools and colleges, demanding resignation of institutional heads.

According to a count by The Daily Star, at least 150 teachers across the country were forced to resign between August 5 and August 31 last year. Many were humiliated and harassed.

In some cases, teachers and officials were assaulted, with video clips of the incidents circulating on social media. The education ministry issued directives repeatedly to bring the situation under control but failed.

Throughout the year, both students and teachers staged demonstrations over their distinct demands -- from salary hikes and pay scale revisions to exam deferrals and auto-pass for students.

Many of these protests turned violent. The education ministry could neither maintain order nor negotiate meaningful resolutions.

Student groups on August 20 stormed the Secretariat and carried out vandalism, demanding cancellation of HSC and equivalent examinations postponed during the July mass uprising.

The authorities eventually scrapped the exams and published results through subject mapping, drawing criticism from academicians.

The then education adviser, Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, later admitted that the decision was a mistake.

Another controversial move was the sudden reversion to the 2012 curriculum for class 6 to 12 amid pressure from a section of guardians and teachers. Students who had just begun adapting to the new curriculum were forced to shift back, resulting in widespread confusion.

The National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) was tasked with revising and reprinting 50 textbooks to align them with the previous curriculum. A coordination committee was formed to facilitate the process but was disbanded following backlash over its composition.

The NCTB promised to deliver the revised textbooks by December, 2024, but missed the deadline. New targets were set for January and February. However, nationwide distribution could not be completed until April this year.

School students in multiple districts began the academic year without full sets of textbooks, leading to significant learning loss, especially for those with limited access to digital tools.

In March this year, the government made a change in the top leadership of the sector, with Prof Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar replacing Prof Wahiduddin as

education adviser.

"A LOST OPPORTUNITY" In October last year, the primary and mass education ministry formed a consultation committee to recommend ways to improve primary and non-formal education.

Headed by BRAC University Professor Emeritus Manzoor Ahmed, the committee submitted its report to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on February 10 this year.

On implementation of the committee's recommendations, Prof Manzoor said, "As of now, we've only seen piecemeal steps, not a comprehensive or systematic response."

Despite time constraints, the interim government could still establish a similar body for the education sector with a six-month tenure, he said.

"This could give the next government a strong foundation for much-needed reforms," he told The Daily Star recently.

Termining the past year a lost opportunity for the sector, he said, "The shortcomings inherited by the interim government were significant, but the response has been largely ad hoc. No substantive reform initiative has been taken. There has been no education commission, unlike in other sectors."

"It can be fairly described as a disappointing record," he said.

Criticising the government's approach as fragmented and uncoordinated, he said, "There was no holistic planning and no mechanism for short, medium, or long-term reform."

Prof Anu Mohammad, a former teacher at Jahangirnagar University, said it's true that everything cannot be changed in a year, but the government failed to do even what was possible.

"Why education was not given due importance under this government remains a pressing question."

Questioning why no education reform commission was formed, he said the government could at least introduce a uniform framework for teacher recruitment in universities.

Contacted, Education Adviser Prof CR Abrar said, "For those who expected a miracle within a year, their expectation is misplaced."

The education sector has been plagued with problems for years. "Can a government just assume power and change everything, especially in a situation where the youth who brought about this transition have a major stake in the outcome?"

"In such a context, decisions that affect them must be made with great care," he said.

About partisan appointments at universities, he said, "Perhaps it was the circumstances that led to the decisions made at a certain point of time... We have learnt from that process... It was not ideal."

"Not all the decisions were necessarily good. Perhaps the role of the state -- what it should have been and what was expected -- was not delivered."

On the formation of a commission for the education sector, the adviser said that commissions often operate on very short terms -- some for six months. Such short term bodies, he argued, are not suitable for something as complex as education.

"We hope to see some meaningful and visible results within the next five to six months as we complete our tenure," he added.

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## TUHIN MURDER Will ensure punishment of those involved Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will do everything possible to ensure that the killers of journalist Asaduzzaman Tuhin receive the exemplary punishment, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said yesterday.

While talking to reporters after a meeting of the core committee on law and order, he expected that the remaining accused will be arrested soon.

"As a nation, we have become intolerant. We have no patience. There has been social degradation," Jahangir said, adding, "In the past, people used to protest and resist any untoward incident. Now, even neighbours do not come forward in times of danger, nor do they protest."

On August 7, a group of miscreants killed Tuhin, 40, who worked as a staff

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People shield their faces as they walk through dust-laden winds in the Shyampur area of the capital. Due to ongoing construction and road works, the air is thick with dust and pollutants. There are also factories in the area that contribute to the worsening air quality. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Dengue death toll hits 101 amid case surge

HELEMUL ALAM

The number of dengue deaths in the country has crossed 100 this year, painting an alarming picture of the outbreak.

Three more patients died yesterday, raising the death toll to 101 and total reported cases to 24,183, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of the deaths, the highest, 45, were recorded in Dhaka South City Corporation areas, followed by 18 in Barishal division, 17 in Chattogram division, 11 in Dhaka North City Corporation, four each in Khulna and Rajshahi divisions, and one each in Mymensingh division and Dhaka division outside city corporation areas.

Dr HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, said while the number of dengue patients in Dhaka is lower this year, the death rate is higher.

He attributed this to a growing number of cases of Expanded Dengue Syndrome (EDS), a severe form of the disease involving critical damage to organs such as the liver, brain, heart, kidneys and central nervous system.

"These patients can deteriorate rapidly and die suddenly due to severe complications," Dr Ahsan said, adding that people with comorbidities such as hypertension, diabetes, and chronic lung or kidney disease are especially vulnerable.

Many patients fail to recognise warning signs – severe abdominal pain, breathing difficulty, bleeding, extreme weakness, or a sharp drop in urination and platelet count – only seeking treatment when their condition is critical.

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## Increase party nominations for women

Speakers tell event

The 'women-excluded' commission is deciding on women's issues. I feel extremely uncomfortable. I have not seen women being equally involved in the decision-making here.

Sharmeen S Murshid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of party nominations for women should be increased in the upcoming election to empower them in politics, said rights activists, politicians, and policymakers at a programme yesterday.

They also said the National Consensus Commission should start discussions again regarding women's participation in the election.

The remarks were made at an event titled "Policy Dialogue on Establishing a Public Fund for Women Candidates" organised by Democracy International at the KIB auditorium in the capital's Farmgate.

Abdul Alim, principal director of Democracy International in Bangladesh, presented a draft proposal on creating a public fund for women candidates, while

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## Govt strips 40 absconding police officers of medals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has revoked the Bangladesh Police Medal (BPM) and President's Police Medal (PPM) from 40 police officials.

The decision follows ongoing departmental action against these officials, who have been absconding from their posts since the fall of the Awami League government last year.

The home ministry disclosed the updates in a notification dated August 7, which was made public yesterday.

The list includes former DMP additional commissioner Mohammad Harun-Or Rashid, DIG Syed Nurul Islam, and additional DIGs Biplob Kumar Sarkar and Proloy Kumar Joarder.

The notification said

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## JULY UPRISING AFTERMATH 1,300 firearms looted from police stations still missing

Shows data from police headquarters

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and  
MUNTAKIM SAAD

More than 1,300 firearms and over 2,50,000 rounds of ammunition looted from police stations during the July uprising remain missing, with many reportedly now in the hands of criminals and being used in crimes across the country.

The Awami League government was overthrown in a student-led uprising on August 5 last year, following which 5,753 firearms and 6,51,609 rounds of ammunition were looted from various police stations and outposts, according to police

headquarters.

Police data updated on August 3 this year shows that despite a joint operation launched on September 4 last year, 1,375 firearms and 2,57,849 rounds of ammunition are still unaccounted for.

### AT A GLANCE

- Over 2.5 lakh rounds of ammunition also missing
- Police say many now in hands of criminals
- Govt offers rewards for info on looted firearms
- Experts question reward effectiveness after a year

Among the unrecovered weapons are rifles, SMGs, LMGs, 7.62x25mm pistols, 9x19mm pistols, shotguns, gas guns, teargas launchers, and 26mm signal pistols.

Amid the situation, the interim government yesterday announced rewards for information leading to the recovery of missing firearms.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

## RAMPURA SHOOTINGS ICT accepts charges against ex-DMP chief, four others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday accepted charges against five former police officials, including then Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) commissioner Habibur Rahman, over their alleged role in crimes against humanity in the capital's Rampura area during the 2024 July uprising.

The charges, pressed by the prosecution on three counts, involve the killing of two people and the shooting of two others in Rampura on July 19 last year.

A three-member tribunal, led by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, also issued arrest warrants for four of the accused who remain on the run, and set August 17 for the next hearing.

Apart from Habibur, the accused are then additional deputy commissioner of DMP's Khilgaon division Rashedul Islam; then Rampura Police Station officer-in-charge Mashirur Rahman; then sub-inspector of the police station Tariqul Islam Bhuiyan; and then Rampura police outpost assistant sub-inspector Chanchal Chandra Sarkar.

Only Chanchal is currently in custody. The allegations include murder, attempted murder, conspiracy, complicity, facilitation, abetment, incitement, failure to prevent or punish crimes, and command responsibility.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## 2016 'MILITANT DRAMA' Complaint filed at ICT over retired major's killing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A complaint was lodged with the ICT Chief Prosecutor's Office yesterday over the 2016 killing of major (retired) Jahidul Islam – an incident described as a staged "militant drama".

Jahidul's widow, Jebun Nahar Islam, lodged the complaint accusing several senior police officials of killing her husband and forcibly disappearing her and her two daughters for over four months.

The accused are: Md AKM Shahidul Hoque, then inspector general of police; Md Monirul Islam, then chief of the Detective Branch; Md Asaduzzaman, then chief of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit; Md Masud Ahmed, then deputy commissioner of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## Govt reform plans left out indigenous people: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday called for the urgent formation of an Indigenous Reform Commission to ensure the due rights of indigenous peoples.

The event, titled "Challenges in Protecting the Land, Forests, and Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples: The Role of the Government and Civil Society", was jointly organised by ALRD, Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, and 15 other organisations to mark International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

At the event, Khushi Kabir, chairperson of ALRD and coordinator of Nijera Kori, said after last year's mass uprising, various reform commissions were established to eliminate discrimination and promote reforms.

"But the indigenous people were left behind as usual. Opinions from many were collected, but indigenous people and women were excluded. Their perspectives were not reflected in the reform process," she said.

She stressed that the four founding principles of the state, envisioned during the independence struggle, must be realised.

Sanjeeb Dronng, general secretary of Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5



On the 101st birth anniversary of SM Sultan yesterday, Dhaka University's Faculty of Fine Arts came alive with a vibrant festival celebrating his legacy. Although Sultan's own paintings were absent, contemporary artists showcased works inspired by his powerful, realistic style. Organised by the Charupith Art Research Institute and its partners, the event included exhibitions, seminars, and film screenings, reaffirming Sultan's lasting impact on Bangladeshi art and culture.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

## HC halts leasing of 9 sand quarries in Cox's Bazar forests

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed leasing activities of nine Balu Mahals (sand quarries) located in and near reserved and protected forests of Cox's Bazar.

In response to a petition, the court also ordered the chief conservator of forests, Cox's Bazar deputy commissioner, superintendent of police, and divisional forest officers concerned to immediately stop sand extraction from these areas.

The nine sand quarries are Khutakhali-1 at Chakarua upazila, Dholirchhara and Panirchhara canal at Ramu upazila, Balukhali-1, Uyalapalong, Dochari, and Hijlia at Ukhia upazila, and Dhoyangarchar and Kumariarchhara at Rajapalong mouja. The officials have been directed to prepare a list of leaseholders and others involved in sand extraction from the said forest areas, assess the damage caused by sand extraction from the quarries, and submit a report to this court within three months.

The HC also issued a rule asking the government to explain why its action in listing these sand quarries for lease should not be declared illegal and against public interest.

The HC bench of Justice Kazi Zinat Hoque and Justice Aynun Nahar Siddiqua issued the order and rule following a petition filed by the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association.



After a two-month hiatus, TCB trucks resumed nationwide operations yesterday, selling essential items like oil, sugar, and lentils at subsidised rates. The photo was taken in Dhaka's Khamarbari area. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## Dengue death toll hits 101

FROM PAGE 3

Dr Ahsan recommended immediate hospitalisation for anyone showing these signs, and early admission for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, pregnant women and those with underlying health conditions.

On the high death toll in Dhaka south, Dr Ahsan explained that many critically ill patients are referred from outside Dhaka to major city hospitals. "They often arrive in critical condition — infected elsewhere but dying in

Dhaka hospitals," he said.

Travel delays are a key factor. "It can take five to six hours to reach a Dhaka hospital from Barishal or other distant districts, plus more time for admission. If a patient is already in shock, these delays can be fatal."

He urged district hospitals to follow national dengue treatment guidelines and treat patients locally, referring only those in critical condition after stabilisation.

Public health expert Dr Mushtaq Hussain noted that while rural areas have

a structured healthcare network — community clinics, union health centres, upazila complexes and district hospitals — Dhaka lacks such a system.

As a result, many low-income residents seek care only in advanced stages of illness. Limited access to affordable dengue testing also delays diagnosis.

Dr Hussain recommended reorganising dengue care into three levels — primary, secondary and tertiary — and strengthening primary healthcare, especially for low-income communities.

He also called for more blood collection centres and expanded secondary care services in Dhaka to reduce the load on medical college hospitals.

## ICT accepts charges against

FROM PAGE 3

Prosecutor Gazi Monwar Hossain Tamim told the tribunal that after a high-level meeting, chaired by then prime minister Sheikh Hasina, were it was decided to "shoot on sight", then inspector general of police

Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun ordered his force to use deadly weapons.

Habibur allegedly relayed this order via wireless to target peaceful quota reform protesters, personally visiting Shabbagh Police Station to reinforce the directive.

Following his orders, led by ADC Rashedul, OC Mashiur, SI Tariqul, and ASI Chanchal allegedly opened fire on the victims. The prosecution claimed Habibur later rewarded OC Mashiur with Tk 1 lakh for the killings.

## Govt strips 40 absconding police

FROM PAGE 3

departmental procedures are ongoing to address the absconding status of these officers.

Of the 40 officials, nine are inspectors, one is an assistant superintendent of police, nine are additional SPs, eight are SPs, ten are additional DIGs, and three are DIGs.

