

DHAKA THURSDAY AUGUST 21, 2025

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 208

BHADRA 6, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

SAFAR 26, 1447 HIJRI

16 PAGES PLUS CAMPUS : TK 15.00



Talks without  
Russia 'a road  
to nowhere'

P5



When climate  
change becomes  
your doctor's  
problem too

P6



Bangladesh  
off to winning  
start

P11



Revenue  
collection rises  
24% in July

B1

## July frontliners dominate the Ducsu race

Nominations close with  
509 submissions

MOHUDDIN ALAMGIR and MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

Many frontliners of the July uprising, which brought down the Sheikh Hasina regime, are now in the spotlight as leading candidates in the Ducsu election.

So far, nine panels have been announced for the 28 Ducsu posts. Most of the student groups nominated July protesters for either of the top three positions -- vice-president, general secretary or assistant general secretary.

According to students, many candidates for other posts also participated in last year's uprising.

"The leaders who were at the forefront of the mass uprising and inspired others with their courage have earned respect from the students."

**The leaders who were at the forefront of the mass uprising and inspired others with their courage have earned respect from the students.**

ABU BAKER MOJUMDER, GS candidate from BGCS.

**The spirit of July stood for gender equality, parity between the differently abled and conventionally abled, and for justice between minorities and majorities.**

MEGHMALLAR BOSU, GS nominee for Gonotantrik Chhatra Jote

of July stood for gender equality, parity between the differently abled and conventionally abled, and for justice between minorities and majorities. It is from the moral urgency of July's vision that we continue this struggle."

On the last day of nominations submission yesterday, BNP-backed Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal's DU unit, BGCS (an organisation of July protesters), and another leftist group announced their panels.

Independent platform "DU First" also unveiled their full panel. They had earlier named Jamaluddin Khalid for VP, Mahin Sarkar for GS and Fateha Sharmin Anne for AGS.

Chhatra Dal announced a 27 member panel with Abidul Islam Khan for VP, Shaikh Tanveer Baree Hamim for GS, and Thanbir Al Hadi Mayed for AGS.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Abidul said, "So far, other groups have been busy appropriating the spirit of July for their own ends. In contrast, since August 5, we have upheld that spirit without engaging in any unauthorised or opportunistic practices."

"That's our initial success. Guided by integrity and commitment, we believe it is we who can properly lead from Dhaka University for democracy and for the nation."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## AUGUST 21 GRENADE ATTACK Wait for justice: 21 years and counting

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Twenty-one years have passed since the gruesome grenade attack was carried out on an Awami League rally on Bangabandhu Avenue in Dhaka, leaving at least 24 people killed and 300 injured.



Then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina, who later ran the country for 15 years as prime minister and was forced to resign and flee on August 5 last year amid a mass uprising, narrowly escaped the attack on this day in 2004.

Two cases -- one for murder and another under the Explosive Substances Act -- were lodged after the incident, considered to be one of the most sensational crimes in the country's history.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## JULY CHARTER IMPLEMENTATION What notes of dissent could mean

Objections recorded during consensus talks may shape future of politics, governance

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The July National Charter, finalised after weeks of consensus talks, faces a delicate challenge over notes of dissent, most of them from the BNP and its allies.

Eleven such objections, nine from the BNP bloc alone, now raise questions about whether key provisions, ranging from caretaker government appointments to curbs on prime ministerial powers, will be implemented if the party comes to power.

The BNP and allies have agreed to implement dozens of reform proposals if they come to power, while positioning themselves in favour of preserving parliamentary supremacy and executive discretion.

They stood apart from most other parties on a series of key proposals that would reshape the balance of power between the executive, parliament, and oversight institutions.

Politicians and members of the National Consensus Commission, headed by Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, say that a note of dissent is an expression of disagreement -- a formal record of opposition, typically written in a structured manner.

The commission, which steered the dialogue,

**BNP leaders argue that the dissent does not amount to rejection, but rather serves as a safeguard should they return to office and wish to legislate along their own lines.**

has sought to allay fears that the dissent will derail the charter's implementation, emphasising that the dissent should be seen as part of democratic bargaining rather than a threat to national agreement.

"A note of dissent signifies participation in the process while expressing disagreement," said Badil Alam Majumdar, a member of the National Consensus Commission.

The commission's Vice-President Prof Ali Riaz is also optimistic about the implementation of the July Charter despite the notes of dissent.

"Politics always involves diverse views and paths, and working together despite differences is essential," he said.

Rival parties, however, voiced unease at what

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

## SADA PATHOR LOOTING

### Admin officials, law enforcers involved

Finds probe body; ACC preliminary report names 42 including politicos

DWOHA CHOWDHURY

Some government officials including members of law enforcement agencies were involved in the rampant looting of stones from Bholaganj's Sada Pathor area, found a probe committee of the Sylhet district administration.



The seven-page report also made 10 recommendations, including departmental investigations and punishment of the officials found guilty, said Padmasan Singha, additional deputy commissioner of Sylhet and head of the probe body.

He said the report was submitted to outgoing Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Sher Mahbub Murad yesterday afternoon.

However, he declined to share further details without the approval of senior officials.

On August 12, the district administration formed the probe body after an outcry over the looting.

The probe committee was asked to submit its findings within three working days. On Sunday, the deadline was extended by another three days.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Corruption Commission prepared a preliminary

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6

## From full nets to lighter hauls

Even in peak season,  
hilsa yields leave fishers  
disappointed

PINAKI ROY with SUSHANTA GHOSH and  
SOHRAB HOSSAIN

Hilsa season is usually a time of joy -- for both fishermen and consumers who wait eagerly for the national fish. This year, however, despite the end of a 58-day ban, it has turned somewhat bleak. Along the southern coast, fishermen have been returning with lesser catches and bigger losses.

Shamsul Bepari, owner of the trawler FB Mayer Doa from Kalapara, has gone on five trips since the ban ended. On his last trip, he returned to the Mohipur Fish Landing Centre with only 22kg of hilsa and 30kg of other fish worth Tk 40,000, against costs of Tk 1.75 lakh.

"I've lost nearly Tk 8 lakh," he said.

The trawler's skipper, Mohammad Yunus, said they travel up to 600-700km into the deep sea, consuming a litre of fuel per 20km. "But strong winds and rough seas are forcing early returns. We're suffering losses every time, but we're still getting ready with nets, fuel, and ice, hoping for a better catch."

In Bholal's Nasir Majhi fishing village, Hossain Majhi caught only 15kg of hilsa in

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

## Israel okays plan to conquer Gaza City, calls up reservists

AFP, Jerusalem

Israel's defence minister yesterday approved a plan for the conquest of Gaza City and authorised the call-up of around 60,000 reservists, piling pressure on Hamas as mediators push for a ceasefire.

Defence Minister Israel Katz's move, confirmed to AFP by a spokesperson, came as mediators awaited an official Israeli response on their latest proposal.

While mediator Qatar had expressed guarded optimism over the latest proposal, a senior Israeli official said the government stood firm on its call for the release of all hostages in any agreement.

The framework that Hamas had approved proposes an initial 60 day truce, a staggered hostage release, the freeing of some Palestinian prisoners and provisions allowing for the entry of aid into Gaza.

On the ground in Gaza City yesterday, Mustafa Qazzaat, head of the emergency committee in the Gaza municipality, described the situation as "catastrophic".

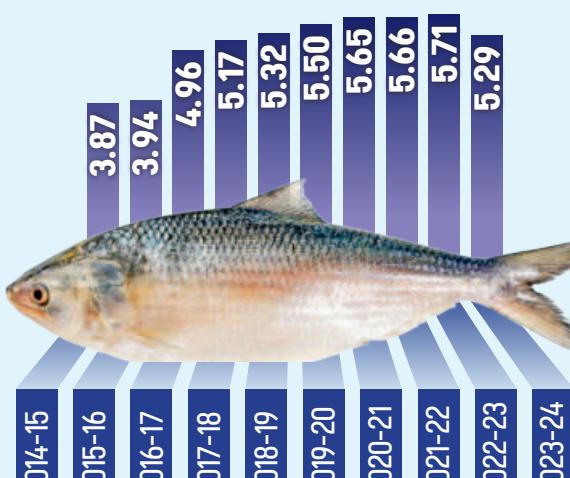
He told AFP that "large numbers" of people were fleeing their neighbourhoods, with the majority of those displaced "on the roads and streets without shelter."

Aida Abu Madi, a 48 year-old resident of Zeitoun, said she fled with her husband, children and three grandchildren to the home of relatives in western Gaza City.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



### HILSA PRODUCTION IN LAST DECADE IN LAKH METRIC TON



### CAUSES FOR DECLINE

- Rough seas and heavy monsoon rains cut fishing trips short
- Sandbars and shallow rivers blocked migration at 20 key points
- Pollution and declining plankton disrupted the food chain
- Illegal trawlers near coasts depleting breeding stocks
- Little ecological restoration beyond seasonal bans

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



## INTO THE FRAY

On the final day of submission yesterday, members of different student groups at Dhaka University handed in their nomination papers for the DUCSU election.

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: Umama Fatema, contesting for VP with an independent candidate; Abu Baker Mojumder, a July movement coordinator, contesting for GS from BGCS; Abidul Islam Khan, the Jatiyatatabadi Chhatra Dal nominee for VP, with his panel; Meghmalla Bosu, contesting for GS from Gonoantik Chhatra Jote; and Sadek Kayem, the Chhatra Shibir nominee for VP, with his panel, who submitted his nomination form on Tuesday. With the polls slated for September 9, the nomination papers will be scrutinised today, after which a draft list of candidates will be published.