Four officers — Biplob Kumar Sarker, SM Mehed Hasan, Proloy Kumar Joarder, and Sudip Chakrabarty — were suspended, while the remaining 36 are listed as absconding from their posts in the notification.

On February 23 this year, the home ministry revoked medals from 103

police officers awarded in 2018, including former IGP Benazir Ahmed and former DMP commissioner Asadzaman Mia.

## Complaint

FROM PAGE 3

Mirpur, Md Shahid Alam, then officer-in-charge of Rupnagar Police Station; and several unidentified police personnel of the same police station.

According to the complaint, on September 2, 2016, around 10:00pm, the accused blindfolded Jebun Nahar and her two daughters, and took them to an unknown location where they were detained.

She said the next day, during interrogation, she was told, "You and your husband are militants. If you do not confess, you will be sent to your husband."

The complaint further alleged that after Jahidul's murder, she and her daughters were kept at DB's "Aynaghar" for four months and seven days, during which they were subjected to physical and mental torture — to make her confess that her husband was a militant. She claimed that when she made no confession, the accused took her elder daughter and staged a "militant drama" at a house in Azimpur, sending the girl to a juvenile victim centre.

Jebun Nahar also alleged that she spent four years in jail before being released on bail, which was later cancelled in 2019. She was re-arrested and taken back to jail until her release on August 31, 2024, following the fall of the Awami League government.

The then police claimed the deceased was Murad alias Jahangir Alam alias Omar; fellow militants would call him "Major Shaheb".

As the military commander of "Neo JMB", he gave arms training to the Holy Artisan and Sholakia attackers, police also claimed.

**STATUTORY NOTICE**  
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)  
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1332 OF 2025  
IN THE MATTER OF: An application under sections 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994.  
AND  
IN THE MATTER OF: NILESH NANDKISHORE PUND, Managing Director of NEW ROOTS HAIR CARE PRIVATE LIMITED of House no. 3, Block-C, Road no. 17, Banani, Dhaka-1213. —Petitioner.  
VERSUS—  
NEW ROOTS HAIR CARE PRIVATE LIMITED, House no. 3, Block-C, Road no. 17, Banani, Dhaka-1213 and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies & Firms, TCB Bhabon (6th floor), 1, Kawranbazar, Dhaka-1215. —Respondents.  
Notice is hereby given that an application under sections 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994, was moved before the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the petitioner for condoning the delay of holding the Annual General Meeting of NEW ROOTS HAIR CARE PRIVATE LIMITED for the years 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025. Upon hearing the application The Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel has admitted the said application on 30.07.2025. If any person interested in the said application may appear on the date of hearing or before the Hon'ble Court either himself or through an Advocate. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges.  
Gopal Halder, Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Room No. 129 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbagh, Dhaka-1000. Mobile: +88-0173629878.

**LEGAL NOTICE**  
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)  
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1357 OF 2025  
IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections-81(2), 85(3), 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994.  
AND  
IN THE MATTER OF: Ahmedur Rahman Mazumder, son of Amirur Rahman Mazumder and Mahmada Khatun, Shareholder, Director and Managing Director of Royal United Company Limited of 28/30, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, Dhaka, Bangladesh. —Petitioner.  
VERSUS—  
Royal United Company Limited of 28/30, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, Dhaka, Bangladesh and The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms, TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1, Kawran Bazar, Dhaka. —Respondents.  
Take notice that an application under Sections-81(2), 85(3), 183 read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above named Petitioner for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting of Royal United Company Limited for the calendar years 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 and to give necessary direction for holding the said meeting within a reasonable time. Upon hearing of the application on 31-07-2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel has admitted the said application. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an advocate on or before the date fixed for hearing. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.  
Advocate Md. Anwar Hossain  
Room No. 351 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Shahbagh, Dhaka-1000. Mobile: 01913391551

**ভাড়া হবে**  
আজিজ ভবন ৯৩, মতিঝিল বা/এ (নিচ তলা)  
অধিকার ভিত্তিতে ব্যাংক, ইন্স্যুরেন্স ও  
অফিসের জন্য ভাড়া দেওয়া হবে। যোগাযোগঃ  
আজিজ প্রোপার্টিজ লিঃ  
০১৫৫৭-৬৮২৩৬১, ০১৮৪৪-৪৬৯১১৪

**STATUTORY NOTICE**  
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(ORIGINAL STATUTORY JURISDICTION)  
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1380 OF 2025  
IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Sections 81(2) and 85(3) 183 read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994, AND In the Matter of Sunny Chandra Saha, shareholder & Managing Director GOLD-STAR CERAMICS LIMITED, having its registered Office:- at 55, Mujaffar Tower (Level-05), Bir Uttam CR Duttta Road, Sonargaon, Dhaka. —Petitioner.  
VERSUS—  
"GOLD-STAR CERAMICS LIMITED" a Private Limited Company having its registered Office:- at Mujaffar Tower (Level-05), Bir Uttam CR Duttta Road, Sonargaon, Dhaka, representative by its Managing Director Sunny Chandra Saha and another. —Respondents.  
Notice is hereby given that an application under Sections 81(2) and 85(3), 183 read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was moved in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the petitioner for condoning the delay in holding the Annual General Meeting of the company name & style as "GOLD-STAR CERAMICS LIMITED". The Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel has admitted the said application on 03.08.2025 and Hon'ble court directed the petitioner to publish the notices within 3(three) weeks and also to submit affidavit-in-compliance on or before 4th September, 2025 from the date of publication. Any person interested in the said application may appear before this Hon'ble Court. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges.  
Chaitali Chakrobarty (Chaity)  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Room No. 303 (Main), Supreme Court Bar Association Bhaban, Dhaka-1000. Mobile: 01712849363

**UNHCR**  
The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar hereby announces the launch of the following tender:

TENDER REFERENCE NUMBER	ITEM DESCRIPTION
BGD - UNHCR RFP 1378	FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVISION OF ASSORTED CONSTRUCTION WORKS, AND RELATED SERVICES FOR PERMANENT STRUCTURES

Interested and potential vendors are invited to participate in this Request for Proposal (RFP) by accessing and downloading the tender documents from **UNHCR Cloud ERP Supplier Portal**.

**UNGM Notice Link:** <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/272636>

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT:**  
Please confirm your participation for BGD - UNHCR RFP 1378 by using the "Acknowledge Participation" functionality in Cloud ERP Supplier portal.

**It is very important to subscribe (Acknowledge Participation) to an ongoing negotiation that you wish to participate in as this is the only way to receive automatic email notifications with information on any changes related to this negotiation.**

**Instruction to Bidders:**  
To register as a prospective supplier and submission of bids, please follow the guideline: <https://www.unhcr.org/media/guidelines-unhcr-suppliers-how-use-supplier-portal>  
Existing suppliers use this link: <https://supplier-portal.unhcr.org/> to login with your email address and password. Do not create a new profile if you are already registered. If you have forgotten your password, click on Forgot Password link to reset your password.

**Bid submission deadline: Tuesday, 24 August 2025 – 23:59 hrs BST Bangladesh time.**

**Kindly note that no hard copy is acceptable. The offer to be submitted only through Cloud ERP portal.**

**PRAYER TIMING**  
AUGUST 11

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-25	12-45	4-45	6-41	8-00
JAMAAT 5-00	1-15	5-00	6-44	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Govt monitoring AL activities abroad

Says CA's press secretary

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The interim government is closely monitoring the activities of Awami League, Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam said yesterday, amid reports of the party opening an office in India's Kolkata.

"You know their activities are banned in Bangladesh. Definitely, we are monitoring what they are doing from outside the country," he said, responding to questions about the AL's party office in Kolkata, which was recently reported by BBC Bangla.

The press secretary said they are looking into these activities to determine whether there is any intent to "create instability" in the country.

"We will be able to let you know if we gather concrete information," Alam said during a media briefing at the Foreign Service Academy in the capital.

According to the BBC Bangla report, Awami League has set up a "party office" on the 8th floor of a complex on the outskirts of Kolkata.

## Journo Mozammel Babu shown held in extortion case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Mozammel Babu, managing director and editor-in-chief of Ekattor TV, was shown arrested yesterday in an extortion case filed by a shareholder of Boishakhi TV with Banani Police Station in January.

Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Ziadur Rahman passed the order. Babu was brought to the court around 11:40am. He was wearing a helmet and a bulletproof vest.

On January 11, Chowdhury Md Humayun Kabir, a shareholder of Boishakhi Media Ltd, filed the case. According to the prosecution, it was alleged that during the military-backed caretaker government in 2007, a group led by Babu demanded Tk 10 crore in extortion at the Boishakhi TV office. They took Tk 4,50,000 in cash.

Babu was detained in Mymensingh while trying to cross the border into India on September 16 last year. Since then, he has been in jail.

**University of Rajshahi**  
Central Science Laboratory  
Rajshahi-6205, Bangladesh  
[www.ru.ac.bd](http://www.ru.ac.bd)

Memo No. 96/25 C.S.Lab Date: 11.08.2025

**Invitation for (OTM) e-Tender (Re-Tender)**

e-Tender is being invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procuring the following works. Details are given below.

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of goods and related services	Tender closing date & time
1.	1136367	RU CSL EQUIPMENT 2024-25.03.	Supply, Installation, Commissioning, Operation, and Maintenance of Inductively Coupled Plasma Optical Emission Spectrometer (ICP-OES) with Accessories	10-Sep-2025 15:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP 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](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Professor Dr. A B M Hamidul Haque  
Director  
Central Science Laboratory  
University of Rajshahi  
Phone: 02-588864124  
Email ID: [directoreslab@ru.ac.bd](mailto:directoreslab@ru.ac.bd)

GD-1754

**Netherlands Team's Tour of Bangladesh 2025**  
Worldwide Media Rights

Ref No: BCB/Media Rights / 2025/560 Date: 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025

**Expression of Interest (EOI)**

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) invites Expression of Interest (EOI) along with financial offers from the TV Broadcasters or Marketing Agents for acquiring the following Media Rights of Netherlands Team's Tour of Bangladesh 2025 comprising of 03 T20i to be held from 26<sup>th</sup> of August 2025 to 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2025.

01. Satellite TV (Linear) Rights - Worldwide including Bangladesh  
02. Digital OTT (Over-the-Top) Rights - Worldwide including Bangladesh  
03. DTH (Direct-to-Home) Rights - Bangladesh only

**Area of Rights :**  
A detailed EOI document has been developed incorporating all necessary EOI details and documents for acquiring the above-mentioned Media Rights of Netherlands Team's Tour of Bangladesh 2025 involving Bangladesh National Cricket Team (Men).

**Eligibility Criteria:**  
01. Companies related to Tobacco, Alcohol (surrogated and non-surrogated), Betting, Online Betting shall not be eligible to participate in the EOI process.  
02. Any person(s) or entities with an existing unresolved dispute (i.e. Financial, Disciplinary and any other) with BCB or ICC on a point of law or fact shall be ineligible to acquire the aforementioned rights or to participate in the EOI Process.  
03. The Broadcaster/ TV Channel must be in operation (on air) for at least 03 (Three) years. Marketing agents must have the capability and reasonable experience in marketing international standard cricket events.

**EOI Document Collection Procedure:**  
01. Interested parties need to obtain a copy of the EOI Document (General Guidelines) related to EOI will be available at the BCB's Official Website: [www.tigercricket.com.bd](http://www.tigercricket.com.bd)  
02. The details of the EOI process, Series Itinerary, Production Specifications etc. set out in the EOI Document. EOI document will be available from 11<sup>th</sup> of August 2025 to 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2025.

**EOI Submission Procedure:**  
The EOI along with financial offer (prepared in accordance with the EOI Document) must be submitted at the BCB Management Office at Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216, Bangladesh by 16<sup>th</sup> of August 2025 during office hours (between BST 1000 to BST 1700) and should be in a sealed envelope to be addressed to: Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Cricket Board. Interested participant may submit EOI along with financial offer electronically via email at [sponsorship.rights@bcb-cricket.com](mailto:sponsorship.rights@bcb-cricket.com)

**The EOI needs to be accompanied with the following documents:**  
01. Company Profile and Individual Directors' / Owners' Profile.  
02. Updated auditor's report on financial statements (In case of consortium, each party's auditor's report needs to be submitted individually).  
03. Bank Solvency Certificate along with bank Statement.  
04. Certified copy of Memorandum and Articles of Association along with certificate of Incorporation or similar constitutional documents.  
05. Updated VAT Registration Certificate, Trade License and Tax Identification Number (TIN) Certificate or similar documents.  
06. In case of Consortium, notarized consortium Agreement.

The BCB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers at its sole discretion without assigning any reason. The BCB also reserves the right to cancel the entire EOI process and / or modify, add or alter the terms of the document and/ or the conditions for EOI process by issuing an addendum(s) at any time prior to the submission of the EOI.

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Bangladesh Cricket Board  
Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka-1216, Bangladesh

ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN PACT Iran threatens Trump-backed transit corridor

REUTERS, Dubai Iran threatened on Saturday to block a corridor planned in the Caucasus under a regional deal sponsored by US President Donald Trump...



A top Azerbaijani diplomat said earlier that the plan, announced by Trump on Friday, was just one step from a final peace deal between his country and Armenia...

The proposed Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP) would run across southern Armenia, giving Azerbaijan a direct route to its exclave of Nakhchivan...

The US would have exclusive development rights to the corridor, which the White House said would facilitate greater exports of energy and other resources.

He said military exercises carried out in northwest Iran demonstrated the Islamic Republic's readiness and determination to prevent any geopolitical changes.

"This corridor will not become a passage owned by Trump, but rather a graveyard for Trump's mercenaries," Velayati said.

Analysts and insiders say that Iran, under mounting US pressure over its disputed nuclear programme, lacks the military power to block the corridor.



Palestinians mourn over the shrouded bodies of loved ones killed the previous day while seeking aid near Zikim, at Al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City yesterday.

'The end of the war must be fair, and I am grateful to everyone who stands with Ukraine...' Zelensky thanks European leaders

'Self-amusement' Chinese expert spurns India's claims of downing Pakistani jets during May conflict

DAWN ONLINE China's former defence attache in South Asia Cheng Xizhong yesterday spurned India's much-delayed claim that it had shot down six Pakistani aircraft during the May conflict...

Having faced international coverage of its own craft being downed by Pakistan and scathing criticism from the opposition, India's Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh - three months after the conflict - claimed on Saturday that his country had shot down five Pakistani fighter jets and one other military aircraft during those clashes.