PHOTOS: PALASH KHAN

## Wait for justice

FROM PAGE 1  
The final judgment in the cases is now pending with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court as their trial proceedings have already been completed at the lower court and High Court Division.

A six-member bench of the Appellate Division, led by Chief Justice Syed Reftat Ahmed, has been holding hearing on the appeals filed by the state challenging the High Court verdict that acquitted BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, former state minister Lutfozaman Babar, and others in the cases.

The SC started the hearing on July 17 and held it for four working days.

"The state and defence counsels are now placing arguments on the appeals before the Appellate Division. Once the arguments are completed, the apex court will deliver a judgment. I hope the proceedings of the cases will be completed soon," Additional Attorney General Aneek R Haque told The Daily Star recently.

It cannot be specifically said when the apex court proceedings will end, he added.

Mohammad Shishir Manir, one of the defence counsels, told this correspondent, "This case is a classic example of abuse of the processes by the executive and the judiciary. Different regimes abused different authorities to distort evidence and thereby materialised a short-term political goal. Moreover, the judicial fabric of Bangladesh has also been tainted by high-handedness. We all should get rid of this type of awkward situation. Let's bid farewell to the abuse of process."

Yesterday, the SC bench continued hearing appeals for the fourth day and decided to resume today.

Earlier in the day, senior defence counsel SM Shabujahan told the Appellate Division that there is no evidence of the accused persons' involvement in the grenade attack or in the conspiracy.

"If the political changeover had not taken place last year in the country, none of the persons detained in connection with this case could have been released from jail," he said, adding that all the detained were released after August 5 last year.

The lawyer appealed to the apex court to uphold the HC verdict that acquitted all the accused in the cases.

On Tuesday, Deputy Attorney General Abdullah Al Mahmud Masud placed arguments on behalf of the state, praying to the apex court to scrap the HC judgment and affirm the trial court verdict.

On October 10, 2018, the Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 of Dhaka delivered the verdicts in the cases, sentencing 19 people, including Babar to death, Tarique, now in London, and 18 others were sentenced to life in jail while 11 others got different prison terms.

Delivering the judgments in the two cases, the tribunal observed that it was a well-orchestrated attack executed by abusing state power.

On December 1 last year, the HC delivered its verdict, acquitting all the 49 accused and scrapping the lower court judgment.

The court on December 19 that year released the full text of the verdict observing that the August 21, 2004, grenade attack case should be referred to the home ministry for a fresh probe by a proper and expert investigation agency to ensure justice.

"It is a heinous tragic incident in the history of this country, where a lot of people lost their lives, including that Awami Leader leader Ily Rahman. This killing needs to be investigated properly, and independently to ensure justice, which has totally been absent till today in this case..." the HC bench of Justice AKM Asaduzzaman (now a judge of the Appellate Division) and Justice Syed Enayet Hossain said in the 79-page full text of the verdict.

Following the HC judgement, all the arrested accused got released from jail.

## What notes of dissent could mean

FROM PAGE 1  
they called the BNP's attempt to keep space open for one party advantage, warning that it risked undermining the charter's credibility as a roadmap for reforms.

They suggested the BNP's notes of dissent reflect more than mere disagreement and provide a moral ground to justify the party's refusal to implement some of the key provisions if voted to power.

For its part, the BNP has defended its stance as a political necessity, saying that leaving its objections on record was the only way to protect its electoral pledges.

Party leaders argue that the dissent does not amount to rejection, but rather serves as a safeguard should they return to office and wish to legislate along their own lines.

### RIVALS' CONCERN

These objections have caused unease among other political groups, who fear that the BNP may use its dissent as a pretext to ignore reforms once in office.

Jamaat-e-Islami Nayeb-e-Ameer Syed Abdullah Mohammed Taher said there is uncertainty about what will happen to the recommendations after the election.

"As there is such an apprehension, the charter will have legally binding provisions. We will not concede any ground on that issue."

"Our argument is that, historically, those in power have failed to fulfill the promises they made to the nation. So, suddenly claiming that they've all become virtuous—needs to be proven," he said.

He added that consensus does not mean unanimity but majority support. "The higher the percentage of agreement, the stronger the consensus."

"Those who say, 'No, we don't agree'—their dissent has been noted. That's for the record, but not as a decision. Changing a decision has no legitimacy," Taher said.

National Citizen Party's Joint Convener Javed Rasin explained his party's apprehension with an example. "There is general agreement to form an upper house through proportional representation. But BNP's dissent gives them moral ground to avoid implementing it later. If they are voted to power, they will simply say, 'I had already registered my objection.'"

For this reason, he argued, all recommendations should be implemented before the election and formalised through a constituent assembly.

Bazlur Rashid Firoz, general secretary of the Socialist Party of Bangladesh, said expecting the BNP to implement reforms it had opposed was unrealistic. "They are not obligated to do so, as they have already registered their objections," he said.

Sajedul Hug Rubel, secretary of the Communist Party of Bangladesh, noted that during the discussions, the BNP explicitly stated they were issuing notes of dissent on matters they believed would pose challenges if they came to power.

"This has raised concerns that the BNP may choose not to implement those provisions once in office," he said.

**COMMISSION'S INTERPRETATION**  
The commission took a cautious view

on the notes of dissent.

Prof Riaz noted that BNP's dissents served a political function. "They have issued notes of dissent to formally register their objections, allowing them the flexibility to adopt a different stance in the future based on party considerations. They have kept that door open. However, we expect that they will revisit these issues before the charter reaches its final stage."

Riaz also emphasised the significance of the charter, the necessity of which emerged after the fall of the Awami League regime through the July uprising.

"Whether the differences are moral, political, or legal—we must ensure their implementation. Otherwise, the sacrifices of so many people risk being in vain," he said.

"BNP is a significant party, and in the future political landscape, they will have to operate within that framework. Surely, they will consider things politically," he added.

Riaz emphasised that the BNP, having been deeply engaged in the process, would also be bound by the provisions where consensus was overwhelming.

"They didn't just witness the opinions; they also witnessed the sentiments. What we hope is that they will show respect toward those sentiments and try to accommodate them."

For many, the heart of the debate is not the specific dissent notes, already well-documented, but whether the July Charter can deliver meaningful reform if its most powerful signatory holds back.

Commission member Badiul Alam Majumdar said, "If the vital issues with notes of dissent are not implemented, especially if they are withheld, then we will remain stuck in the old framework. We will continue along the same outdated path, and that will not lead us to a new destination."

"This raises the possibility of a return to autocracy."

A member of the consensus commission, who requested anonymity, echoed this concern, arguing that too many carve-outs would reduce the charter to little more than a partisan document.

"During the discussions, BNP spoke as if they were certain they would be voted to power. Therefore, once in power, they want absolute, unchecked authority."

"They are unwilling to restrain the accelerating criminalisation of politics and elections. They want every institution to remain subordinate to their control. It seems the party wants the prime minister to have unchecked powers," he said.

The BNP's dissent on the process to appoint the caretaker government chief indicates it wants the parliament to play a role at one point if certain options fail, he said.

"In other words, whichever party is in power will determine the caretaker government. So, what kind of caretaker government will that be? We had proposed that it be decided through consensus among all parties," the commission member said.

**BNP'S RESPONSE**  
Speaking to this newspaper, several top BNP leaders said the party issued notes of dissent for political reasons.

They said they were generous on

issues that posed minor implications for state governance, and rigid on matters where they anticipated facing challenges in governing.

One of them, wishing anonymity, hinted at flexibility over the issues.

"The fate of the issues on which our leaders have given notes of dissent during the talks depend on the political situation once they are voted to power. The desire of the top leaders will also be a factor," he said.

Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed dismissed concerns outright. "There is no reason for concern on this matter."

He, however, added that if the BNP is elected, it will implement the reform proposals on which it issued notes of dissent, "according to our proposals".

"Isn't it natural that the party receiving the mandate will act according to that mandate?"

Asked about the charter's legal status, Salahuddin said, "The charter will be made legally binding keeping the notes of dissent unchanged. Another issue is that there has been no discussion yet on how the charter will be made legally binding. Let's see what comes up in the talks."

### BNP'S OBJECTIONS

On the election time caretaker government, the BNP opposed the commission's plan to expand the selection panel by adding senior judges and using ranked choice voting if the first options failed.

Instead, BNP proposed that parliament itself should intervene in such a scenario -- an arrangement they argue would strengthen the elected legislature. Critics, however, fear this could let the ruling party of the day control the outcome.

The party also gave a note of dissent on the proposal to form an upper house of parliament through proportional representation based on the national vote share, contending it should reflect the seat share in the lower house.

On executive authority, BNP resisted the consensus view barring party chiefs from serving as prime minister, and demanded tighter restrictions on MPs crossing party lines, arguing that greater discipline was essential, while critics warned it could limit dissent within parliament itself.

The party also dissented from provisions that would grant the president power to appoint the Bangladesh Bank governor and the head of the Energy Regulatory Commission, maintaining that such powers should remain with the government of the day.

On judicial appointments, BNP insisted on retaining flexibility for future governments, saying its manifesto would include the option of choosing the chief justice from among the two most senior Appellate Division judges, rather than strictly by seniority.

Finally, it disagreed with others on proposals for search committees to appoint oversight officials such as the Ombudsman and Comptroller and Auditor General, and heads of Public Service Commission and Anti-Corruption Commission. Such panels, it argued, would be ad hoc and unaccountable, while clear legislation would ensure a stronger, more transparent framework.

## July frontliners

FROM PAGE 1

BGCS announced its "Baishommyo Birodi Chhatra Sangsad" panel with Abdul Kader for VP, Abu Baker Mojumder for GS and Ashrafa Khatur for AGS.

Chhatra Front leader Aditi Islam, students said, was among the organisers at DU's Kuwait Maitree Hall.