While Pakistan had already denied that India downed any of its aircraft, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif swiftly rubbished Singh's "belated assertions" on Saturday.

Commenting on the matter yesterday, Cheng said India's allegations lacked strong evidence and have been widely questioned by the international community...

Advertisement for Chittagong City Corporation (চট্টগ্রাম সিটি কর্পোরেশন) regarding a tender for a security post. It includes contact information and details about the tender process.

Jamaat wants FROM PAGE 12 certain demands and conditions, and we are pursuing them. We will continue to pursue them, and we hope we will achieve our goal.

Advertisement for the Election Commission (দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন) regarding a recruitment process. It includes details about the exam, application process, and contact information.

Regularise undocumented migrants

FROM PAGE 12 but why not regularising the irregular ones. Therefore, we are raising this issue with an urgent basis, a foreign ministry official told The Daily Star yesterday.

Malaysia froze the recruitment of foreign workers on May 31 last year following massive irregularities and malpractices in the labour hiring process under a syndicate of 101 recruiting agents.

Each worker had to pay between Tk 4-5 lakh for jobs, but thousands of them ended up jobless or under-employed thanks to their agents' malpractices.

Currently, there are frequent raids and detention of irregular workers, Abu Hayat, an independent researcher from Kuala Lumpur, told this correspondent.

Meanwhile, Dhaka may sign five memorandums of understanding (MoU) during the Chief Adviser's visit of Malaysia.

The MoUs pertain to defence cooperation, energy cooperation, formation of Business Councils (FBCCI and NCCIM), Cooperation between BMCCI and Malaysian institution MIMOS and Cooperation between Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and Malaysian Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS).

In addition, three 'exchanges of notes' may also be signed between the two countries on cooperation in the halal ecosystem, higher education and diplomatic training academy, said Shah Asif Rahman, Director General (Public Diplomacy) at the ministry of foreign affairs...

Bangladesh's application to become a 'Sectoral Dialogue Partner' of ASEAN and to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will be strongly highlighted during the visit.

In addition, the ASEAN member states, including Malaysia, will be called upon to play a more active and effective role in the repatriation of Rohingya, he added.

Advertisement for the Election Commission (দুর্নীতি দমন কমিশন) regarding a recruitment process. It includes details about the exam, application process, and contact information.

Advertisement for Sylhet Gas Fields Limited (সিলেট গ্যাস ফিল্ডস লিমিটেড) regarding an e-Tender Notice for a security post. It includes details about the tender process and contact information.

## Banning hall politics may not be the answer

### Ensure healthy student politics and nonpartisan administration

The sudden decision by Dhaka University to uphold a ban on all forms of student politics within the residential halls—as declared by its proctor in the early hours of Saturday—reflects the tendency of knee-jerk reactions by university authorities whenever a crisis emerges, rather than a willingness to find solutions through dialogue. Reportedly, students began protesting after the announcement of hall committees by the DU Jatiotabadi Chatra Dal (JCD) convening body. They rejected the vice-chancellor's call to initiate discussions with student organisations to reach a consensus on hall politics, and continued their protests. This prompted the proctor to announce that all types of hall politics would be banned.

The protests are understandable, given the terrifying legacy of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and other ruling party wings before it, which carried out all kinds of abuses in the halls in the name of politics. After the BCL's violent attack on the quota reform protesters on July 15, 2024 and the subsequent protests in the halls, the administration had declared a ban on all politics in the halls on July 17, 2024. The demands of student protesters to remove hall-based domination were valid. At present, no one wants a revival of the past, when students were coerced into joining BCL and punished if they refused to comply with the student wing's leaders.

But the current administration's buckling under late-night protests without involving stakeholders will not yield long-term solutions. It is also baffling how a ban on "covert" political activities can be enforced. As some student leaders have noted, banning visible, declared student groups will allow certain factions operating under a façade of neutrality to gain an unfair advantage, undermining the level playing field ahead of DUCSU elections. It may also result in a return to the old tradition of hall domination by a particular group.

The goal should not be to ban politics on campus, but to ensure that it fosters democratic practices and values among students. Student politics is an enduring reality of our campuses. Historically, student movements have played critical roles in social and political change, including the July uprising of 2024 which was led by students. We must ensure that student political groups serve the interests of all students, not just their own cliques. These groups must be held to clear standards with zero tolerance for violence, intimidation, control of the halls, or undue influence over university affairs. The university authorities should create a forum where student organisations, general students, legal experts, and officials can collectively decide how politics should function on campus.

Most importantly, the university administration must be committed to being strong, independent, and free from any kind of political bias. Only then can student politics be healthy and free from the toxicity of the past.

## Ensure gender equality in sports

### BCB and CWAB's neglect towards women cricketers unacceptable

We are frustrated to learn of the neglect faced by our women cricketers at the hands of the country's two leading cricketing bodies—the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) and the Cricketers' Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB). Reportedly, the BCB has failed to arrange any international series for the national women's team since they qualified for the ICC Women's World Cup in April. Meanwhile, CWAB recently held several meetings ahead of its September 4 election, attended by numerous current and former male national team cricketers. There was no representation from female cricketers, however. These incidents not only highlight the lack of institutional support for women cricketers but also expose the glaring absence of female representation within these bodies.

It has also been reported that the BCB has done little to facilitate adequate practice for the women's team ahead of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup, scheduled to start next month. All it arranged were a few practice matches against the men's U-15 side at the BKSP. As a result of such neglect, the team will have to participate in the tournament without any real match practice. This is simply unacceptable. Moreover, in terms of equal pay, our women's team lags far behind their male counterparts. At a time when India, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa are offering equal match fees to male and female cricketers, a significant pay gap persists in Bangladesh.

In a recent interview with this daily, former Bangladesh team captain and all-rounder Rumana Ahmed expressed her frustration at being treated differently for being a woman and also voiced concerns over the dwindling domestic opportunities for women cricketers. Sadly, this disparity is not limited to cricket. Our women footballers also face the same inequalities. Despite having achieved far greater success than their male counterparts in recent years, they are still given far fewer opportunities and paid significantly less. Removing such inequalities is essential if our women players are to continue excelling in their respective fields.

We urge the BCB and CWAB to ensure that both the women's and men's cricket teams are treated equally in every respect. They must organise regular domestic leagues and tournaments for the women's teams and create opportunities for them to participate in international matches to foster their development. Ensuring equal pay is also crucial. Equally importantly, the voices of women players must be acknowledged and represented in all decision-making forums.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Hip-hop is born

On this day in 1973, at a back-to-school party in the Bronx in New York, US, DJ Kool Herc (Clive Campbell) introduced the technique of playing the same album on two turntables and extending the drum section; the night is widely recognised as the birth of hip-hop.

# The anatomy of post-uprising disillusionment



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H.M. NAZMUL ALAM

When Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government finally fell on August 5, 2024, after over 15 years in power, many saw this as the end of not just a regime but also its legacy of nepotism, elite capture, and weaponisation of bureaucracy. In its place, an interim government, strengthened by student leaders and civil society figures, promised a new beginning. But now, on the first anniversary of that momentous transition, we are left to confront a dispiriting paradox: the more things seem to change, the more they seem to remain the same.

To observe this trajectory is not merely to diagnose political stagnation; it is to confront a deeper malaise that grips the postcolonial state. The Bangladeshi polity, like many postcolonial entities, remains haunted by what Partha Chatterjee termed the "derivative nature" of its politics, importing forms of democracy and revolution without addressing their foundational preconditions: ethics, justice, and institutional integrity.

Instead of dismantling the Hasina-era architecture of inequality, the uprising appears to have inherited its scaffolding. The bureaucracy, once subservient to a party machine, remains largely unchanged, save for new masters who often replicate the performative gestures of the old. The passport office is still a Kafkaesque labyrinth; BRTA still delays issuing licences; roads are still cleared for convoys of newly minted VIPs—the list goes on. The "sir" culture persists not because of policy failure, but because it is rooted in a psychology of entitlement and feudal deference cultivated over generations.

What is equally disturbing is the appropriation of the movement's moral capital by those who once fought under its banner. Many students who braved tear gas and rubber bullets in the name of justice now find themselves accused of replicating the very practices they once condemned. Extortion, influence peddling, and administrative favouritism are no longer exclusive to career politicians; they have found new agents among the revolution's own. This is what Hegel would describe as the "tragedy of history," wherein noble ideas are often corrupted by the dialectic of power.

History offers many such warnings. The Bolshevik Revolution, once heralded as the dawn of proletarian

emancipation, ossified into Stalinist terror. The post-Mubarak transition in Egypt collapsed into military authoritarianism. Even the French Revolution, perhaps the most emblematic of all, devoured its own architects in the Reign of Terror. In each case, the moral legitimacy of mass uprising was squandered by the inability—or unwillingness—of its leaders to reimagine governance



'It is time to confront a painful possibility that the July movement was not about systemic transformation, but about renegotiating power.'

FILE PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

beyond the idioms of control and domination.

The failure of Bangladesh's post-July regime lies not in its slow pace of reform—radical change is rarely instant—but in its abandonment of ethical seriousness. What was meant to be a foundational rupture has congealed into a cynical continuity. The deeper structures of clientelism, bureaucratic aloofness, or institutional dysfunction remain unmoved. July, a symbol of defiance, is now turning into a brand rather than a beacon. The very mechanisms that animated resistance—solidarity, courage, and truth-telling—have been commodified.

Perhaps nowhere is this more visible than in the movement's treatment of

women. It was women who reignited the movement on the night of July 14, 2024, when they marched from Rokeya Hall in defiance of curfews and repression. Their audacity shifted the moral centre of the uprising. And yet, a year later, discriminatory rules still bind women within university halls, harassment on the streets remains rampant, and the societal reflex to rehabilitate predators with garlands of social forgiveness is unchanged. Simone de Beauvoir once warned that no revolution is truly revolutionary unless it transforms the condition of women. In this sense, the July uprising has not merely fallen short; it has betrayed its most courageous constituency.

It would, however, be too easy, and too comforting, to lay blame solely at the feet of the new leadership.

possibility: that the July movement was never about systemic transformation, but about renegotiating power; that the anti-discrimination rhetoric was instrumental, not intrinsic; and that the struggle was less about eliminating privilege and more about redistributing it.

Still, all is not lost. The disappointment of the past year may yet serve as a crucible for a more serious reckoning. We must resist the temptation to romanticise revolutions or demonise reform. What is needed is a deep reimagining of the moral foundations of public life in Bangladesh. We must ask: What does it mean to govern ethically? What does it mean to dissent responsibly? What does it mean to rebuild institutions that serve, rather than dominate, the people?

## Legal enforcement can protect our children from lead poisoning



Samia Jaman Karobi is lecturer at the Department of Law in R.P. Shaha University.

SAMIA JAMAN KAROBI

Widespread lead exposure continues to pose a serious but under-recognised threat to public health in Bangladesh, with devastating consequences for millions of children. Experts from icddr,b and international collaborators recently presented alarming findings regarding the extent of the crisis. Data from a 2022-2024 study in Dhaka revealed that 98 percent of children aged two to four years had blood lead levels ( BLLs) exceeding the reference threshold of 35 µg/L set by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with a median BLL of 67 µg/L. Not a single child tested had a lead-free result. These figures are not only medically concerning but also represent a national emergency requiring immediate legal, regulatory, and social attention.

Bangladesh was identified as the fourth most lead-impacted country globally by UNICEF, with 35 million children affected. The UNICEF report and icddr,b findings serve as a grim reminder that this is not merely a health issue but a rights-based crisis. Lead exposure severely impairs brain development, causing irreversible cognitive deficits,

behavioural disorders, and stunting. These effects violate the rights of children under both domestic and international legal frameworks. Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ratified by Bangladesh, requires the state to ensure the highest attainable standard of health for children, including protection from environmental pollution. Similarly, Article 18(l) of the Constitution of Bangladesh obliges the state to improve public health and nutrition. The fact that lead poisoning continues to spread largely unchecked demonstrates an institutional failure to uphold these commitments.

While commendable interventions, such as reducing turmeric adulteration from 47 percent in 2019 to under one percent by 2021, have been achieved through research collaborations and actions by icddr,b and the Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA), some sources of lead—cookware, cosmetics, dust, and informal industries—remain unregulated. The Consumer Rights Protection Act, 2009, prohibits harmful goods and authorises penalties under Section 43. However, enforcement is weak. Agencies like

the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) and the Department of Environment (DoE) must take responsibility for monitoring consumer safety and environmental risks to children's health.

The ongoing crisis underscores the urgent need for institutional accountability in monitoring industrial approvals and certifying product safety, including cosmetics and cookware. In the absence of science-based regulation and consistent enforcement, harmful products and practices continue to circulate, endangering public health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), lead exposure during pregnancy, which can cross the placenta and harm the fetus, poses serious intergenerational risks. Despite clear evidence of danger, polluting industries still operate near densely populated areas, exposing children to toxic fumes and dust. Coordinated regulatory action is essential to prevent long-term harm and protect the health and rights of future generations in Bangladesh.

The judiciary in Bangladesh has, in principle, recognised the right to a healthy environment as a fundamental constitutional guarantee. In the landmark case of Dr Mohiuddin Farooque v Bangladesh (1996), the Supreme Court announced that environmental degradation could amount to a violation of Article 32 of the constitution, which ensures the right to life. Later, in a writ petition, the court ordered the government to take action against harmful air pollutants,

reinforcing the legal doctrine that public health is inseparable from environmental protection. Such precedents must be invoked again to protect children from lead exposure by filing fresh public interest litigations under Article 102 of the constitution and demanding accountability from regulatory bodies.

Along with legal reform, public awareness campaigns must be dramatically scaled up. While isolated health education initiatives exist, they have not reached the scale required to change public behaviour or pressurise informal industries. Community education through schools, religious institutions, and local government bodies is crucial, especially in urban slums and industrial belts where exposure rates are highest. Parents must be informed about the risks of using lead-based cookware and cosmetics.

Addressing the lead poisoning crisis demands a coordinated national strategy that aligns with the country's constitutional duties, international human rights obligations, and established judicial interpretations. Regulatory agencies must strengthen oversight, ensure compliance, and apply penalties where necessary. At the same time, the legal community should utilise available remedies to hold negligent actors accountable. Lasting progress will require sustained legal action, active institutional responsibility, and widespread public awareness to ensure that every child grows up in a safe and healthy environment.

# 'Climate finance needs to be demand-driven, not designed in donor capitals'

Christina Chan, senior director of climate hub at BRAC and former managing director and senior advisor for adaptation and resilience at the US Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Change, talks to Sifat Afrin Shams of The Daily Star about climate finance, adaptation projects and resilience at the grassroots.

**Having worked both within and outside the US government, what, according to you, are the most tangible and immediate effects of US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement on the Global South, including Bangladesh?**

Having worked on climate under both President Obama and President Biden, I saw first-hand how damaging the previous (2017) US withdrawal from the Paris Agreement was, especially for countries like Bangladesh. Under Obama, we worked hard to build trust with developing countries to land the Paris Agreement. When the Trump administration pulled out, it sent a deeply troubling message: that a top emitter was walking away from a crisis it helped cause. That fractured momentum and gave cover for other big emitters to delay or weaken their commitments. The impact on climate finance was immediate.

A second (2025) US withdrawal is even more damaging. It sends a disastrous signal to the rest of the world: that the US is not serious about cutting emissions or living up to its obligations. Even before withdrawal would take effect, developing countries are already feeling the cut-off of critical assistance, including for climate change adaptation.

**What are the biggest barriers to getting climate finance to the local level, where it is most needed, and how can local organisations and NGOs help to bridge that gap?**

Money often doesn't make it to the communities that need it most. And from my experience, there are a few major reasons why.

First, the funding systems themselves are incredibly complex. Many of the big international climate funds—like the Green Climate Fund—have long, technical application processes that require very specific institutional capacity. That creates a huge barrier for organisations that are doing real, on-the-ground work but don't have teams of grant writers or compliance officers.

Moreover, the money often flows through multiple layers—big development banks, international NGOs, national governments—which can dilute the funding or delay its arrival. Some donors are still hesitant to fund local actors directly because they see them as risky or too small to manage large grants.

Second, a lot of climate finance still comes with strings attached—projects are designed from the top down, based on what donors think will work, rather than what communities actually need. And the funding cycles are often too short. Adaptation isn't a one-year project—it's a long-term process that requires trust, flexibility, and ongoing support.

Organisations like BRAC, with deep roots in the communities it serves and an understanding of both the development context and the language of donors, can act as a bridge, helping local actors build the capacity they need to access funds, while also advocating upstream to donors to simplify their processes and shift more control to the local level.

**How does BRAC's approach to climate action address the disproportionate impact on women and girls, and what more needs to be done?**

Women are at the centre of our approach to climate change adaptation. Women play a critical role in the agricultural workforce and they are disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. They are also agents of change. Among male and female farmers, I have met with since joining BRAC a year ago, women farmers expressed being more likely to trust scientific advice, adopt new crops and collaborate. Evidence also suggests that when women have equal access to information and resources, "their likelihood of adopting improved agricultural practices can match or exceed that of men."

Through our work on climate change adaptation, we are promoting collaborative approaches between men and women to



Christina Chan

address inequalities and exclusion and to create more respectful and inclusive gender relations. Beyond selecting women as participants, we seek to examine and confront structures, processes and relationships of power and intersectionality that contribute to their climate vulnerability.

**Could you share some examples of what you consider to be successful frugal innovations in climate adaptation?**

Climate change is reshaping the world in profound ways—take coral reefs, for example. Many can no longer survive rising temperatures, as pointed out by former Maldivian President Mohammed Nasheed in his keynote speech at the Frugal Innovation Forum (FIF) last month. In places like Bangladesh, increasing salinity is changing what crops can be grown where. This means we can't just keep doing things the old way. We have to rethink what we grow, where we grow it, and how we grow it—and that calls for innovation.

Innovation, however, is not necessarily

about high-tech or expensive solutions. In fact, as underscored at the FIF, the most effective climate adaptation often comes from communities themselves, who know their environment intimately. When communities are in the driver's seat, co-designing solutions with development organisations or researchers, what emerges is often frugal innovation—smart, practical approaches that carefully use limited resources and money, yet have a big impact at scale.

Several examples were highlighted at the FIF last month. One is the promotion of sunflowers as a salt-tolerant crop in coastal Bangladesh. Sunflowers can thrive in saline soils where traditional crops struggle, providing farmers with a viable alternative that doesn't require expensive inputs. Another example is the use of simple solar-powered water pumps that provide reliable irrigation without costly fuel, helping farmers adapt to unpredictable rainfall patterns.

**Looking ahead, what is your greatest hope for the future trajectory of climate resilience in the Global South?**

My hope for climate resilience in the Global South is rooted in the urgent need to make adaptation a top global priority, especially for the communities facing the most severe climate risks.

We need to dramatically scale up investments in adaptation to protect lives, livelihoods, and development progress. We must embrace transformative adaptation, which goes beyond simply coping with climate impacts to fundamentally reshaping systems and structures that create vulnerability in the first place. This means addressing underlying social, economic, and political inequalities and building resilience in ways that foster equity, justice, and long-term sustainability.

Central to this approach is ensuring that adaptation efforts are inclusive and equitable. That means centring the voices of women, indigenous peoples, and marginalised communities to ensure the benefits reach

those who are often left behind.

Ultimately, adaptation must be proactive and integrated, driven by reliable data and designed with, not for, local communities.

**How can the international community ensure that climate finance truly serves the principles of equity and responsibility?**

The question is about more money, as well as how the money flows, who it reaches, and who gets to shape the decisions.

We must centre the needs of the communities most affected by climate change—those who contributed the least to the problem. That includes Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries, and places like Bangladesh that are on the frontlines. Climate finance needs to be demand-driven, not designed in donor capitals. Too often, funding is built around what global institutions think is bankable or scalable, rather than what local communities actually need to build resilience.

We need to shift the balance toward grants and adaptation finance. Too much of the money still comes as loans, and a disproportionate amount still goes to mitigation in middle-income countries. That might be where the big emissions cuts are, but it's not where the most urgent human need is.

I have heard time and again from partners in the Global South: the systems for accessing climate finance are too slow, too bureaucratic, and too skewed in favour of big institutions. If we want to make finance more equitable, we have to reform access. That means streamlining processes, rethinking how we assess risk, and building the capacity of local actors.

And finally, accountability matters. We need transparency around where the money goes, who benefits, and whether it's reaching marginalised groups and advancing gender equity. That means involving communities in governance, building stronger local feedback loops, and holding both donors and recipients to shared goals.

# When the Rohingya crisis becomes an opportunity for some



**Ahtaram Shin** is a Rohingya writer and freelancer. He works with Rohingya as an editor and researcher and contributes to various media outlets covering Rohingya issues.

AHTARAM SHIN

Nearly eight years into exile, the wounds of the Rohingya people remain raw, bleeding silently in the margins of a distracted world. More than a million Rohingya refugees continue to live in limbo, scattered across camps in Bangladesh and beyond, with no clear path home, no recognition of citizenship, and no justice for the atrocities committed against them. In this prolonged state of dispossession and despair, a new and unsettling pattern has taken root: for some in the Rohingya diaspora, the crisis has become not just a cause but a career.

What began as a desperate cry for help has, in some quarters, become a pathway to power. Organisations have sprung up, declarations are made, Zoom calls are conducted, and grants are secured. But behind the polished websites and international conferences lies a haunting question: what has changed for those still trapped behind barbed wire in Cox's Bazar?

There is no denying that the Rohingya crisis is one of the gravest tragedies of our time. Following decades of systemic marginalisation, including the 1982 Citizenship Law that stripped Rohingya of legal status, and brutal military operations such as Operation Dragon King (1977) and the 2017 clearance campaign, over a million Rohingya were violently expelled from Myanmar. Despite the passage of time, they remain stateless and voiceless.

While the Myanmar junta escalates its war on ethnic minorities and the world shifts its attention to Ukraine, Gaza, Israel, Syria, and Sudan, the Rohingya suffering continues in near-total neglect. Camps have become sprawling slums, rife with violence, drug trafficking, gender-based abuse, and depression. There is no right to work, no real education, no freedom of movement, and little hope.

Yet in the vacuum of progress, a parallel reality has emerged: a new class of diaspora activists, NGO projects, international speakers, and self-declared representatives now speak on behalf of the Rohingya people. They appear at summits, publish op-eds, and secure fellowships. Some hold advisory positions in the National Unity Government of



'More than a million Rohingya refugees continue to live in limbo, scattered across camps in Bangladesh and beyond, with no clear path home.' FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

Myanmar (NUG), direct civil society forums, or work as policy consultants in Western think tanks.

Diaspora voices are important. But the problem is one of authenticity, accountability, and impact. What too often emerges is not leadership rooted in community, but performance tailored for international consumption. Instead of lifting their people, some have learned how to profit from their pain.

In Cox's Bazar, most refugees have never heard of the diaspora organisations speaking in their name. There is no democratic process of selection, no grassroots mandate. Many in the diaspora have assumed roles of authority based on English fluency, networking skills, and donor access, not lived experience or genuine connection to the communities they claim to lead.

This phenomenon is not unique. In the Syrian, Palestinian, and Afghan diasporas, similar patterns have emerged: trauma becomes a commodity, tragedy becomes a tool, and suffering becomes a platform. As Palestinian academic Hanan Ashrawi once warned, "You cannot commodify your struggle." And yet, in the Rohingya context, commodification is well underway.

quick to criticise those who speak out from the camps. They dismiss dissent as "divisive" and genuine local leaders as "uninformed." Meetings are held in Geneva and New York without ever consulting those in Teknaf or Kutupalong. Stories shared are often from 2017 or before, because many are no longer connected to the evolving horrors on the ground.

The hypocrisy is evident. When

like Aung San Suu Kyi have refused to recognise their name; they instead defend the junta.

A heartbreaking reality is how fear, trauma, and a lack of direction have shaped youth in the refugee camps. Many educated Rohingya spend their lives teaching in community centres, managing small NGOs, or posting on Facebook—yet rarely take tangible steps toward change. Some blame leaders, some retreat into apathy, and others remain paralysed by the weight of generational oppression.

But silence is not safety; it is slow suicide. Waiting endlessly for the diaspora or the international community to act is a luxury the Rohingya can no longer afford. We must shift from expectation to action, from storytelling to strategy.

There is a quiet betrayal happening, a betrayal from within. Some Rohingya have used their people's pain to build platforms, apply for grants, and create careers. They speak of liberation, but fear discomfort. They champion justice, but avoid risk. They build brands, not bridges. Theirs is an activism of résumés and press photos, not of sacrifice and solidarity.

As Nelson Mandela once said, "Where globalisation means, as it so often does, that the rich and powerful now have new means to further enrich and empower themselves... we have a responsibility to protest in the name of universal freedom." That protest must also be against those who co-opt liberation movements for personal gain.

This is not a rejection of the diaspora; it is a demand for ethical leadership. We need transparent, community-based advocacy; inclusion of refugee voices in decision-making; ground-up strategies, not top-down agendas; a focus on citizenship, repatriation, and safety—not just visibility; and accountability for those who claim to lead.

International donors must be vigilant. The media must look beyond curated stories. And, most importantly, the Rohingya people must reclaim their struggle—from the camps, from Arakan, and, yes, even from opportunists within their own ranks.

This is not cynicism. It is a cry, of a Rohingya man who believed in Mandela, Che Guevara, Malcolm X, and thought his people had heroes too. It is a cry of betrayal, of stolen hope, of representation turned into an illusion. The Rohingya don't need saviours. They need comrades. Organisers, not opportunists. Bridges, not business cards.

We must reclaim our struggle and purify our purpose. Let that be the path forward.

## CROSSWORD

BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**  
1 Shows nervousness  
6 Acting groups  
11 Unescorted  
12 Think up  
13 Black card  
14 Quite impressed  
15 Frank McCourt book  
16 Summer drink  
18 Small worker  
19 Hit letters  
20 Nettle  
21 Spotted  
23 Flies alone  
25 Bird of myth  
27 Family  
28 Monastery head  
30 Wanes  
33 Bruins legend  
34 Convoy member  
36 Furrow  
37 Scurry  
39 Drop the ball, say  
40 Sweet treats  
41 Visibly shocked  
43 "Hello" singer  
44 Jabs
- DOWN**  
1 Lasagna and linguine  
2 Skiing variety  
3 Bike features  
4 Purpose  
5 Appears  
6 Salmon of the North Pacific  
7 "No Sunshine"  
8 Show interruptions  
9 Castle parts  
10 Furtive one  
17 Tax agency  
22 Cribbage jack  
24 Tell tales  
26 Whodunit discoveries  
28 Gaming spot  
29 Bind  
31 Exercise with a squat thrust  
32 Emphasis  
33 TV grouch  
35 Plot  
38 Dissolve  
42 Sticky gunk

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## YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

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## Blender's Choice The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2024 Lead actresses who made a mark in 2024



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**MEHAZABIEN CHOWDHURY**

Mehazabien's dedication to breathing life into her characters is undeniable, and as Rupa in *Ararat*, she delivers with effortless conviction, winning the audience's acceptance. Her trusted collaboration with director Vicky Zahed once again proves reliable, never disappointing. Earning a nomination for this role is well-deserved, as she masterfully navigates Rupa's complex emotions—dilemma, anger, betrayal, and an inferiority complex—bringing depth and authenticity to a character that lingers long after the screen fades.



**PORI MONI**

In *Rongila Kitab*, Pori Moni embodies Supti with striking emotional depth, a convincing physical transformation, and heartfelt sincerity. Her effortless portrayal of a pregnant woman and the struggles Supti endures were powerfully brought to life under Anam Biswas's direction. The performance resonated with audiences and critics alike, earning her a nomination for Best Actor (Female) in the popular category, and reaffirming her talent for delivering authentic, memorable characters.



**SAFA KABIR**

In Vicky Zahed's *Tikit*, Safa Kabir surprised the audience as Suborna, a mysterious, quietly intense character who marks a striking departure from her usual romantic roles. Her layered portrayal, blending intrigue with subtle emotional depth, adds a gripping edge to the series' dark comedy-thriller tone. This bold transformation and compelling performance reverberated strongly with audiences, earning her a well-deserved nomination for Best Actor (Female) in the popular category.



**TASNIA FARIN**

Tasnia Farin gleams in *Kacher Manush Dure Thuiya* delivering a deeply moving portrayal of Sharmin that beautifully captures her emotional depth and quiet strength with genuine subtlety. Her effortless chemistry with co-star Pritom Hasan brings warmth and realism to every scene, making Sharmin's journey toward independence feel truly authentic and heartfelt. Both audiences and critics have been captivated by Farin's nuanced and sincere performance in Shihab Shaheen's web film, marking yet another powerful milestone in her acting career.