### PANELS HONOUR INJURED PROTESTER

In a unique move, Chhatra Dal, BGCS, Islami Chhatra Andolan, and Pratirodh Parishad did not field any candidate for research and publication secretary in honour of Sanjida Ahmed Tonni, who was injured in a Chhatra League attack while protesting on DU grounds on July 15 last year.

A photo of her bloodied face became one of the iconic images of the movement.

Tonni, a psychology student, will contest independently. In a Facebook post, she pledged to serve students with dedication. "With your support, I will turn this vision into reality."

### 509 NOMINATIONS SUBMITTED

Meanwhile, Chief Returning Officer Prof Zashim Uddin said 509 of 658 nomination papers were submitted yesterday.

"Tomorrow we'll know the number of candidates contesting for each post. We'll scrutinise the papers and then publish a draft list." The draft is expected at 1:00pm today.

Candidates may withdraw until 1:00pm on August 25, after which the final list will be published the next day. Campaigning will run from 4:00pm on July 26 till September 7 midnight.

Voting will be held on September 9, from 8:00am to 3:00pm, with counting and results the same day.

Apart from the top three posts, there are posts of Liberation War and democratic movements secretary; science and technology secretary; common room secretary; international affairs secretary; literature and cultural affairs secretary; research and publication secretary; sports secretary; students' transport secretary; social service secretary; career development secretary; health and environment secretary; and human rights and legal affairs secretary.

The remaining 13 are member posts. The last DUCSU election was held in 2019, after a 29-year hiatus, though it is supposed to be annual.

## Israel okays plan to conquer

FROM PAGE 1

"I didn't hear about Israel's decision, but I saw my neighbours fleeing, so I fled too," she told AFP by telephone.

Anis Daloul, 64, said he fled Zeitoun with his family on Sunday for a neighbourhood northwest of Gaza City.

He told AFP by telephone that the Israeli military had "destroyed most of the buildings in Zeitoun and displaced thousands of people".

Israel's security cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu approved the plan to conquer Gaza City in early August, sparking fears it will worsen the already catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The remaining captives would be released in a second exchange within the 60-day period, during which negotiations for a permanent ceasefire would take place, the sources said.

Israel and Hamas have held on-off indirect negotiations throughout the war, resulting in two short truces during which Israeli hostages were released in exchange for Palestinian prisoners.

Qatar, one of the mediators in the talks, said the latest proposal was "almost identical" to an earlier version agreed by Israel, while Egypt said Monday that "the ball is now in its (Israel's) court".

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has yet to publicly comment on the truce plan, but said last week that his country would accept "an agreement in which all the hostages are released at once and according to our conditions for ending the war".

## Pubali Bank Credit Card – Now Just a Click Away!

- Apply online from your comfort zone
- Instantly check your credit score and credit limit in real time
- Simple process, trusted service

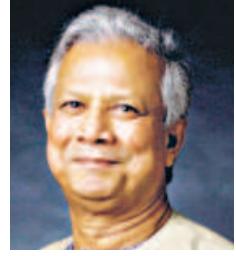
A Smart Choice for a Smarter Life – Pubali Credit Card  
<https://applycreditcard.pubalibankbd.com> or Scan QR Code



ঘরে বসেই  
ব্যাংক  
অ্যাকাউন্ট  
ঢুলুন



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



Coordinated action needed to fight NCDs  
Says Yunus

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Professor Mohammad Yunus yesterday underscored the need for developing a resilient generation, stressing that effective human resource management is vital for ensuring both individual wellbeing and the nation's sustainable progress.

"We have all come together today [yesterday] to address a critically important issue in the health sector. For national development

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



Firefighters and locals dousing the blaze after a fire broke out at the capital's Mohakhali slum yesterday afternoon, gutting at least 70 shanties.



## 'Everything gone in blink of an eye'

At least 70 shanties burnt to ashes at Mohakhali slum

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Rina, 25, who lost a leg in an accident, was inside her room on the first floor of a narrow house when a fire broke out at Mohakhali's Saat Tola slum yesterday.

As panic spread through the slum, she managed to crawl down from the upper floor and reach safety.

Her mother, 50-year-old Jahan Begum, works as a domestic worker in several households in the Mohakhali area. She was at her workplace at the time.

Hearing about the fire, she rushed back to the slum to check on her daughter.

When she arrived, she found that at least 70 shanties, including her own, had already been burnt down.

After the flames were doused, she went near her home and saw that the TV and refrigerator she had bought just last month -- along with everything else -- had turned to ashes.

The fire broke out around 2:30pm at the slum, located near the Infectious Diseases Hospital. Five fire service units brought the blaze under control at 3:18pm, and it was fully extinguished by 4:35pm.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

## Women, girls bear the brunt of climate crisis

They face severe health, livelihood, and safety challenges during disasters, says study on southwest Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Climate emergencies are hitting girls, women, and marginalised communities hardest in Khulna and Sathkhira, a new study has revealed.

Over 60 percent of adolescent girls struggle to access menstrual health products, while only 2.5 percent of households have consistent access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services during disasters.



60% girls lack access to menstrual health products

2.5% households have access to sexual, reproductive health services

Unsafe drinking water affects 72% households

Early marriage, gender-based violence rise during climate crisis

The research also highlighted a worrying rise in early marriage and gender-based violence, with 78 percent of women reporting increased risks during climate crises.

The findings of the study,

titled "Understanding SRHR, WASH, and Livelihoods Situations and Pathways Forward in Climate-Vulnerable Locations of Southwest Bangladesh", were shared at a national dissemination

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

## Focus on regional dev to ease Dhaka's burden: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Creating jobs, education, and healthcare opportunities across the country is essential to reduce over dependence on the capital and save the city, said speakers at a public dialogue yesterday.

"Eight to ten regional capitals must be developed, and every upazila should be transformed into a vibrant suburb to ease Dhaka's burden," said Shameem Haidar Patwari, secretary general of Jatiya Party (GM Quader), at the event held at CIRDAP auditorium in Dhaka.

He blamed Rajuk for the city's decline and called for its dissolution, alleging that it had failed in fulfilling its responsibilities.

The dialogue, titled "Complexities of DAP: Towards Sustainable Urbanization", was organised by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) and was attended by policymakers, experts, business leaders, and civil society representatives.

At the discussion, Alamgir Kabir, former state minister for housing and public works, said, "Unplanned urbanisation is not only Dhaka's issue; it is a nationwide challenge. Unless corruption is addressed, the country's crises cannot be solved."

He criticised the cycle of blame between

bureaucrats and politicians.

Calling Dhaka a "dead city", BNP chairperson's adviser Habibur Rahman Habib warned that unless migration into the capital is curbed, the city cannot be saved.

Former lawmaker Nilufar Chowdhury Moni criticised lawlessness in the real estate

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Create jobs, edn opportunities outside Dhaka

Ensure quality healthcare in regional areas

Develop eight to ten regional capitals

Decentralise services, governance

Enforce laws to curb corruption in Rajuk

sector, where developers often construct buildings in narrow alleys without following safety rules.

"If an earthquake strikes, fire services won't be able to enter these areas, even in affluent neighbourhoods," she said.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

## Justice still elusive for July victims

Speakers tell BIP event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing frustration over the slow judicial process, families of July uprising martyrs and injured at an event yesterday demanded swift trials of the perpetrators and justice for the victims.

"After the fall of Sheikh Hasina's regime, we hoped we would get justice immediately. Even after a year, the minimum progress expected has not been achieved," said Samsi Ara Zaman, mother of martyred journalist Tahir Zaman Priyo.

She made the remarks at a dialogue organised yesterday by the Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP) to mark the one-year anniversary of the 2024 uprising.

Junaid Islam, a student of Jahangirnagar University, said, "The July uprising represented the people's expectations for the freedom

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

## Honouring the stellar women

bti, Star award two individuals in banking, healthcare categories

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In 2023, bti and The Daily Star launched the "bti The Daily Star Stellar Women" initiative -- a unique platform to honour and celebrate women from diverse walks of life for their contributions to society.

The inaugural season recognised 12 outstanding women across various fields.

The second season of the initiative began in September 2024, with the first two awards being presented in November.

Recently, a gathering was held at bti Celebration Point in Gulshan 2, Dhaka, where two more extraordinary women were recognised for their achievements.

Shaila Abedin, SEVP and head of liability consumer & SME banking at Prime Bank, was awarded the title in "Banking & Financial Institutions" for her unmatched contributions to women's banking and to the banking sector as a whole.

Simultaneously, Dr Tahsin Ferdous

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2



Shaila Abedin



Tahsin Ferdous

## Panel to probe controversial video of BFIU head formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Financial Institutions Division (FID) of the finance ministry has formed a four-member committee to probe and submit an inquiry report on the controversial image/video of AFM Shahinul Islam, head of the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU), that was circulating on social media.

Md Sayed Kutub, additional secretary of the FID, will be the convener of the committee, while the three members are Md Sirajul Islam, executive director of Bangladesh Bank; Md Matiur Rahman, director of the ICT 2 Division of the central bank; and Mohammad Saidul Islam, joint secretary of the FID, who will be the member secretary.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

PROBE DELAY  
Two ACC  
officials  
suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has suspended two deputy directors – Kamalesh Mandal and Md Ahsanul Kabir Palash – for failing to submit investigation reports on time.

An order signed by ACC Chairman Dr Mohammad Abdul Momen stated that the decision followed the failure.

Kamalesh was tasked with probing allegations of irregularities in contractor appointments and corruption under Dhaka WASA's Water Supply Network Improvement Project but missed the reporting deadline.

Palash, meanwhile, is accused of abusing his authority and preparing forged documents in connection with a housing project under Rupan Housing Estate Limited.

Man gets  
life term for  
raping girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Netrakona

A Netrakona court has sentenced a man to life term imprisonment for raping a seven-year-old girl.

Rahmat Ali, 55, of Mohanganj upazila, was also fined Tk 50,000, in default of which he will have to serve two more years in prison.

Judge AKM Emdadul Haque of the Netrakona Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal delivered the verdict on Tuesday in presence of the convict.

According to the prosecution, on May 4, 2012, the victim's mother filed a rape case with Mohanganj Police Station. Rahmat was the lone accused in the case.

On the day of the incident, Rahmat took the second-grader to a classroom in her school and raped her.



## Swelling Padma submerges crop fields in Pabna

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

The Padma river has been swelling rapidly over the past weeks, flooding low-lying areas and cropland around the river and shoal areas in three upazilas of Pabna.

Water development board officials claimed there is no chance of the river overflowing in the district, but riverbank residents and farmers said they are the worst affected as sudden water flow has submerged farmland.

"I have cultivated 250 bigha of banana at Char Protappur on the bank of the Padma. Most of my field submerged in the last one week. If the water stays for another week, the vast banana orchard will be badly damaged," said Md Sanaullah, a banana farmer of Char Protappur village.

In some areas, water levels have reached the top of banana trees, he said. Besides, radish and other vegetables on 12 bigha of land have already been damaged due to waterlogging over the week.

Another farmer, Md Hossain Malitha of Lokhkhmikunda village in Ishwardi upazila, said his 15 bigha of crops submerged in a week, and he now fears losing the entire yield. "I have cultivated 30 bigha of vegetables on

the shoal land of Lokhkhmikunda village, of which 15 bigha submerged in a week. Water is receding from the crop field very slowly, so it will take another week or 10 days to remove. Then it will be hard to get the expected production," he said.

During visits to Lokhkhmikunda, Protappur, Shanikdiar, Virothpur and other shoal areas in Pabna Sadar and Ishwardi upazilas, vast shoal lands were found submerged as water levels have risen in the Padma.

Md Mahabub Alom, executive engineer of Pabna Water Development Board (WDB), said the river swelled due to heavy rainfall upstream but there is no risk of crossing the danger level this time.

"Padma is flowing at 12.77 metres, which is 1.03 metres below the danger level at the Hardinge Bridge point. The rising water level has flooded low-lying riverbank and shoal fields, but it will decrease within the next two days," he said.

According to the agriculture extension department, 315 hectares of cropland in shoal areas of Pabna Sadar, Sujanagar and Ishwardi upazilas were submerged in a week.

Of the affected crops, 138 hectares are vegetables, 13 hectares are chilli, 114 hectares are paddy (Aman and Aush) and 50 hectares are banana fields, said

Aditya Bishwas, a deputy assistant agriculture officer of DAE, Pabna.

"If the water recedes within a week, most of the crops will be saved, but if it stays for two weeks, most will be damaged. We are expecting the water to recede in the next few days.

After that, we will get the exact crop loss," Aditya said.

Although the Padma and Jamuna are flowing through Pabna, the district has so far been saved from flooding due to the protection embankment, WDB and agriculture officials said.

They said the affected croplands are located outside the embankment.



## জরুরী নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এই মর্মে জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, কেডিএস লজিস্টিক্স লিঃ এ একাউন্টস ও ফাইন্যান্স বিভাগে জরুরী ভিত্তিতে সিএফও (CFO) নিয়োগ দেয়া হবে। অর্থাৎ প্রার্থীগণকে নিয়ন্ত্রণ ই-মেইলে ২৫শে আগস্ট ২০২৫ ইং তারিখের মধ্যে জব এন্ট্রিকেন লেটার ও অপেন্ডেডেট সিভি প্রেরণ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

ই-মেইল: hrd.logistics@kdsgroup.net

কেডিএস লজিস্টিক্স লিঃ

মোড়মারা, সোনালীজাহান, সীতাকুন্ড, চট্টগ্রাম।

মোগামেগ ফোন নম্বর: ০৯৬৭৮-৮০০৮৪৭ এবং টেলিফোন নম্বর: ০

## LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)  
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1411 OF 2025

Mrs. Syeda Madina Mursheed

-VERSUS-

The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms and another

-Respondents

Notice is hereby given that an application under sections 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 has been moved before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the petitioner for condonation of delay in holding 1st and 2nd Annual General Meetings (AGMs) of Ascend Health Ltd for the year ended on 30.06.2023 and 30.06.2024 and to relieve the Directors of the Company from the liabilities of fine, and the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel admitted the said application on 14.08.2025. 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.

Muhammad Harunur Rashid

Barrister-at-Law  
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Membership No. 9550, Room No.351 (Main) Supreme Court Bar Association, Shahbagh, Dhaka. Mobile: 01703198218

## STATUTORY NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)

COMPANY MATTER NO. 1468 OF 2025

An application under Section 81(2), 85(3) & 396 of the Companies Act, 1994.

Nuruddin Ahmed

-VERSUS-

The Forest Lounge Ltd. and another

-Respondents

Take Notice that an application U/S- 81(2), 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh for condonation of delay in holding the AGM for the year 2022 to 2025 of The Forest Lounge Ltd. Upon hearing of the application on 19.08.2025 Hon'ble Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel has been pleased to admit said application. In the said order the Honorable Justice directed to publish advertisements in the newspaper, and submit affidavit-in-compliance. If you are interested to oppose the said application you may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an advocate. Copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.

Asikur Rahman Sourav, Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh

SS Bhaban (Ground Floor), 70/D Green Road, Dhaka-1205, Phone: 01917399260

An application under Section 81(2) read with Section 85(3) and Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994.

AND

IN THE MATTER OF  
Mr. Andriy Lavryk

-VERSUS-

Petitioner  
The Registrar Joint Stock Companies and Firms and another

-Respondents

Dear Mr. /Ms.  
please take notice that on behalf of the Petitioner namely Mr. Andriy Lavryk, having his address at 77, Saksagangkpo, St.Kiev, Ukraine-42000, an application under 81(2) read with Section 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting of Super Protective Shoes (Pvt) Ltd., for the calendar years of 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 & 2025 have been filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. Upon preliminary hearing the Hon'ble Court has issued an order for the said application. Pursuant to the order, the Petitioner is required to file an application for the same. The Petitioner has filed the application and directed to publish this notice and file an affidavit-in-compliance on or before 19th October, 2025. Any person or persons having interest in the said application may appear either personally or through duly authorized Advocate on or before the date so fixed. Copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on payment of required costs.

Yours Faithfully

(Mr. Dewan Faisal), Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Barrister, Lincoln's

Inn Legality, A13, Navana FH Solaris, 65, Bijoynagar, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh.

## Coordinated action needed to fight NCDs

FROM PAGE 3

and progress, skilled and efficient human resources are essential. Without proper human resource management, neither individual wellbeing nor national advancement can be achieved," he said.

The chief adviser made the remarks while speaking at the signing ceremony of the "Joint Declaration" aimed at strengthening international cooperation for integrated action in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

The event was held at the Shapla Hall of the Chief Adviser's Office in Dhaka.

Yunus said non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are steadily increasing across almost all countries, with the situation in Bangladesh is particularly critical due

to its socio-economic challenges, skilled and efficient human resources are essential. Without proper human resource management, neither individual wellbeing nor national advancement can be achieved," he said.

"As such, NCDs have become perhaps the most pressing issue in national health management," said Yunus. Their impact extends beyond the health sector, affecting our overall economy, social security, and sustainable development," he said.

Citing the World Health Organization's 2022 report, he highlighted that 71 percent of all deaths in Bangladesh are caused by non-communicable diseases. Alarmingly, 51 percent of these deaths

occur in individuals under the age of 70, which is considered premature.

Besides, 69 percent of all personal health spending in Bangladesh comes directly out of pocket, with the majority of that expenditure linked to NCDs.

He emphasised that improving treatment services for NCDs is crucial, but not enough. "Equally important are public awareness, prevention, and early control strategies to reduce the incidence of these diseases."

Yunus said addressing NCDs is not the responsibility of the Health Services Division alone, as

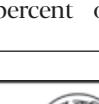
this requires coordinated efforts from all ministries.

Sectors such as food, agriculture, education, sports, local government and public works each have a vital role to play, and specific action plans have already been outlined for each ministry as part of a broader strategy, he added.

## PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 21

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00
JAMAAT 5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



## Bangladesh Krishi Bank

Divisional Office, Dhaka  
Plot-03, Block-A, Section-13  
Mirpur, Dhaka-1216

Phone: 02-48040586  
02-48033035  
Website: www.krishibank.org.bd  
Email: gmdhaka@krishibank.org.bd

DO/DHAKA/ADMIN-4(4)8(4)/Branch Renovation/c-gp/2025-2026/1057

Date: 19.08.2025

## e-Tender Notice (OTM)

This is to notify all concern that, the following e-Tender is invited in National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

SL	Tender ID	Name of tender	Tender publication date and time	Tender document last selling date and time	Tender closing and opening date and time
01	1136029	Repairing and Renovation works of BKB, Chief Regional Office Building, Munshiganj	21-08-2025 03:00pm	22-09-2025 03:00pm	23-09-2025 03:00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-Government Procurement Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-Government Procurement Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) and you can also ask help from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

*১০/০৮/২০২৫*  
Golam Md Areef  
General Manager

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer DPHE, Pirojpur District, Pirojpur. [www.dphe.pirojpur.gov.bd](http://www.dphe.pirojpur.gov.bd)

Invitation for e-Tender notice	



</

## Russia expects India to keep buying its oil

REUTERS, New Delhi

Russia expects to continue supplying oil to India despite warnings from the United States, Russian embassy officials in New Delhi said yesterday, adding that Moscow hopes trilateral talks will soon take place with India and China.