**XEFER**

Xefer Rahman's acting debut in Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's *Last Defenders of Monogamy* truly caught everyone's attention. Her natural, heartfelt performance brought a fresh energy to the project, and fans were amazed by her striking transformation. Acting alongside the acclaimed Chanchal Chowdhury, she held her own with grace and depth, making each scene memorable. It's no surprise she earned a well-deserved nomination this year for such a remarkable debut.

## NEWS

### Govt eases drive

**FROM PAGE 12**  
leaders agreed to call off their 72-hour strike planned for tomorrow following what they described as a "fruitful meeting" at Bidyut Bhaban.

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

In May 2023, the then government fixed the economic life of buses and minibuses at 20 years and trucks and lorries at 25 years. But following pressure from transport associations, the order was put on hold, allowing outdated vehicles to remain on the roads.

After the political changeover last year, the interim government, in a stakeholder meeting on October 24 last year, gave a six-month deadline — until May 2025 — to remove all outdated vehicles from Dhaka.

In June this year, the government fixed the economic lifespan of buses and minibuses at 20 years and trucks and lorries at 25 years.

According to Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) data updated on July 16, a total of 39,169 buses and minibuses, and 41,140 trucks, lorries, and tankers have crossed their economic lifespan.

On July 20, the government launched a drive against outdated vehicles and removed 38 vehicles and filed 2,030 cases till July 27.

On July 27, transport owners and workers threatened to enforce a 72-hour nationwide strike from August 12 to press home their eight-point demand, including halting the ongoing crackdown on outdated vehicles and extending the economic lifespan of buses and trucks by five to 10 years.

Following yesterday's meeting, Transport Adviser Fouzul said the government has assured transport owners and workers that it will address issues that are solvable. "Some steps have already been taken to that effect."

When reporters asked about the drive against the outdated vehicles, he said removing all outdated vehicles at once would cause a shortage unless new ones hit the streets.

"That's why we're now targeting the oldest, unfit vehicles," Fouzul explained, adding, "Besides, there is a lack of dumping ground and adequate magistrates and police to conduct the drives."

### Most people will vote for the BNP

**FROM PAGE 12**  
challenges on the path to building the country," said Tarique virtually from London.

The BNP leader made these remarks while addressing the biennial council of Rajshahi Metropolitan BNP as the chief guest at Pathanpara area in the city.

He said after the dictator fled, the rule of the people and the establishment of political rights must now be ensured.

### Let students decide

**FROM PAGE 12**  
hall politics. The agitation followed the unveiling of hall committees by the DU JCD's convening body.

After the meeting yesterday, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan told reporters that student organisations had provided vital suggestions and wanted to continue dialogue.

He said preparations were underway for the Dhaka University Central Students' Union election, and full participation of student organisations was essential. "We want to ensure it is peaceful and that student organisations don't end up in any sort of confrontation with the general students."

Central JCD President Rakibul Islam Rakib said DU should frame a policy on hall politics based on students' opinions.

SM Farhad, president of DU Chhatra Shibir, said his party proposed email voting with a simple "yes-no" format

### Man hacked to pieces

**FROM PAGE 12**  
According to the Rab official, the suspects admitted during interrogation that they took Oli to Sadek's home in Tongi's Bonmala area on August 6.

He added that Sadek plotted the killing with Roni after Oli had made derogatory comments about his wife, Shaon. Initially, they took him to a nearby rail line to push him under the wheels of a train. As no train arrived, they returned to Sadek's home and murdered him there on August 6.

Two days later, when the body started to decompose, the suspects

Rebuilding the education, judiciary, economy, health sector and restoring law and order will be the first priority if the BNP forms the government with the people's votes.

Tarique said that he would meet the people of Bangladesh face-to-face very soon.

"We must work to ensure water flow in the Padma river. If necessary, we will go to the International Court of Justice or the United Nations to secure our fair share of water," he added.

on hall politics.

Abdul Kader, convener of DU Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangsad, said, "We made it clear that we do not support any political structure or activities in the halls or academic spaces."

While DU Chhatra Union was initially eager for dialogue on hall politics, they walked out of the meeting due to the presence of Shibir members.

DU Chhatra Union President Meghmalla Bosu said his organisation would not negotiate with those who patronised the acts of genocide in 1971 and 2024.

"But one thing must be made clear: under no circumstances should political space be given to those involved in covert activities. They exploit the identity of general students... Whenever they face political challenges, they use the name of general students to push their agenda, pressuring the university administration into taking various actions."

packed the remains into the bags and threw those in the Tongi Station Road area on early August 8. Police recovered the bags around 9:30am that day.

Using fingerprint analysis, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) identified the victim and informed his family.

The victim's wife, Shahana Akter, filed a murder case with Tongi East Police Station on Saturday.

Rab officer Salman said further probe was underway to determine whether others were involved.

### 12.61cr voters on draft list

**FROM PAGE 12**  
door-to-door data collection drive to enlist those left out, 4.57 million new voters were added, while 2.13 million names were removed. As a result, the total now stands at 126.17 million.

According to EC data, the voter inclusion rate this year is 3.69 percent, while the net growth rate is 1.97 percent.

**GOVT TO BUY 40,000 BODYCAMs**

The interim government has planned to procure at least 40,000 body cameras for police to enhance security at voting booths during the February general election.

The move was discussed at a high-level meeting at the State Guest House Jamuna in Dhaka on Saturday with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in the chair.

### Talks begin on implementation

**FROM PAGE 1**

According to a commission member who requested anonymity, several participants suggested seeking an official reference from the Supreme Court under Article 106 to resolve key constitutional issues related to the charter.

All the experts agreed that since August 5, the country has already entered "a new constitutional order" that the court cannot ignore.

Other proposals included holding a referendum — though some cautioned it would be politically challenging due to the risk of disagreement — and expanding the scope of the current ordinance to accommodate the required changes.

One expert also discussed forming a constituent assembly, while others pointed to the Legal Framework Order as a potential solution, weighing its pros and cons.

"This was essentially a preliminary discussion," Prof Riaz said.

"We listened to the experts to understand the legal options for implementing the July Charter. We will continue engaging with more legal experts, both formally and informally, to ensure all alternatives are explored."

Home Adviser Lt General (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury and the chief adviser's special assistants Khuda Baksh Chowdhury and Faiz Tayeb Ahmed attended the meeting, according to the CA's official Facebook page.

Faiz Tayeb said the procurement process for the bodycams was in its final stage, adding that they would strengthen security at thousands of vulnerable polling centres. "We are aiming to procure the bodycams by October so police officers can receive training on their key features, including AI capabilities."

Authorities have approached three companies from Germany, China, and Thailand to supply the devices, which police will wear on their chests while on

election duty.

Prof Yunus instructed officials to expedite procurement and ensure proper training for police personnel. "We must guarantee complete security at all polling centres, no matter the cost. Our goal is to make the February election the most free, fair, and peaceful in the country's history."

During the meeting, the chief adviser's special assistant on telecommunications and ICT affairs also unveiled plans for an election app to provide information on the February polls, including candidate details, booth updates, and interactive features for submitting complaints.

Prof Yunus urged officials to fast-track the app's launch and ensure it is user-friendly.

He added that the commission is not currently seeking input from political experts. "Right now, we need a clear legal path for implementation. Once we have that, we can speak to the political parties and experts."

The commission will not hold any meeting today but will work internally to finalise the draft of the July Charter and set the schedule for the next phase of discussions.

The National Consensus Commission, chaired by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, was established to build political agreement around reform proposals from six commissions launched by the interim government in October last year — covering the constitution, electoral system, judiciary, anti-corruption measures, administration, and police reform.

In its first phase, between March 20 and May 19, the commission held 44 meetings with 32 parties, reaching consensus on 62 proposals.

In the second, starting June 2, it hosted 23 more sessions with 30 parties, securing agreement on all 19 issues discussed.

The issues were: chairmanship of the parliamentary standing committee; delimitation of constituencies; provisions relating to the president's power of pardon; decentralisation of the judiciary — (a) decentralisation of the Supreme Court, (b) expansion of subordinate courts at the upazila level; declaration of a state of emergency; appointment of the chief justice; amendment of the constitution; tenure of the prime minister; formation of the Election Commission; and proposals relating to the expansion of citizens' fundamental rights.

The proposals adopted with notes of dissent are: amendment of Article 70 of the constitution; provision allowing the prime minister to hold multiple offices; provisions relating to the appointment of the Public Service Commission, Comptroller and Auditor General, Anti-Corruption Commission, and Ombudsman — previously proposed under the name "Selection Committee for Constitutional and Statutory Bodies" (earlier proposed as the "National Constitutional Council" or "NCC"); women's representation in parliament; bicameral parliament; method of electing the president; caretaker government; fundamental principles of the state; and powers and responsibilities of the president [Article 48(3)].

## 1,300 firearms looted Increase party

FROM PAGE 3  
Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said, "We have launched a special initiative to recover the lost weapons of law enforcement agencies. Those who provide information leading to recovery will be rewarded."

A committee will soon be formed for this purpose, with details to be announced later, he said while addressing reporters after the Law-and-Order Core Committee meeting at the ministry.

Tawhidul Haque, associate professor at Dhaka University's Institute of Social Welfare and Research, said, "The reward initiative is a good idea, but it may not be effective now since a year has passed since the looting."

"These firearms were looted by criminals and have been used or rented out for crimes. These may have been kept in reserve to create instability before the election." He suggested forming a special team from the army, rather than the police, to conduct drives to recover the firearms.

Meanwhile, police officials say many of the looted weapons are being used in criminal activities.

On the day of the uprising, police stations were attacked nationwide, with widespread incidents of vandalism, arson, and looting. Police operations ceased by midday, and Ansar members were later deployed to guard the stations. Normal activities resumed on August 13.

## USE OF FIREARMS IN CRIMES

Since the recovery drive began, several incidents have linked recovered weapons to crimes.

In January and February,

police in Chattogram arrested six people in separate raids and seized firearms, which had been looted from Double Mooring Police Station.

On April 17, police arrested Arif Hossain near Double Mooring Police Station and recovered a pistol and bullets from his hideout. He later confessed that the weapons were looted from the police.

On July 21, a gunfight took place between two criminal groups in Chandgaon of Chattogram. Later, police conducted drives at the scene and discovered two bullets and bullet casings, which were actually looted from police stations.

On August 29 last year, businessman Md Anis was shot dead in Bayezid Bostami area of the port city. Police found five bullet casings marked "police" and a weapon bag at the scene.

In November, the Coast Guard arrested Ziaur Rahman in Maheshkhali with a pistol he admitted was looted from a Chattogram police facility.

An official of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), requesting anonymity, said a portion of the looted firearms were sold to criminal gangs in Dhaka.

Residents of Mohammadpur alleged that firearms stolen from Mohammadpur and Adabor police stations are now in the hands of criminals.

Iftekhar Hasan, officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station, said they suspect firearms used in Geneva Camp criminal activities came from looted police weapons.

"We are conducting drives to recover the firearms," he said.

FROM PAGE 3  
its Chief of Party Catherine Cecil delivered the opening speech.

Sharmeen S Murshid, adviser to the women and children affairs ministry, said, "The 'women-excluded' commission (consensus commission) is deciding on women's issues. I feel extremely uncomfortable. I have not seen women being equally involved in the decision-making here."

"To increase women's participation in the polls, the commission's discussions should start again. Women must be brought into a more active and strong position in politics, made more capable, and included in the election process," she added.

On the public fund proposal, she said, "The spending limit for elections is never maintained. Establishing a public fund could help reduce corruption. Many qualified candidates cannot contest due to financial constraints, but such a fund could support women candidates."

Badiul Alam Majumdar, member of the National Consensus Commission, said everyone's demand this time was to increase the number of women's seats and hold direct elections for those seats.

"In reserved seats, nominations are given as a favour, with no accountability to the people. Unfortunately, direct elections in reserved seats have become just a slogan for rights organisations, as well as civil society. Politicians have also used this slogan."

BNP Standing Committee member Nazrul Islam Khan said the government can increase women's nominations if it wants.

"However, it is the political parties that must

implement the decision. Women themselves need to be proactive in contesting elections. We must also see how many women actually seek nominations," he said.

"Female candidates must be able to compete against other parties and win. Only when a party wins does the issue of accountability and implementing decisions arise," he added.

He also welcomed the proposal to create a public fund for female candidates.

BNP Self-Reliance Affairs Secretary Shireen Sultana criticised the way the consensus commission's discussions with political parties ended, saying they had limited the scope for women's candidacy.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, said, "Without consulting any women's organisations, the commission has made decisions on women's issues. We reject this decision. In 2025, they are showing the 'generosity' of giving only 5 percent nominations for general seats to women, and these will likely be in less prominent constituencies."

Tasnim Jara, senior joint member secretary of NCP, said during the uprising, women led from the front. "Yet no changes have been made regarding women's nominations to general seats. This is a failure. No process was visible at the commission to include women's voices," she said.

Election Commissioner Abul Fazal Md Saanullah, BNP Standing Committee member Selima Rahman, former lawmaker Nilufar Chowdhury Moni, Biplobi Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Haque, and Sumaiya Islam, member of the Women's Affairs Reform Commission, also spoke.

## Govt reform plans

FROM PAGE 3  
Adivasi Forum, stressed the urgent need for an Indigenous Reform Commission.

"Even if elections are held in February, this commission can still be formed to prepare a report on the current status and position of indigenous peoples," he said.

Prof Robayet Ferdous of Mass Communication and Journalism at Dhaka University warned that indigenous peoples are facing an existential crisis.

This year's International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples focused on the impact of artificial intelligence on indigenous rights, identities, and cultural and linguistic heritage.

Speaking on the issue, Prof Ainun Nahar of Jahangirnagar University said attitudes of dominant groups towards indigenous peoples in Bangladesh are extremely alarming.

"Where AI can be used to create and spread misinformation, jeopardising the safety of indigenous communities, how can it possibly be used to establish indigenous rights in Bangladesh?" she questioned.

Prothom Alo Joint Editor Sohrab Hasan said the state signed the CHT Peace Accord but never implemented it.

The Land Commission in the CHT has not held a single meeting despite 22,000 pending applications, he said, adding that the core objective of the peace accord was to respect their distinct identity.

Pallab Chakma, executive director of the Kapeeng

Foundation, said, "This government is giving no importance to human rights in the hills. The Thai government recently passed a law to protect their indigenous communities. We hope Bangladesh will enact a similar law."

Shamsul Huda, executive director of ALRD, demanded that the government celebrate international indigenous day with the same dignity as other national days. The international conventions related to indigenous rights, such as ILO Convention Articles 141 and 169, must be ratified, he said.

The seminar made several other demands, including constitutional recognition of indigenous peoples, finalisation of the draft Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Rights Act into law, and the establishment of a separate ministry and land commission for plains indigenous peoples, with a full minister appointed from among them.

At the event, two papers were presented – one by Adivasi Forum's Ujjal Azim and another by ALRD's Rafique Ahmed Siraji.

## Will ensure

FROM PAGE 3  
reporter of Mymensingh-based daily Pratidiner Kagoj, with sharp weapons in front of a crowded market in the Chandana Chowrasta area of Gazipur.

Meanwhile, a court in Gazipur has granted two-day remand each to the seven accused arrested in the case, said Bason Police Station OC Shahin Khan.

## Wedding plans

FROM PAGE 1  
Ruplal Robidas, 45, was from Ghanairampur Dangapara village under Taraganj upazila, and his relative Pradip Chandra Robidas, 44, was from Shyampur area under Mithapukur upazila.

Eyewitness Majidul Islam said, "The two kept insisting they were not thieves and explained their professions, but the mob would not listen; they beat the men severely."

MA Faruk, officer-in-charge of Taraganj Police Station, said, "The policemen informed around 11:00pm. The victims were taken to Taraganj Upazila Health Complex, where Ruplal was declared dead on arrival. Pradip was transferred to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, where he died early yesterday."

"Ruplal's wife has filed a case against 500-700 unidentified individuals. Police are investigating the case. The culprits will be identified and arrested soon."

**SHOCK AND GRIEF**  
Ruplal was a cobbler, and Pradip was a van driver. Both were single-earning members of their families.

Ruplal left behind his mother, wife, two daughters and a son, and Pradip left behind his wife, two sons and a daughter.

According to Ruplal's wife Maloti Robidas, their 19-year-old daughter, Nupur Rani Robidas, was engaged to Komol Robidas from Shyampur area in Mithapukur.

Pradip was the matchmaker, and he was supposed to stay at Ruplal's house on Saturday night. They were set to go to Komol's home yesterday to fix the wedding date.

Visiting Ruplal's house yesterday noon, this

correspondent saw the grieving family was still in disbelief. "Whom will I call baba now?" in a choked voice asked Ruplal's daughter Nupur, who has just passed her HSC examinations.

Apart from their small 10 decimal homestead, consisting of two tin-roofed houses and a single-shed kitchen, the family has no other possessions.

"What will I do with three children and an elderly mother-in-law. My daughter's wedding is now uncertain," cried Ruplal's wife Maloti.

Speaking on the matter, Kursha Union Parishad member Tuhinur Rahman said, "Ruplal supported his family by mending shoes in the market. He worked hard to educate his children. He and his relative were falsely accused and killed."

Meanwhile, Advocate Monilal Das, Rangpur divisional president of the Bangladesh Dalit Parishad, said both victims belonged to the Dalit community. He demanded immediate arrest of the perpetrators and called for assistance for the victims' families.

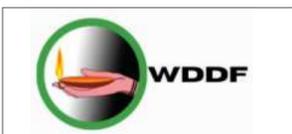
Contacted, Taraganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer Rubel Rana said, "The upazila administration will provide financial assistance to ensure Ruplal's daughter's wedding takes place. Police have been instructed to quickly identify and arrest the suspects."

Meanwhile, locals blocked the Rangpur-Dinajpur highway for an hour yesterday evening, demanding justice for the killings. Police and army members later arrived at the scene and assured the protesters that the culprits would be identified and arrested quickly, said UNO Rubel Rana.

## ROUNDTABLE

## Women with Disabilities Rights and Inclusive Services

Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF) organised a seminar titled "Women with Disabilities Rights and Inclusive Services" on July 24, 2025. Here is a summary of the discussion.



**Ashrafun Nahar Misti**  
Executive Director, Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF)



We urgently need greater awareness around disability issues, especially as climate change and man-made disasters increase. Events

like the July uprising and the Milestone plane crash have left many with permanent disability, facing immense physical and mental trauma. Rebuilding a normal and affordable life becomes extremely difficult for them. We must address discrimination against people with disabilities, particularly those requiring assistive devices and different care during daily life.

The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013 must be reviewed and strengthened to ensure access to justice, protection from sexual violence, and targeted poverty reduction—especially for women with disabilities. These steps are essential to building an inclusive and just society for all.

The Department of Social Services needs to take further initiatives for the empowerment of persons with disabilities and to ensure a barrier-free environment—especially accessible transport, housing, schools, and recreational facilities on an equal basis with others.

**Albert Mollah Haque**  
Executive Director, Access Bangladesh Foundation (ABF) (Keynote Speaker)



Women with disabilities in Bangladesh face major barriers due to social prejudice, poor accessibility,

limited awareness, weak law enforcement, and lack of coordination among service providers. They experience higher illiteracy, limited



education, and very low participation in vocational training (0.13%) and formal employment (3.13%). Their overall labour force participation is just 11.34%, with 93% excluded from employment versus 59% of men (National Survey of Persons with Disabilities 2021).

To protect their rights, recommendations include law reforms, inclusive education, skills training, accessible healthcare, gender- and disability-sensitive budgeting, violence protection, awareness campaigns, political inclusion, improved accessibility, better coordination, and strong monitoring to ensure dignity

**Salma Mahbub**  
Founder & General Secretary, Bangladesh Society for the Change and Advocacy Nexus (BSCAN)



and equality. It is crucial to meaningfully recognise the unique challenges faced by women with

disabilities, who are often overlooked even within disability laws. Their needs—particularly regarding SRHR (Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights), WASH, and accessibility—require focused attention.

A recent incident involving an acquaintance hospitalised during labour highlights this reality. As a wheelchair user, she lacked access to a high-commode toilet and had

## Recommendations

- Revise the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013 to address the specific needs of women with disabilities.
- Accurately count women with disabilities to guide effective planning.
- Expand inclusive, ICT-based, and job-oriented vocational training.
- Ensure disability-friendly infrastructure in services and transport.
- Collect and publish gender- and disability-disaggregated data.
- Reserve two parliamentary seats for women with disabilities and ensure inclusive electoral processes.
- Strengthen monitoring of inclusive services in education, employment, and health.

to return home after two days just to use one. Such cases reveal the severe hardships women with disabilities face due to structural negligence.

Despite their numbers, women with disabilities remain underrepresented in leadership and policymaking. Clause 39 under the National Women's Development

responsibilities are deeply linked. Children with disabilities often face rejection at home, especially affecting mothers. A counseling system is needed to help parents support their children. Yet, family care is often overlooked, harming overall development. Bangladesh also lacks research-based, need-driven policy.

Women with disabilities are not a homogenous group—their needs vary by age, location, and context. Education systems must be rethought—curriculum, teacher training, and inclusive classrooms. Beyond transport and entertainment, legal support remains inaccessible. A market-driven assessment is also essential to identify suitable employment for women with

**Ghulam Faruq Hamim**  
Bangladesh Program Team Lead, ADD International Bangladesh



disabilities, using rational and scientific methods. Despite recognising twelve types

of disabilities, accurate diagnosis and classification remain weak due to a lack of proper training for doctors, especially for conditions like Down syndrome, deafness, or speech impairments. Misdiagnosis and underreporting persist, further marginalising the community.

Though people with disabilities are occasionally consulted in national planning, their input is rarely reflected, revealing tokenism. Mental health and disability need stronger policy focus. Despite some NGO-led progress in workplace inclusion, government commitment is still lacking. As one person with disability said, he often feels invisible in society—a feeling that must be acknowledged

**Barrister Sara Hossain**  
Executive Director, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)



if we are to ensure true inclusion. Demands by the community of people

**Rejaul Karim**  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh



Policy must be urgently implemented. Persons with disabilities face significant barriers across legal, public, and private service delivery systems.

Those with psychosocial or sensory disabilities (such as deafness or blindness), women with disabilities, and individuals with Down syndrome experience the highest levels of exclusion, with near-zero participation.

Access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) remains particularly limited for women with disabilities due to a lack of inclusivity. With persons with disabilities constituting 15% of the population, policies and action plans must address their needs. The wide spectrum of disabilities demands adaptability in services and education—because a one-size-fits-all

**Dr. Tania Haque**  
Professor, Department of Women and Gender Studies, University of Dhaka



approach is not only inadequate but deeply exclusionary. Disability and family

# AL govt's secret surveillance state

FROM PAGE 1

The equipment listed and their total value calculated for this story are based on a limited dataset and imports recorded under specific Harmonised System (HS) codes. Similar products may have been imported under different HS codes, which are not reflected in this report.

While surveillance systems are essential to prevent crimes, track criminals, gather intelligence and neutralise threats to national security, experts warn that without transparency and due legal process, such a powerful surveillance system can be abused to suppress political opponents and snoop on ordinary citizens in violation of their constitutional right to privacy.

## MASS SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

While the Rab and police had been focussing on building specific target-based surveillance, the NTMC opted to build a mass surveillance infrastructure by installing an ILIS.

By 2022, it purchased the components necessary to monitor

the whole device, according to experts.

The government can inject malware into users' devices using very benign apps that they may have been downloaded to access services, and gain access so much so that the authorities can essentially see the entire device, said Sabhanaz Rashid Diya, executive director of Tech Global Institute, a technology nonprofit, which has long been studying the surveillance landscape of Bangladesh.

"There is one malware that can track keyboard strokes, so it can see what you are typing. Another software can create a backdoor in iOS systems, read messages and download contacts," she added.

The last component of the ILIS also involved a satellite phone interception system.

The Daily Star has no information on the extent to which citizens were targeted by this system during Sheikh Hasina's rule. It is also unclear how the system is being used at the

Holdings Pte Ltd for Tk 45.11 crore, is capable of tracking activity across platforms.

Kamal Shakil, the manager of foreign trade at Ecomtrade, told The Daily Star that this platform was procured from a Netherlands-based supplier and that they were only the reseller.

To store the large volume of data, the NTMC acquired two DRS Hadoop Data Node Hardware units. GPS-disciplined NTP servers ensured all intercepted data was timestamped accurately and consistently across systems.

All these were permitted by as many as 22 laws, including the Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulation Act, 2001, said Diya, the executive director of TGI.

"Bangladesh's surveillance regime is rooted in colonial-era laws that permit spyware use, communication interception, and broad law enforcement access without adequate safeguards," she said.

She called it a "security-first

unable to place or receive calls from the rally venues.

In 2017, the Rab bought a similar network jammer, but this one could be mounted on a vehicle.

The same year, police purchased an IMSI catcher from Cyprus-based Tiersec.

An IMSI catcher, or International Mobile Subscriber Identity catcher, is a surveillance tool designed to monitor, locate, and occasionally intercept mobile phone activity. It operates by mimicking a real cell tower, causing nearby phones to connect to it rather than to an authentic cellular network. The IMSI is a unique number assigned to each mobile SIM card and is used to pinpoint a target within a larger crowd.

Import data show that the police bought more IMSI catchers – one of them bike-mounted – in 2019 and 2022 from Canadian firm Octasic. In total, the police spent Tk 43 crore on IMSI catchers, signifying police's dependence on such snooping

That year, police purchased a Satcom Analyser produced by Swiss surveillance company ATECS AG via a Singaporean firm. A Satcom analyser is a tool that can be used to monitor, intercept, and analyse satellite-based communications, including satellite phones and terminals.

The Rab, on the other hand, armed itself with a backpack IMSI catcher and two units of unspecified mobile communication analysers from Octasic. These analysers can generally track which devices are connecting to which networks, their unique identification numbers, phone numbers, locations, and collect information on call logs and text messages.

In 2023, police purchased a portable surveillance and signal intelligence (SIGINT) device from Cyprus-based company Delhaze Ltd. This device can detect, intercept and geolocate wireless communications like mobile phones, radios and satellite links.

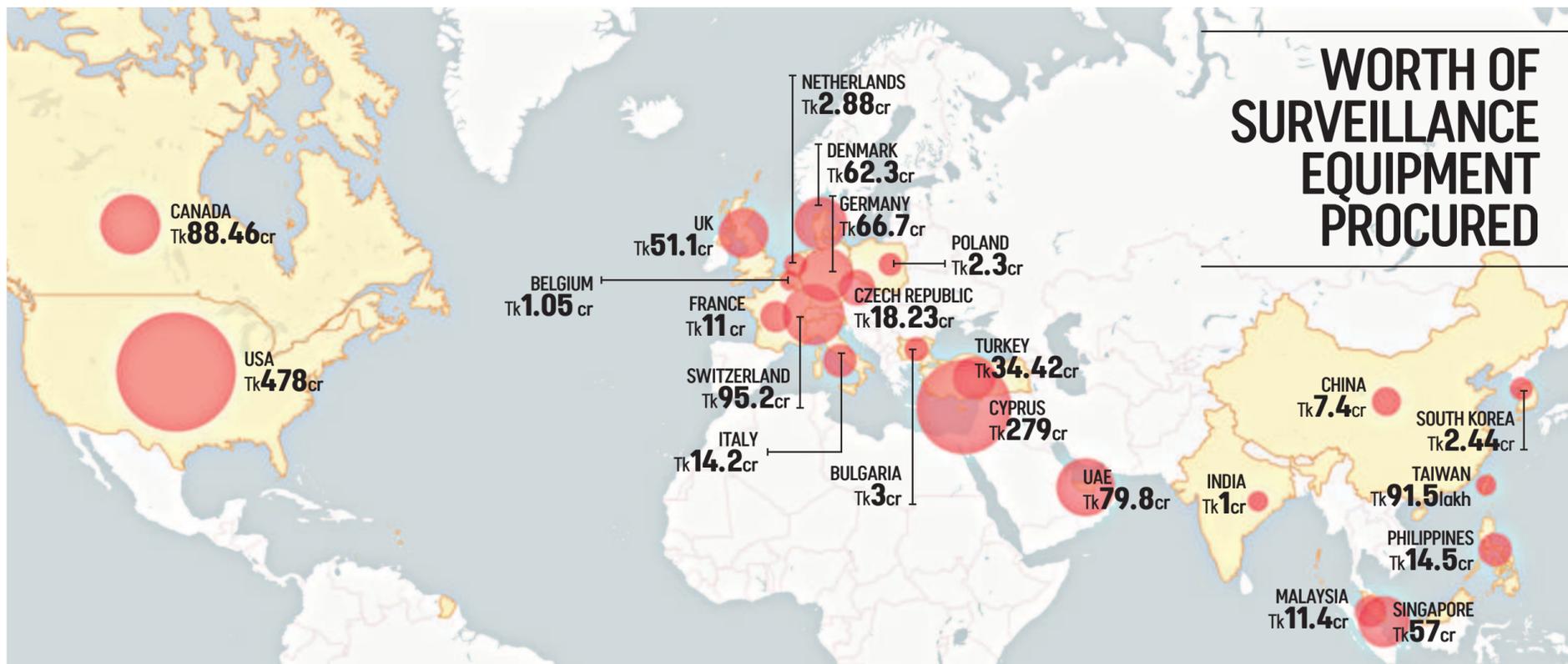
Baratz is the founder of an Israeli surveillance company called Septer.