US President Donald Trump has announced an additional tariff of 25% on Indian goods exported to the US from August 27, as a punishment for buying Russian oil, which constitutes 35% of India's total imports compared with a negligible 0.2% before the Ukraine war.

"I want to highlight that despite the political situation, we can predict that the same level of oil import (by India)," Roman Babushkin, the charge d'affaires at the Russian embassy in India, told a press briefing.

He predicted India and Russia would find ways to overcome Trump's latest tariffs in their "national interests".

Trade talks between India and the US broke down over the opening up of India's vast farm and dairy sectors, as well as its purchases of Russian oil. The total tariff announced on Indian goods entering the US is 50%.

The Indian foreign ministry did not immediately reply to an emailed request for comment.

It has previously said the US decision to single out India for Russian purchases was "extremely unfortunate".

Russia's Deputy Trade Commissioner Evgeny Griva yesterday said buying oil from Russia is "very profitable" for India, which will not want to change its supplier.

On average Russia gives a 5%-7% discount to Indian buyers, he said, adding that Russia has a "very, very special mechanism" to continue oil supplies to India.



## UKRAINE SECURITY GUARANTEES

# Talks without Russia 'a road to nowhere'

Says Lavrov, slams Europe's 'clumsy' bid to win over Trump

AFP, Moscow

Russia yesterday said it had to be part of any discussion on security guarantees for Ukraine and downplayed the likelihood of an imminent summit with President Volodymyr Zelensky, tempering hopes for a quick peace deal.

Nato military chiefs were meanwhile scheduled to hold a virtual summit on security guarantees for Ukraine, the latest in a flurry of global diplomacy aimed at brokering an end to the nearly three-and-a-half year conflict.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warned that "seriously discussing security guarantees without the Russian Federation is a utopia, a road to nowhere".

Moscow signed the Budapest Memorandum in 1994, which was aimed at ensuring security for Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan in exchange for them giving up numerous nuclear weapons left from the Soviet era.

But Russia violated that first by taking Crimea in 2014, and then by starting a full-scale offensive in 2022, which has killed tens of thousands of people and forced millions to flee their homes.

On Tuesday, top US officer Dan Caine, Chairman of the

Joint Chiefs of Staff, held talks with European military chiefs on the "best options for a potential Ukraine peace deal," a US defence official told AFP.

In eastern Ukraine, far from the diplomatic deliberations, Russian forces claimed fresh advances on the ground and Ukrainian officials reported more deaths from Russian attacks.

US President Donald Trump brought Zelensky and European leaders to the White House Monday, three days after his landmark encounter with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska.

Russia's long-serving foreign minister downplayed the meeting between Trump and European leaders at the White House, describing it as a "clumsy" attempt to change the US president's position on Ukraine.

Trump, long a fierce critic of the billions of dollars in US support to Ukraine, earlier said European nations were "willing to put people on the ground" to secure any settlement. He ruled out sending US troops but suggested the country might provide air support.

Russia has long said it will never tolerate the presence of any Western troops in Ukraine.

While Trump said Putin had agreed to meet Zelensky and accept some Western security guarantees for Ukraine, Russia has not confirmed this.

Lavrov also cast doubt on an imminent meeting between the sworn enemies, saying that any summit between Putin and Zelensky "must be prepared in the most meticulous way" so it does not lead to a "deterioration" of the situation surrounding the conflict.

Russia's defence ministry said on Telegram that its troops had captured the villages of Sutkhetse and Pankivka in the embattled Donetsk region. They are near a section of the front where the Russian army broke through Ukrainian defences last week, between the logistics hub of Pokrovsk and Kostiantynivka.

Six civilians were killed by Russian attacks across eastern and southern Ukraine yesterday, local authorities said.

One person died in Russia's western Bryansk region as a result of a Ukrainian drone strike.

Russia's aerial attacks on the northeastern town of Okhtyrka in the Sumy region wounded at least 14 people, including three children, according to regional governor Oleg Grygorov.

## Support grows for Palestinian statehood in US

REUTERS, Washington

A 58% majority of Americans believe that every country in the United Nations should recognize Palestine as a nation, according to a new Reuters/Ipsos poll, as Israel and Hamas considered a possible truce in the nearly two-year long war.

Some 33% of respondents did not agree that UN members should recognize a Palestinian state and 9% did not answer.

The six day poll, which closed on Monday, was taken within weeks of three countries, close U.S. allies Canada, Britain and France, announcing they intend to recognize the State of Palestine. This ratcheted up pressure on Israel as starvation spreads in Gaza.

The survey was taken amid hopes that Israel and Hamas would agree on a ceasefire to provide a break in the fighting, free some hostages and ease shipments of humanitarian assistance.

Two officials said on Tuesday Israel was studying Hamas' response to a potential deal for a 60-day truce and the release of half the Israeli hostages still held in Gaza.

Britain, Canada, Australia and several of their European allies said last week that the humanitarian crisis in the war-torn Palestinian enclave has reached "unimaginable levels," as aid groups warned that Gazans are on the verge of famine.

A larger majority of the Reuters/Ipsos poll respondents, 65%, said the US should take action in Gaza to help people facing starvation, with 28% disagreeing.

The poll also showed that 59% of Americans believe that Israel's military response in Gaza has been excessive.

## Admin officials, law enforcers involved

FROM PAGE 1

report in which it said the Bureau of Mineral Development (BMD), the Sylhet administration, police, Bangladesh Border Guard (BGB) and 42 others with political and business links were either directly involved or indirectly involved or were beneficiaries of the rampant stone looting.

The Daily Star has a copy of the report, which two officials confirmed as authentic. However, the ACC officials would not comment until the probe was complete.

The ACC report carries names of Sylhet's divisional commissioner, then deputy commissioner, superintendent of police, then upazila nirbahi officer and officer in charge of Companiganj.

Besides administration and law enforcement officials, names of leaders from across the political spectrum came up in the ACC report.

In response to public outrage, an ACC team visited the Sada Pathor site on August 13, collected evidence, and prepared the preliminary report.

The High Court, responding to a public interest litigation on August 14, ordered the authorities to recover looted stones, submit lists of those involved, and take action to protect the environment.

Meanwhile, the Sylhet city unit BNP held a press briefing yesterday afternoon to protest a national daily's report that accused them of involvement in the looting.

Rezaul Hasan Koyel Ludhi, acting president of Sylhet city BNP, said, "The report is false, baseless, and intentional. We are challenging its authenticity; otherwise, the newspaper should apologise. It is the Awami League that has been looting stones for the last 15 years, and to hide the real culprits, we are being accused."

Sylhet Jamaat and NCP said they would hold a press briefing about the allegations today.

Sylhet's Divisional Commissioner Khan

Meanwhile, joint forces, comprising members from the administration, police, Rab, BGB, and the army, are carrying out drives across the district to recover stones looted from Sada Pathor.

## From full nets to lighter hauls

FROM PAGE 1

the Meghna last week. The trip, involving nine crew members and 40 litres of fuel, cost Tk 10,000-15,000. Hasan Majhi caught just 6kg near Hajipur and Shahidpur, where depth has dropped to 7.5 feet.

Ersad, also from Nasir Majhi village, described sailing 30km into the sea with seven others on July 6, only to return with three hilsa. "We saw massive sandbars around Gozaria Char near Monpura."

From Chandpur to Monpura, sandbars now block channels, leaving only narrow navigable routes.

The ban ran from April 15 to June 11. But as Kalu Mia, a fisherman from Mohipur, put it: "Since the ban was lifted, barely any fisherman has returned home with a good haul."

Patuakhali's fisheries officer, Md Kamrul Islam, offered some hope: "We hope that once the weather improves, fishermen will be able to venture out to sea for longer and will get good hauls of hilsa. Last year, most fishermen caught good amounts of hilsa towards the end of the season [June–November]."

Officials and scientists give varying reasons for the shortage. Some, like those at the Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute in Chandpur, blame climate change for unpredictable weather that has kept fishermen ashore since early July.

"If fishermen could reach the sea and stay longer, they would catch more," said Md Abu Kawser Didar, a scientific officer.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, this July was 23.5 percent wetter than average, with three low-pressure systems on July 7, 14, and 24 bringing heavy rain. Barishal division recorded 878mm rainfall.

Officials said the active monsoon kept fishermen ashore.

But weather is only part of the problem. Others cite poor navigability, pollution, and hostile river ecology.

"Hilsa needs some ideal conditions to migrate to the river from the sea, such as fresh water, strong currents, at least 10m depth, and a minimum

something if we can't provide a suitable environment for hilsa, we will not get any."

Barishal Fisheries Office says migration is blocked at 20 points including Meghna, Payra, Baleshwar, Bishkhali, Andharmanik, Tetulia, Sugandha, and Gozaria. Divisional officer Md Alfaz Uddin Shaikh said a proposal for dredging has been submitted.

### LIFE CYCLE OF HILSA FISH



river width of 500m," said Molla Emdadullah, project director of the Hilsa Development and Management Project (HMDP).

"When the fish see there is no depth or not enough width in the river, they migrate to other rivers – those could be in Myanmar or India. They move away from Bangladesh when they face these barriers."

"Scientists are sure about

A 2022-2025 study by Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University found plankton levels in the Payra, Bishkhali, and Baleshwar rivers have dropped by at least 30 percent since 2020.

"Additionally, water depth has dropped drastically in many areas due to the formation of new sandbars, obstructing the natural movement of hilsa," said Mir Mohammad Ali, assistant professor at the

university. "Deep sea trawlers are fishing illegally near the coast, depleting hilsa. In some areas, depth is only 18-20 meters, far below the 75-80 needed for breeding."

Asked whether the Department of Fisheries has taken any initiative apart from imposing bans, HMDP's project director replied in the negative.

"But we're planning to develop a project that will focus on improving the environment of the river for hilsa breeding. We've seen reports that fish are dying in the Meghna in Chandpur due to pollution. The concentration of pollution will reach hilsa nurseries soon if we don't act now."

From 2003 to 2023, the national hilsa output rose, then fell by 42,000 tonnes in 2024.

In Barishal division, the country's largest hilsa hub, June output fell from 21,817 tonnes in 2024 to 14,496 this year. In July, the division produced 10,876 tonnes, compared to 15,470 last year – around 30 percent less. On July 25, landings were 290 tonnes, down from 500 in previous years.

As supply has tightened, prices have surged. In Dhaka markets, small hilsa now sells for Tk 1,450-1,600/kg, medium for Tk 1,850-2,000, and large for Tk 2,600-3,200 – up from Tk 650-1,300 last year.

According to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh, hilsa prices have risen by about 33 percent since 2023. Consumer Association data shows hilsa sold for Tk 417/kg in 2010, Tk 789 in 2019, and Tk 3,500 in 2025, as per newspaper reports.

Experts warn that without urgent steps to restore rivers, hilsa may abandon Bangladeshi waters – a blow to both livelihoods and a key part of the nation's identity.

## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

জেলাপ্রশাসকের কার্যালয়

শরীয়তপুর

(নেজারত শাখা)

www.shariatpur.gov.bd

তেলিকম  
সরকারি সেবার তথ্য নিম্ন

তারিখ: ০৫ ভাদ্র ১৪৩২

২০ আগস্ট ২০২৫

### দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

০১. মুক্তগালয় / বিভাগ	জেলাপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়
০২. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান	জেলাপ্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, শরীয়তপুর।
০৩. দরপত্রের বিবরণ	জেলাপ্রশাসকের কার্যালয়ে ও সার্কিট হাউজে স্টেশনারী মালামাল ও ব্যবহার্য দ্রব্যাদি সরবরাহ এবং কাপড় খোলাই।
০৪. তথ্যবলে উচ্চ	রাজ্য তথ্যবল
০৫. ক্ষয় পদ্ধতি	উন্নুক দরপত্র পদ্ধতি।
০৬. প্র্যাকেজের নাম	জেলাপ্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, শরীয়তপুর এবং সার্কিট হাউজে স্টেশনারী মালামাল ও ব্যবহার্য দ্রব্যাদি সরবরাহ এবং কাপড় খোলাই।
০৭. দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের তারিখ	২১ আগস্ট ২০২৫
০৮. দরপত্র সিডিউল বিত্তের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	০৮ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫, তারিখ বিকাল ০৫:০০ টা পর্যন্ত।
০৯. দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	০৯ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫, দুপুর ০১:৩০ টা।
১০. দরপত্র উন্মুক্তরণের তারিখ ও সময়	০

## We must fix the logistical issues

Govt must implement a master plan to address these costly inefficiencies

A poor and costly logistics system has long been a thorn in the side of Bangladeshi businesses. At a recent roundtable organised by this daily, business leaders identified it as a major hurdle to the country's readiness for graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status. They warned that, post-LDC, when preferential trade benefits will end and a high tariff regime will drive up costs, inefficient logistics may further erode our competitiveness.

According to a World Bank official, as much as 16 percent of Bangladesh's GDP is spent on moving goods from factories to customers—well above the global average of 10 percent. Experts argue that the problem lies more with poor coordination and planning than with infrastructure deficits. For example, only four percent of Bangladesh's freight is transported by rail, compared to India's 20 percent. A lack of locomotives and skilled manpower to operate freight trains is commonly cited as a reason for this underutilisation. So why has the railway's freight-carrying operation not been prioritised over the years?

Between 1970 and 2019, the railway's freight transportation fell from 488,000 tonnes per kilometre to 396,000. A Financial Express report notes that since the 1980s, the modal share of road and highway transport for both passengers and goods has increased, while railways have declined and waterways have remained stagnant. However, road transport costs Tk 6 more per tonne per kilometre compared to water transport. Despite this, businesses are still opting for the more expensive mode due to delays and inefficiencies in the cheaper alternatives.

The inefficiencies and underutilisation of our existing sea and river ports compound the logistical challenges. In the last five decades, we have not been able to develop a fully functional alternative to Chittagong port, which often remains congested. Meanwhile, Mongla remains underutilised because of a lack of supporting infrastructure; construction work is still ongoing at Payra even after a decade, and Matarbari is functioning only partially. As a World Bank official recently pointed out, what is lacking in Bangladesh is not planning but execution.

Thankfully, the interim government is preparing a guideline for the next government to eliminate delays and irregularities in project implementation. We also hope that it will form an inter-ministerial panel to address the logistics issues and start implementing the 2024 National Logistics Policy. We agree with experts that the country requires a long-term master plan and a central logistics council—a single authority for coherent policy execution. An integrated transport ecosystem covering roads, rail, waterways, aviation, ports, and digital networks is a must to handle the higher volume of trade and retain our competitive advantage, whether we graduate out of LDC in 2026 or not.

This means not only investing in infrastructure development but also enhancing capacity through manpower development and training. At the same time, relevant laws should be updated to welcome private investment—under government oversight—in sectors such as the railway and waterways to reduce logistics costs and increase efficiency.

## Let's not ignore the risk of influenza

Public awareness, vaccination can check its spread

We are quite concerned about the increasing number of influenza cases this year, with both children and adults falling ill to the virus. According to a joint surveillance study by the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) and icddr,b, July saw 2.75 times more influenza cases than the same month last year. The study revealed that out of 2,455 patients who visited 19 designated hospitals with symptoms such as fever, cold, and body aches, 1,453 were diagnosed with influenza. The positivity rate was 21.5 percent in July last year, and 33.4 percent the year before—both far below this year's 59.2 percent. This is the highest rate recorded since influenza surveillance began in the country in 2007. Although health experts expect the caseload to come down from October onwards, we have to be prepared to deal with any possibility.

According to the World Health Organization, seasonal influenza is an acute respiratory infection that spreads easily through droplets when people cough or sneeze. While medication is generally unnecessary, those from vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and those with comorbidities, should seek medical attention, since the illness can significantly weaken the immune system. Health experts have advised wearing masks, avoiding gatherings, and maintaining hygiene to curb the spread. But with the presence of multiple viral diseases during this year—including dengue, chikungunya, and COVID—people suffering from high fever and severe cough are straining hospitals fearing the worst. Due to this, diagnosis and treatment have also become more complicated, burdening our hospitals.

We, therefore, urge the authorities to take appropriate measures to prevent further spread of influenza. Since the infection rate is significantly higher this year compared to previous years, it must be addressed with greater efficiency. People, especially those experiencing cold and cough symptoms, should wear masks, avoid crowded places, and adhere to hygiene protocols to minimise transmission. For this, raising public awareness through campaigns and media advertisements is essential. It is also important to educate the public about influenza symptoms and care, as dengue, chikungunya, and COVID all can have similar symptoms. Typically, Bangladesh experiences two major flu seasons: March-April and August-September. Therefore, individuals should be encouraged to take the influenza vaccine during February-March, ahead of the seasonal surge. However, as the vaccine remains costly for many, health authorities must explore ways to make it more affordable for the general population.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Dhaka grenade attack

On this day in 2004, a grenade attack took place at a rally organised by the Awami League on Bangabandhu Avenue in Dhaka, killing 24, including senior party leader Ivy Rahman, and injuring about 300.

# EDITORIAL

## How to make the BB autonomy ordinance effective



### OPEN SKY

Dr Birupaksha Paul  
is professor of economics at the State University of New York in Cortland, US.

### BIRUPAKSHA PAUL

While most reform initiatives under consideration by the interim government have achieved little progress or, at best, a fragile consensus, its banking reforms have gathered ample momentum among economists and civil society. The most notable among them is the long overdue Bangladesh Bank Ordinance (Amendment), 2025, which is designed to award long-coveted autonomy to the central bank. The ordinance seems good enough to lend off the finance ministry should it try, as it did during the Awami League regime, to use the Bangladesh Bank (BB) as its money-printing press in the name of deficit financing. If enacted, the amendment can bring a revolutionary change over the Bangladesh Bank Order (1972), which has fallen behind the art of modern-day central banking.

The main points of the proposed ordinance include: a) the governor's status which is to be equivalent to that of a minister; b) a search committee which will propose three names for the governor's post; c) the prime minister's advice to the president for the governor's appointment; d) parliamentary approval for the appointment and removal of the governor; e) exclusion of any government bureaucrats from the BB board; f) the governor and deputies to be sworn in by the chief justice; and g) the governor's tenure which is to be increased to six years from four.

While most of them reflect the necessities of modern-day central banking, some of them require corrections so that the governor's appointment remains fair and authentic to uphold the central bank's institutional integrity. The ordinance must clarify how the six-member search committee, which will propose three names for the governor's post, should be formed. The committee members must possess adequate expertise, banking-related knowledge, and ample reputation for wisdom to ensure fairness.

It is likely that a highly politicised committee will eventually choose the names suggested by the prime minister, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, the formation of the search committee is immensely crucial, as it would accept nominations or applications for the governor's position. The governor candidates must be known to society for their

scholarly contribution in the fields of economics, finance, banking, and macro policymaking. The search committee must be transparent in its recruitment guidelines and sequential decision-making in the selection process.