Teledyne FLIR Detection, Inc, a US manufacturer of thermal and surveillance technologies, maintains a research and development centre in Israel. Its subsidiaries and DVTel Israel Ltd are incorporated in Israel.

While Yaana Technologies scored the most expensive bid, Singapore-based, Bangladeshi-owned logistics firm Panmark Impex came in second place, having exported surveillance equipment worth Tk 366 crore. They sent 20 shipments, of which 75 percent went to the police and the rest went to the Rab.

The company's Managing Director Khorsheed Alam Chowdhury said they are not legally liable for any abuse of the devices they supplied.

"Our supplied equipment are tactical 'IMSI' device having no surveillance capabilities; primarily used for finding convicted criminals. To tell you the truth, we are unaware of any instances where our supplied



and intercept the everyday communications of citizens, store that data centrally, and ensure access by various law enforcement agencies, documents show.

Of the Tk 1,382 crore spent on surveillance equipment by the NTMC, police and Rab between 2016 and 2024, the NTMC's expenditure alone accounted for more than 65 percent (Tk 904.39 crore).

A copy of a contract agreement shows that US-based Yaana Technologies and its UK subsidiary Yaana Limited helped the NTMC set up the ILIS infrastructure for Tk 546.7 crore.

The ILIS platform, having 10 components, aims to "collect, collate, analyse and disseminate all information to law enforcing agencies that provide pinpoint targets who are actively and passively threatening national security," reads the contract.

The first two components are the mobile and data interception systems capable of intercepting "any individual's all types of electronic communication" as well as data and internet communication "originating, terminating and passing through Bangladesh".

The third component is a mass data acquisition system capable of collecting all internet communication from the national gateway and national internet exchange levels.

The fourth component allows law enforcement agencies to monitor, intercept, and analyse any person's communications across all connected networks and operators, all from a single control point.

The fifth component, called a "unified target profiling system," can collate all intercepted data, analyse communication patterns and give a "full 360 degree picture of any individual over time, place and communication platform".

The sixth and seventh components are a call detail record analysis system and a geolocation system, respectively.

The eighth and ninth components are a digital command centre inside the NTMC premises and an overall operation and management system.

The 10th component includes an "active intrusion system", which can "stealthily capture from any target device, is not limited by encryption or any encoding mechanism, does not depend on user interaction to perform operation and presents all application, file and communication content," contract documents read. This essentially meant capturing

moment.

In a rewritten response to The Daily Star, the NTMC admitted having installed the ILIS systems and said that some of its components are still in operation for intelligence gathering and investigation purposes.

"As part of the reform process, NTMC, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, is working on formulating an Act/Ordinance related to Lawful Telecommunication Interception with special attention to Privacy of the Citizens and maintaining International Standard," it said.

## HOW THE SURVEILLANCE WORKS

The Daily Star shared the list of components purchased by the NTMC with our in-house network specialists. Using information about the components, they reconstructed the ILIS network (see the operational and network structure online) as outlined by its contract.

The surveillance with ILIS begins by intercepting data packets from the internet infrastructure, including undersea fibre optic cables, satellite systems, ISP routes, and telecom networks.

To do this, it uses three Copper Tap Modules (10/100/1000), which split incoming and outgoing data streams and sends them to monitoring ports. Fibre Taps mirrors high-speed fibre optic traffic and redirects it for analysis.

These feeds are then processed by DeepProbe units, which prepare the data for inspection.

The second step is the decryption of the encrypted traffic. SSL (secure sockets layer) is a way to keep data safe when it travels between a browser and a website by locking it with encryption.

The ILIS uses a SSL Decryption Platform, which intercepts secure connections, decrypts the traffic for inspection, then re-encrypts it before forwarding the data.

Data show the NTMC purchased 15 DeepProbe monitor ports from Yaana, which identifies application usage (e.g., WhatsApp, Signal), timestamps, data volumes, IP addresses, communication types, and user behaviour patterns.

A GSM/Signalling Network Monitoring The Platform is also deployed to extract metadata from voice calls, SMS, and mobile internet traffic. This allows the NTMC to build user profiles based on activity patterns, even without accessing message content.

Its Social Media Monitoring System, purchased from Ecomtrade

framework" and said that it "spans not just telecom and cyber laws, but also narcotics, anti-terrorism, trade regulations, and import controls – creating a system ripe for abuse."

## TARGET-BASED SURVEILLANCE

Import data obtained by this newspaper begins with the purchase of a radio frequency jammer by the Rab in 2016, from Samel 90, a Bulgarian electronics and defence manufacturer.

A radio frequency jammer is

devices.

In 2019, they also purchased a mobile tracker server from a German supplier, cleared through Bangladeshi-owned, Singapore-based Panmark Impex.

Two years later, the police acquired a Man-in-the-Middle (MitM) System Detector and Locator – a specialised tool designed to intercept and monitor communications in real time.

The system works by mimicking

The next year, they purchased an even powerful network jammer – a drone that could sweep across an area blocking communications.

## CIRCUMVENTING EXPORT BANS

At least 20 companies exported surveillance equipment to Bangladesh from 23 countries.

Twelve of those countries – UK, US, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Cyprus, France, Italy, Denmark, Netherlands, Poland, Belgium – prohibit export of surveillance equipment to repressive regimes.

The US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security's Entity List blocks American suppliers from providing technology to actors committing human rights abuses.

The European Union's export regulations also do not allow for surveillance sales to countries if there is proof that they could be used to commit human rights abuses.

Many of these countries used clearing houses in Singapore, Cyprus and the United Arab Emirates to circumvent the export restrictions.

Kamal Shakil, the manager at Ecomtrade which supplied some surveillance equipment to the NTMC, said, "The NTMC contacted the Netherlands-based supplier directly. The supplier did not want to export directly to Bangladesh and wanted to come through a reseller. We did not even know what the product being sent to Bangladesh was. We faced no restrictions in the Netherlands. Singapore provides transshipment facilities for many imports coming into Bangladesh."

At least three of the companies Bangladesh sourced from – Passitora, Teledyne and Tiersec – have Israeli links.

According to its company registration documents, Passitora Ltd, headquartered in Cyprus, is a rebranded version of WiSpear and is linked to Israeli intelligence networks through its founder, Tal Jonathan Dilian, a former Israeli army officer currently under US sanctions for rights abuse. One of its directors at the time of NTMC's purchase was Mivtah Shamir Technologies, a Tel Aviv-based firm.

The NTMC purchased a portable surveillance system from Passitora, costing Tk 52.1 crore.

The company Tiersec is located in Cyprus, but its director is Israeli surveillance entrepreneur Yaron Baratz, and is effectively an Israeli company operating out of Cyprus.

equipment has been used in any act of human rights violations," said Chowdhury.

"Even then, if any misuse of supplied equipment occurred towards violation of human rights, it is the end users who have to take the total responsibility for such an occurrence," he said.

Singapore-based Ecomtrade Holdings Pte Ltd is in the top 10 suppliers, providing Tk 45.1 crore of equipment. The company is led by Bangladeshi-origin businessman Nurul Amin.

Sixteen other companies supplied goods in 146 shipments worth Tk 418 crore.

One of those suppliers, called Spider Digital Innovation FZE, despite being UAE-based, is Bangladeshi-led. The company belongs to Kazi Monirul Kabir, who was formerly the communications lead at two major telecom operators in Bangladesh. He is also the former country manager for Google in Bangladesh.

They provided the NTMC with at least 30 shipments, including the SSL decryption platform, a covert surveillance tool that silently eavesdrops on mobile calls and data called Tactical Passive Cellular Interceptor, and components for an internet traffic inspection system called the Gigamon GigaVUE-HC3 visibility platform.

Kabir categorically stated that they never supplied systems that could be used for human rights abuses. Regarding the Gigamon platform, he said, "You have correctly noted that it gives network traffic visibility, but the project is based on metadata collection, focussing solely on gathering metadata for visibility purposes. There is no option to collect user content."

"We explicitly state that we did not supply components for, nor were we involved in the construction of a broader network traffic visibility infrastructure that collects user content."

Kabir added that there were no export restrictions.

The Daily Star also emailed Yaana, Teledyne, Octasic, Veher and Roya International, the company which had supplied goods from the Swiss surveillance company ATECS AG, but did not receive any response. We also sent written questions to the Rab and police, but they did not respond either.

Data and visualisation:  
Muhammad Imran  
Graphics: Anwar Soheli

## NTMC'S REPLY TO OUR QUESTIONS

**TDS:** What steps have been taken to take out the ILIS from operation?

**NTMC:** Lawful Telecommunication Interception Systems are technical platforms essential for law enforcement agencies, investigation agencies and intelligence agencies to collect necessary information to investigate cases and identify the accused. Countries around the world have such practice. NTMC established and maintains a few basic LI platforms to support mentioned agencies.

**TDS:** The NTMC had installed Deep Packet Inspection (DPI) devices for monitoring and filtering subscriber internet usage. Are these still operational in Data Centres 3 and 4?

**NTMC:** DPI devices are not in operation now. Their functionality is being tested. However, a few online betting sites prohibited by the government have been blocked as test purposes. The future usage of this system will depend on proper guidelines/policy.

**TDS:** In 2022, the NTMC

purchased a system from Intersec (France) that allowed the NTMC to get instant, precise and historical location of individuals. Is the system installed by Intersec still active?

**NTMC:** Yes, the system is active now. Law enforcement agencies, investigation agencies and intelligence agencies utilise the service to locate the accused and victims. More importantly, 999 and Fire Services use this system to instantly locate the victims.

**TDS:** Does the NTMC still pull customer data (Registration information, CDR, SMS content, NID, roaming status, recharge details, package details etc). using an API plugin provided by telecom operators? If yes, then do you obtain a warrant from a magistrate beforehand?

**NTMC:** As said before, law enforcement, investigation and intelligence agencies utilise the platform to investigate cases and identify the accused. Mentioned agencies complete necessary processes at their end before collecting information.

not a surveillance device per se – it is a device that deliberately disrupts wireless communication by transmitting interfering signals on the same frequencies used by phones, GPS, or Wi-Fi, effectively blocking them.

However, it can silently thwart gatherings. On multiple occasions during the 15-year rule of the Awami League, BNP leaders, activists, and journalists reported that they were

trusted networks or devices to gain access to sensitive information, including phone calls, messages, emails, and online activity. It can sometimes also break through encrypted connections to expose protected data. Additionally, it can track the physical location of those being monitored.

In 2022, both police and the Rab stocked up on their interception infrastructure.

## SPORT

**Tim David smashed a 52-ball 83 to salvage the innings, while pacers Josh Hazlewood and Ben Dwarshuis scalped three wickets each to help Australia to a 17-run win over South Africa in the first T20I of the three-match series in Darwin yesterday. It was Australia's ninth straight T20I win – their longest streak.**



## A lesson that should channel THE RIGHT SPIRIT

ATIQUÉ ANAM

Bangladesh women's football team coach, Peter Butler, had hoped his side would gain valuable lessons when they faced South Korea in their final Group H fixture of the AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers on Sunday.

The Englishman praised South Korea's technical superiority and well-funded development structure. "They spend millions and millions on development. They've spent fortunes on planning and organisation. I'm sure their players don't stop at Level III of BFF. I just hope we learn some lessons from this tournament," he had said.

Bangladesh did, indeed, learn lessons at the Lao National Stadium in Vientiane – though perhaps not in the way Butler had hoped. The indomitable Young Tigresses were handed a sobering 6-1 defeat by a dominant South Korean side, who exposed some weakness in Bangladesh's game.

Despite the heavy loss, Bangladesh progressed to the final round of qualifiers – deservedly – as one of the three best runners-up teams. But the manner of their defeat has raised a few serious questions for Butler and his staff to ponder.

Bangladesh entered the final group match surprisingly in pole position, ahead of group favourites Korea, following commanding wins over Laos (3-1) and Timor-Leste (8-0). With Korea only edging



Laos 1-0, Bangladesh led the group on goals scored count, and fans dared to dream of a famous result – buoyed by an eight-match winning streak and the senior team's recent successes against stronger opposition.

However, the gulf in class was quickly apparent. South Korea, ranked 21st at the senior level compared to Bangladesh's 104th, put on a display of technical brilliance, tactical discipline, and superior fitness, exposing both Butler's game plan and the team's physical limitations.

Bangladesh actually struck first, taking the lead in the 15th minute. But the lead

lasted only four minutes, as Korean captain Lee Haecun equalised with a clever run behind Bangladesh's high-line defence.

In response, Butler shifted from his preferred three-at-the-back system to a four-player defence, sacrificing two wingers. But the tide had already turned. South Korea's relentless pressure saw them score five more goals in the second half, capitalising on Bangladesh's fading fitness and broken confidence.

It wasn't just this match that exposed vulnerabilities. The senior team also showed signs of fragility during their Asian Cup qualifying campaign, often relying

on moments of individual brilliance from the likes of Ritu Porna Chakma or Rupna Chakma – or simply sheer luck – to get over the line.

With less than seven months to go before the Women's Asian Cup in Australia – where Bangladesh will face more ruthless sides such as North Korea and China – the team will need far more than luck or individual sparks to avoid heavy defeats.

To his credit, Butler has done a commendable job since taking over. Under his stewardship, the senior team defended their SAFF Women's Championship crown and booked a maiden Asian Cup berth. He also led the U-20s to a SAFF title and their first-ever AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup qualification – all the while navigating through a distressing player-rebellion and managing success without some of the more experienced players.