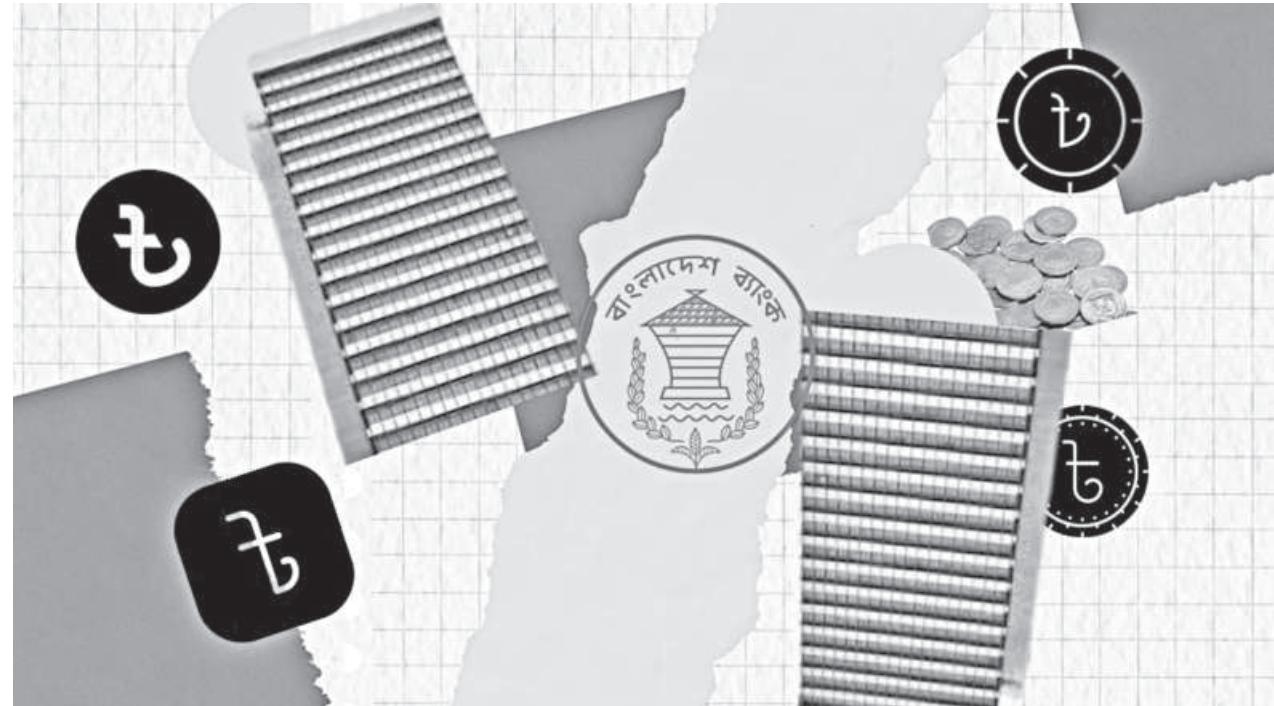
Next, these three names should go to parliament for open discussion

internally through promotion and sometimes favouritism. They are in-house professionals who are supposed to support the governor. Deputies would never go through the same selection process a governor would be required to.

The initial draft-makers seem to have cultivated bias from the central bank's point of interest without understanding the ground reality in a country where both fiscal and monetary policies must work in tandem. Hence, ignoring the political government and the bureaucratic apparatus quite enthusiastically has turned impractical. The task of forming the BB board must involve other government officials to make the central bank's policy measures work fruitfully. As the draft ordinance

expansion, investment promotion, reserves maintenance, employment maximisation, and ensuring macro stability.

The provision for the BB governor's removal should be equally important. The finance adviser supported BB's autonomy but insisted that security and accountability must be ascertained. Many central bank governors are fired when inflation breaks an upper ceiling set for their respective economies. The BB governor must use tools like the policy and exchange rates to ensure a healthy level of reserves and sound macro stability that can attract foreign investors. Hence, there should be another section in the documentation that includes clear guidelines for measuring



VISUAL: ALIZA RAHMAN

among the lawmakers. US Congress members engage in open debate about the potential Fed chair's background and credentials. After debate, the parliament should determine the order of its preference from one to three and give the list to the prime minister, who can select only two names from them and then hand over the shortlist to the president for the final selection. Here, judgement is expected to be invoked at every stage, and every entity has a role to play rather than being used like a rubber stamp. This level of rigour and integrity is required to select a central bank guru who will form a parallel government alongside the political regime.

The governor, being a constitutional position, is to be sworn in by the chief justice under the new ordinance. But why the deputies, too? Deputy governors are appointed

says, the BB board of directors would comprise the governor, two deputy governors nominated by the governor, and eight other directors appointed by the government from a list submitted by the governor. This sounds like a one-man show by the governor. To be fair, there should be two lists: one from the governor and the other from the search committee. The government can choose from both lists to maintain a balance.

In addition, the inclusion of the finance secretary, NBR chair, BIDA chair, and BSEC chair is imperative since all of them are key policymakers for the economy. The success of the Bangladesh Bank's policymaking hinges on deep coordination with these institutions. BIDA, NBR, BSEC, and the finance ministry are all integral parts of the central bank's prime responsibilities involving inflation control, deposit mobilisation, credit

accountability. Authority without accountability breeds malpractice and corruption.

There are three basic changes that demand consideration. First, monetary policy should be presented at parliament, just like the budget. The coverage of monetary policy in GDP is no less than that of the annual budget. Second, the proposed ordinance can be named as the Bangladesh Bank Autonomy Act, which clarifies the objective and justifies the move. Third, the time has come to think about changing the name of our central bank. Simply the "Bangladesh Bank" sometimes sounds like a private or public commercial bank, particularly overseas. Rather, the "Bangladesh Central Bank" sounds more appropriate to reflect its great stature as the supreme financial commander and the reserve bank of the country.

## When climate change becomes your doctor's problem too



Barrister Noshin Nawal  
is a columnist for The Daily Star. She can be reached at [nawalnoshin@gmail.com](mailto:nawalnoshin@gmail.com).

### NOSHIN NAWAL

Climate change used to be that thing your cousin from abroad mentioned while nibbling gluten-free brownies. Now? It's here. It's in your armpits, your nosebleeds, your prescriptions, your health records, and your mum's dizzy spells. And it's barging into our hospitals—uninvited, unfiltered and, naturally, unfunded.

Dhaka has just endured one of the worst heatwaves in recorded history. Except we didn't really endure it; we sweated, we wheezed, we

staggered around like dazed kebabs in an open tandoor. The government, ever efficient, issued guidelines, "Stay indoors," as if we all had the luxury of lounging in centrally air-conditioned drawing rooms, sipping electrolyte water and waiting for foreign remittance. Most of us were marinating in rooftop heat, trapped in tin sheds, or passing out on public buses that felt like mobile saunas with steering wheels.

Meanwhile, dengue has returned with the punctuality of a Shakib Khan film on Eid. Mosquitoes are thriving in places they never used to—hello, climate change—and bringing the gift of viral fever to all. In 2023, over 1,700 people lost their lives suffering from dengue, not because they didn't use mosquito nets, but because our health system failed to contain the disease.

Coastal areas are now grappling with rising salinity, which is causing high blood pressure, kidney disease, and complicated pregnancies among the locals. In Satkhira, women are developing urinary tract infections (UTIs) simply because the water

they're using consists of elements that are unsafe for their hygiene. But sure, let's keep pretending climate change is just about "weather" and not the fact that it's literally pickling people.

Rural clinics, meanwhile, are collapsing under climate-linked disasters. Cyclones destroy infrastructure. Floods cut off access. There's one community clinic in a char area with no electricity, no medicine and no doctor. Still, climate change is treated like a side hustle in our health planning. Most district health strategies don't mention it. No one's training doctors to identify or respond to climate-related illnesses. There's no fund going into climate-proofing hospitals. And the best we've got are donor-funded pilot projects that disappear faster than ORS sachets in a paediatric ward.

But wait, there's more: the healthcare system is not just the victim. It's part of the problem too. Hospitals running on diesel generators, air conditioners from the '90s, and supply chains that emit enough carbon to make a Thanos snap look gentle. Medical waste—needles, bandages, expired medicines—ends up in rivers, lakes, and, if you're lucky, your nearest beel.

Now let's talk mental health—or the lack of it. Eco-anxiety isn't just some Western indulgence. It's what happens when Bangladeshi youth are told to study hard and dream big, only to see their future swallowed by floodwater or smog. One day it's their

exam results, the next day it's their school collapsing in a landslide. How are they supposed to function when climate-induced trauma is now a graduation requirement?

And let's not forget the healthcare workers. Expected to be Florence Nightingale, Bear Grylls and Dr House all rolled into one, while working 12-hour shifts in unbearable heat without PPE, training or even a working fridge to keep insulin cool. When a system burns out its staff as quickly as its diesel, you know the emergency isn't coming—it's already here.

The solution? No, it's not more awareness campaigns with "climate-smart" slogans and forced group photos. It's hard cash and hard reform. It means redesigning hospitals to withstand floods and heatwaves. It means training healthcare workers on climate-linked illnesses. It means integrating climate data into epidemic forecasting. It means treating climate not as a buzzword, but as the underlying diagnosis behind half our public health crises.

Climate change is no longer creeping in—it's taking your blood pressure, biting your ankles, and casually suggesting an ICU admission. And if we don't act now, your next trip to the hospital won't be for treatment. It'll be for shelter.

So yes, climate change is your doctor's problem now. And if our leaders don't start treating it like one, they'll soon need a different kind of prescription: one for a collective collapse.

# The weight of counterfactuals in Bangladesh's politics

Dr Faridul Alam  
is a retired academic and writes from New York City, US.