Most importantly, the former West Ham United midfielder has given the Bangladesh women's teams a clear identity – one built on attractive, attacking football and a never-say-die attitude. But defeats like Sunday's come with a stark reminder to assess the broader picture – to refine strategies, improve conditioning, and close the gap in technical quality, leaving all illusion or ego aside.

The clock is ticking toward Australia, and the road ahead demands clarity, courage, and complete commitment from all involved.



PHOTO: ZIMBABWE CRICKET

## Rizan stars as U-19s win Zim tri-series

**Bangladesh U-19s finished the tri-nation series in Zimbabwe like they started, thumping South Africa by 33 runs in the final at Harare Sports Club yesterday. It was an all-round performance from Rizan Hossain, who made 95 off 96 deliveries to propel the young Tigers to 269 for five before bagging a fiver (5-34) to bundle out South Africa for 236 in 48.4 overs. Legspinner Shadhin Islam provided two crucial breakthroughs in the middle to halt the momentum of South Africa, while pacer Al Fahad picked up three for 50 in nine overs. Having clinched the final, Bangladesh will be returning home with six wins in seven matches in the tournament.**



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

### AFC CHALLENGE LEAGUE

## Debutant Abahani bank on Diabate

SPORTS REPORTER

Six-time Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) champions Abahani began preparations for the AFC Challenge League with much vigor in the middle of last month, bolstered by new signings and the expectation of three foreign recruits joining the club.

However, ahead of their playoff against Muras United FC of Kyrgyzstan tomorrow, the Sky Blues appear a bit out of sorts, with Malian forward Souleymane Diabate the only foreign recruit to have arrived. Diabate joined Abahani after spending six seasons at archrivals Mohammedan.

For both Diabate and Abahani, the AFC Challenge League will be a new experience, as they will be making their debut in the competition. Abahani's best-ever run in an AFC tournament came in 2019, when they reached the zonal semifinal of the AFC Cup.

Two other potential foreign recruits – Brazilian Raphael Augusto and Nigerian Emeka Ogboug – failed to join the Sky Blues. Abahani could not confirm Augusto's transfer, leading him to sign for Bashundhara Kings, while Emeka was unable to travel from Nigeria due to domestic issues.

Despite this, Diabate's words may offer some confidence to Abahani ahead of the clash against Muras United FC, who are scheduled to arrive in Dhaka this morning.

"This will be my first time playing in the AFC

Challenge League, but all football [matches] are the same. I'll just play my game and do everything I can to win and score for Abahani," Diabate told reporters after his first training session with the club at the National Stadium yesterday.

Although it will be a new season, new club, and new teammates for Diabate, the 34-year-old forward is determined to prove his worth at Abahani.

"I know all the Abahani players, so they are not new to me. Maybe the competition is new, but like I said, football is the same everywhere. The players are good, the coach is very good, and Abahani is a strong team. We will try to fight and win the game, insha'Allah," said Diabate, who was initially set to play for Mohammedan – the club that actually qualified for the AFC Challenge League but was barred from participating due to licensing issues.

Mohammedan had previously completed their licensing requirements for the tournament several times but failed to qualify in those years.

Asked how he planned to repay Abahani's faith in him as their lone foreign striker against Muras FC, Diabate replied: "Football is not a one-man game. Abahani have many good local players. Football is not only about foreigners – it is for local players as well. Foreigners are important, but local players are also very good. I played against them last season, so I know their quality. If they join me and help me, we can achieve something."



## Palace beat Liverpool to win maiden Community Shield

**Goalkeeper Dean Henderson celebrates with Justin Devenny after the latter converted the winning penalty to help Crystal Palace beat Premier League champions Liverpool 3-2 on penalties to win the Community Shield for the first time ever after an entertaining 2-2 draw at Wembley on Sunday. Known as the curtain-raiser of the season, the contest saw Henderson deny Liverpool's Alexis Mac Allister and Harvey Elliott after Mohamed Salah smashed one high above the goal.**

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Chelsea fuelling Samba ambitions

SHABAB CHOWDHURY

There is a lot to get excited about this season for Brazil fans, and for that the Selecao loyalists would be tempted to tune in to Chelsea games.

Plus it wouldn't be surprising to even see Brazil's coach Carlo Ancelotti in the stands at Stamford Bridge, gauging his player pool.

Fresh from winning the Club World Cup last month and a Conference League triumph in May, Chelsea boast some of the most exciting young players in world football, with a few standout Brazilians.

Topping that exclusive crop has to be winger Estevao Willian – widely considered the best talent to have come out of Brazil since Vinicius Junior.

After an impressive Club World Cup campaign with Palmeiras, 18-year-old Estevao made his highly anticipated debut for Chelsea in a friendly against Bayer Leverkusen on Saturday, marking the occasion with a goal in a 2-0 win for the home side at Stamford Bridge.

The flair, the deft touches, the body feints, and every bit of movement he made coming off the right fascinated the fans, who often responded with ooohs and aaahs from the stands. Estevao's style combines classic Brazilian directness with youthful boldness and creativity.

For five-time world champions – who have underwhelmed since their 2002 triumph, and have struggled to find a reliable option down the right flank in recent years; often trying Rodrygo, Antony – Estevao, who already has five caps for Brazil, seems to be the answer for



the Selecao.

Still early days, but the polished performances he's producing seem to have put him ahead of Vinicius, who copped a lot of flak for rawness, and it was not until his third season with Real Madrid that he hit the

ground running.

The second Brazilian to find the net on Saturday was striker Joao Pedro, whose clinical finish sealed the victory for Chelsea. He was also on target yesterday in his team's 4-1 win over AC Milan.

One of Chelsea's Club World Cup heroes, Pedro, who hit a brace in the semifinal and struck in the final to bring Chelsea the title, might fill one of the biggest voids in the Brazil team.

A technically gifted forward, Pedro is known for his clever movement, excellent link-up play, ability to thrive in tight spaces, and has an eye for the spectacular. At this moment, none of the competition – Richarlison, Gabriel Jesus, Matheus Cunha – seem to be showing the kind of sizzle and consistency that he has.

Great against his back to goal, he has a knack for driving the ball forward, and a brilliant work-rate shows he is fit for any style of play Ancelotti opts for.

Moreover, in the middle of the park, there is Andrey Santos, who had a breakout 2024-25 season with Ligue 1 side Strasbourg, so much so that Chelsea have called him back to strengthen the side.

Good in tight spaces, expressive in passing, while also an expert in controlling tempo and dictating play – a balance hard to find in midfielders – Santos, a key figure for Brazil across age-group football, seems ready for the big stage.

Ancelotti will undoubtedly monitor Santos closely, as his qualities could provide Brazil with a strong spine and help redefine the team's style, thrilling fans and neutrals alike.



**RUN, RANA, RUN:** Pacer Nahid Rana stood out during Bangladesh's fitness test at the National Stadium yesterday. Rana, who earned his teammates' approval during their session under strength and conditioning coach Nathan Kelly, clocked 5 minutes and 31 seconds to be the fastest in a 1,600-meter run without breaks. After the run, the cricketers also enjoyed a football session as preparations continued for the upcoming Netherlands series and the Asia Cup.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

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**Most people will vote for the BNP in next polls**  
Says Tarique



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said most people will vote for BNP in the upcoming national parliamentary election.

"Through the upcoming election, the first step to establishing the people's political rights will be implemented. We firmly believe that most of the people of the country will support the sheaf of paddy, meaning the BNP, in the upcoming election. But, after winning the election, we will have to face big

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Palestinians carry aid supplies collected from trucks that entered Gaza through Israel, in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

**Regularise undocumented migrants**  
Dhaka to ask KL during Yunus' visit



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh would request Malaysia to regularise the 400,000-odd undocumented Bangladeshi migrants during the three-day visit of Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus to the Southeast Asian country beginning today.

More than 800,000 Bangladeshis work there as regular workers and almost half of them are on an irregular status, according to diplomatic sources in Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur. "Those irregular ones say that you are talking about recruiting new workers,

SEE PAGE 5 COL 7

**Let students decide on hall politics at DU**

Urge JCD, Shibir; Chhatra Union walks out of meeting over Shibir presence

DU CORRESPONDENT

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal and Islami Chhatra Shibir yesterday urged the Dhaka University authorities to seek opinions from general students on politics in residential halls.

Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangsad, led by former members of Students Against Discrimination, said they support the ban on student politics in halls and academic spaces.

The student leaders made the remarks after a meeting organised by the DU authorities with 23 organisations to discuss hall politics.

Early Saturday, DU Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed announced that all forms of politics will remain banned in halls, as per the July 17, 2024 framework.

Meanwhile, five left-leaning student organisations -- Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, Biplobi Chhatra Moitree, Bangladesh Chhatra League (Bangladesh Jasod) and two factions of Bangladesh Chhatra Union -- walked out, protesting DU's invitation to Shibir.

The Paribesh Parishad, a platform of DU authorities and students, banned Shibir after the fall of military dictator HM Ershad in 1990, citing its affiliation with a party that opposed Bangladesh's independence and supported the Pakistan army during the Liberation War.

The DU authorities convened the meeting after protests broke out around Friday midnight, demanding a ban on

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

**Govt eases drive against old vehicles**  
Transport owners call off strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government seems to be softening its stance on phasing out outdated vehicles following last month's threat by transport associations to launch a 72-hour nationwide strike starting tomorrow in support of their eight-point demand.

For the time being, the ongoing drive against outdated vehicles, which began on July 20, will target the oldest ones first, say authorities, explaining that removing outdated vehicles all at once could result in a public transport crisis.

"We'll continue the drive, but we'll make sure it doesn't affect transport owners or workers," Road Transport and Bridges Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan told reporters yesterday after a stakeholder meeting over the transport associations' demands.

Meanwhile, transport

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

**Starvation claims 217 lives in Gaza**

100 children among dead; Netanyahu outlines five principles to conclude the offensive

AGENCIES

Israeli strikes across the besieged Gaza Strip yesterday killed at least 39 Palestinians as the death toll from Israeli-induced starvation since the offensive began rose to 217, including 100 children.

With severe shortages of supplies and patients' health often already weakened by malnutrition, a trauma specialist in the enclave said many patients have little chance of recovery.

"Patients come and doctors know if they have a certain level of injury, there's nothing we can do," he said. "And to face families, and to face patients in the last moments of their life, and not be able to do the things we are trained to do is devastating."

During a news conference in Jerusalem yesterday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "New Gaza offensive plans aim to tackle two remaining Hamas strongholds."

Hamas still has "thousands of armed terrorists" in Gaza and their goal is to "destroy" the state of Israel, he said, adding that Gaza will be demilitarised.

Netanyahu also outlined the Israel's five principles to conclude the offensive: the disarmament of Hamas, return of all hostages, demilitarisation of the Gaza Strip, Israel taking "overriding security control" in the Strip, establishment of an "alternative civil administration" that is not Hamas or the Palestinian Authority.

The UN Security Council (UNSC) was set to hold an emergency session to discuss Israel's plan to capture and occupy Gaza City yesterday.

The countries that have called the UN session have issued a joint statement that condemns Israel's plan to seize Gaza City, saying that it risks "violating international humanitarian law" and will "only endanger the lives of all civilians in Gaza".

Meanwhile, Palestinian analyst Muhammad Shehada said all of the combined airdrops of aid into the Gaza Strip over the last week have totalled about the equivalent of 15 aid trucks, "which is less than 1 percent of what Gaza needs on a normal day for basic survival".

Aid agencies have been seeking the entry

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

**12.61cr voters on draft list**  
Cops to get bodycams for polls duty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh now has 126.17 million (12.61 crore) registered voters, according to the latest draft list prepared by the Election Commission.

This voter list, which is an updated version of the previous one published on March 2, will be published on August 31 after reviewing and verifying claims and objections until August 21, said EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed at a press briefing at the EC headquarters in the capital yesterday.

Noting that the voter list is going to be updated another time, he said, he said the first list was finalised on March 2 and the updated one will be finalised by August 31. The third update will be finalised on October 31, adding new voters until then.

"The supplementary draft has been published today [yesterday] in our offices. If anyone has any corrections, they can inform us till August 21, and based on those, we will finalise the list on August 31. We will also publish another list including those who turn 18 by October 31 so that they can vote without waiting a year," he said.

Corrections, if any, will be implemented by August 24, after which the final list will be published, added the secretary.

As of March 2 this year, the number of voters stood at 123.73 million. Following a

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

**Jamaat wants PR system for both Houses**  
Warns of movement to realise its demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami has demanded the proportional representation (PR) system for the upper and the lower houses of parliament and warned of launching a movement to press home the demand.

"We've already agreed on the [introduction of] PR system in the upper house. But our demand is for both houses, and we will wage a movement to realise it," Jamaat Nayeb-e-Ameer Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taher told reporters after a meeting with Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday.

"The reason is that in the past 54 years under the traditional election system, a truly fair election has never been ensured. Considering this long history of failure, we would like to try a new method."

He said Jamaat has always been in favour of elections and has no objection to holding the polls in the first week of February next year. Instead, the party welcomed the election date.

"First of all, we have already said we will contest the election. Secondly, before going to the polls, we have

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4



Over a hundred readymade garment workers from Gazipur's Seasons Dresses Ltd and Mifkif Apparel Ltd stage a protest yesterday in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital, demanding their dues, including overtime pay from May, salary for June, partial wages for July, 81% of their Eid-ul-Azha bonus, and severance pay for staff who have resigned.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

**Man hacked to pieces for insulting wife of accused: Rab**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

A man was killed over previous enmity and allegedly making derogatory remarks about an accused's wife, according to Rab.

Later, the body of victim, Oli Mia, 35, was dismembered and dumped beside the Tongi-Kaliganj regional highway in two travel bags.

Salman Nur Alam, senior assistant police superintendent and senior assistant director (operation and media) of Rab-1, yesterday disclosed this at a press conference in Uttara Rab-1 office, quoting the arrestees.

On Saturday, Rab arrested three suspects in connection with the murder.

The arrestees are Apel Mahmud Sadek, 42, of Narsingdi's Karimpur area; Sajjad Hossain Roni, 25; and Sadek's wife Shaon Begum, 32.

The three were arrested in Chattogram's Hathazari after Rab tracked them down using digital forensics.

Oli, a labourer, and the suspected perpetrators were living in the Tongi area.

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