FARIDUL ALAM

*"Cleopatra's nose, had it been shorter, the whole face of the world would have been changed."*

—Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* (1670)

History is never merely a record of what happened; it is also haunted by what might have happened otherwise. This is the realm of the counterfactual: thinking about history through "what if" scenarios. Pascal's famous remark about Cleopatra's nose underscores the fragility of events and the disproportionate consequences of contingencies. The point is not the physical feature itself but the insight it offers: the past was never predetermined, and history could easily have taken different turns.

For Bangladesh, the July uprising in 2024 that ousted Sheikh Hasina offers a reminder of this fragility. What if the uprising had failed? Authoritarianism might still be entrenched, dissent muted, and cronyism unchecked. That it did not fail suggests how even the most ossified systems can suddenly give way—how history always contains the seeds of the unexpected. Counterfactual thinking sharpens this awareness: democracy nearly materialised at different moments before, and thus remains possible now.

Unlike the deterministic chaos theory in the natural sciences, which studies how tiny differences in initial conditions produce unpredictable outcomes within strictly deterministic systems, counterfactuals are interpretive tools. Chaos theory uncovers hidden order within randomness; counterfactual thinking insists that history has no inevitability—only paths chosen and paths foreclosed. It foregrounds human agency, political choices, and the interplay of structure and contingency. By asking "what might have been," we illuminate the fragility and openness of political life.

Counterfactuals do not rewrite history. Rather, they show that outcomes were shaped by choices, accidents, and circumstances that could have gone another way. In fragile

democracies like Bangladesh, counterfactuals often expose missed opportunities and compel us to reflect on the stakes of decision-making.

## Why counterfactuals matter

Counterfactuals sharpen political analysis in two ways. First, they clarify causality: asking "What if X had not occurred?" highlights why X mattered and how it shaped subsequent developments. Second, they reveal the stakes of choices: what might have been gained or lost. In Bangladesh, where democracy remains precarious, counterfactuals remind us that crises are not inevitable. They are produced by decisions, betrayals, and failures of imagination. Thinking counterfactually insists that things could have been otherwise, and that democratic renewal remains thinkable precisely because it almost materialised before.

## What if the Mujib-Zia assassinations hadn't happened?

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's assassination in August 1975 was the original trauma of independent Bangladesh. It unleashed coups and counter-coups that derailed the democratic promise of 1971. Had Mujib lived, would Bangladesh have matured into a functioning democracy, or would his centralising tendencies—as epitomised by BAKSAL—have hardened into autocracy? His charisma and legitimacy might have stabilised the nation, yet his concentration of power risked suffocating pluralism.

The counterfactual exposes a tragic paradox: the architect of liberation may have inadvertently laid the foundation for authoritarianism. Could Mujib have recalibrated BAKSAL towards inclusivity, decentralising authority to accommodate diverse voices? Or was the trajectory already fixed towards centralisation? Even leaders with immense legitimacy are constrained by structural and personal tendencies that can distort political outcomes.

Ziaur Rahman's assassination in 1981

foreclosed the possibility of a gradual evolution towards stability. He sought to institutionalise pluralism through grassroots local government and by expanding political space beyond Awami League. Had he survived, might Bangladesh have developed a sturdier democratic framework, or would reliance on military patronage have eroded civilian supremacy? His reforms were ambitious but tethered to fragile compromises, including reintegrating actors who had opposed the Liberation War.

The counterfactual reveals Zia's precarious balance—expanding pluralism while remaining dependent on military guardianship. His survival might have steered Bangladesh towards democratisation, but also risked entrenching military oversight.

civilian ambition and military tutelage. What might have stabilised democracy under one scenario could equally have entrenched authoritarianism under another. These "roads not taken" form a polyphonic counterfactual narrative in which Bangladesh's path is contingent, contested, and never predetermined.

## Echoes of missed possibilities

Later turning points echo these early ruptures:

**1990:** What if the mass uprising had failed to topple Ershad? Prolonged military rule might have replaced democratic restoration.

**2007 08:** What if the caretaker government had institutionalised itself? Military-backed technocracy might have replaced democracy in the name of reform.

**2014:** What if the boycotted election had

and sustain hope. Citizens often articulate grievances in counterfactual terms, "Things could have been different if only..." Opposition parties mobilise around such claims, arguing that elections were stolen or reforms betrayed. Even authoritarian regimes weaponise counterfactuals, warning that without their grip, chaos would ensue.

In Bangladesh, the counterfactual plays a double role: both lament for missed opportunities and horizon of possibility. It reminds us that setbacks were contingent, not inevitable, and that renewal remains possible, precisely because it once almost was. To dwell on counterfactuals is not nostalgia but vigilance, the awareness that alternative futures remain open, demanding action in the present.

## The limits of counterfactuals

Yet, counterfactuals carry risks. They can romanticise paths that may not have led to better outcomes. They can become partisan weapons, each side claiming vindication if only events turned differently. Worst of all, obsession with "what might have been" can paralyse action, trapping politics in shadows rather than clarifying "what must be done now."

Counterfactuals must serve as mirrors, not escapes: sharpening our understanding of how choices matter without substituting for deliberate action.

Bangladesh's politics has been shaped almost as much by what did not happen as by what did:



**'Bangladesh's politics has been shaped almost as much by what did not happen as by what did.'**

FILE PHOTO: STAR

Viewed contrapuntally, the counterfactuals of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Ziaur Rahman reveal a layered tension in Bangladesh's early trajectory. Mujib's centralisation promised decisive governance but risked suppressing pluralism, while Zia's decentralisation expanded political space yet relied on the military. Imagining Mujib's survival raises the question of authoritarian consolidation versus inclusivity; imagining Zia's survival highlights the paradox of democratisation from above.

Taken together, these counterfactuals show that Bangladesh's fragility was not merely the result of assassinations but rooted in deeper contradictions: oscillation between centralisation and pluralisation,

been participatory? One party dominance and democratic decay might have been avoided.

**2024:** What if the July uprising had failed? Bangladesh might still be mired in authoritarianism, dissent stifled and cronyism unchecked.

Viewed together, these counterfactuals extend the shadow of the 1975 and 1981 assassinations. The oscillation between democratic aspiration and authoritarian relapse has persisted, as if the nation remains trapped in cycles set in motion by its early ruptures.

**Counterfactuals as political imagination**  
Counterfactuals are not mere intellectual games; they fuel protest, shape narratives,

"The heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of," Pascal wrote. Counterfactuals cannot change the past, but they remind us that history was never inevitable and that the future remains open.

In a country where democracy still hangs in the balance, counterfactuals serve as both lens and compass, showing that democracy nearly

emerged more than once, and may yet emerge if imagination is joined with action.

# Will Trump's fast-track diplomacy win him a Nobel?



Syed Raiyan Amir  
is senior research associate at The KRF Center for  
Bangladesh and Global Affairs (CBGA). He can be  
reached at raiyanbqa@gmail.com

SYED RAIYAN AMIR

The Nobel Peace Prize has a history of turning political moments into global milestones. For US presidents, the list is short: Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, Woodrow Wilson in 1919, Jimmy Carter in 2002, and Barack Obama in 2009. Each recognition came with a sense that something tangible had shifted—either a war had ended, or a new framework for peace had been set in motion. The committee usually looks for results that feel bigger than the person being awarded.

Donald Trump, if his own remarks are any guide, would not mind seeing his name added. He has often said he wants to "surpass Obama" and likes presenting himself as a dealmaker who can stop wars faster than anyone else. The recent meeting with Vladimir Putin in Anchorage, Alaska, was staged as one of those opportunities. The optics were dramatic: Putin, welcomed with red carpet treatment on US soil for the first time since the start of the Ukraine War in 2022; Trump, smiling and shaking hands as if he was already halfway to a peace deal.

But the outcome was thinner than the build-up. After three hours behind closed doors, the two men appeared together and spoke in vague terms about "progress." There was no ceasefire, no concrete breakthrough. Trump repeated his familiar line—"no deal until there's a deal"—and promised to brief NATO leaders and Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelensky. Putin, more upbeat, called the meeting "long overdue" and framed it as the beginning of a path to peace, but he offered nothing indicating he was ready to scale back the war.

For Putin, just showing up in Alaska was a win. He got an image makeover: a statesman once again welcomed on Western soil, not a pariah boxed out of summits. The handshakes and warm words cost

him nothing, and he left without conceding territory or security guarantees. For Trump, the meeting gave a platform to present himself as the only American leader capable of bringing Russia to the table. He later told Fox News that Zelensky "has to make a deal," framing Ukraine's choices as the hinge on which peace will turn.

That bluntness is classic Trump.



FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

**For Trump, the recent meeting in Alaska is another chance to frame himself as a peacemaker, whereas for Putin, it is proof he is no longer isolated.**

He likes the big reveal, the fast track, the headline-grabbing moment. His style echoes the old superpower summits, when Washington and Moscow carved out spheres of influence over smaller countries. The difference now is that Ukraine is not a pawn but a sovereign state, fighting for survival, and Europe expects to be consulted at every step. Bargaining "over their heads" risks undercutting allies who would be critical in enforcing any settlement.

The Alaska talks underline both the appeal and the risk of Trump's approach. His defenders say his unpredictability keeps rivals off balance, and sometimes disruption can break the deadlock. The

counterargument is just as strong: rushed deals rarely last. A ceasefire slapped together in a day could unravel within months, especially with deep territorial disputes and Europe's security architecture at stake. Roosevelt's peace deal between Russia and Japan held for nearly a decade; Trump's would need to survive its first year without collapsing.

There's also the question of buy-in. NATO allies want ironclad guarantees that Ukraine's sovereignty won't be traded away. European leaders, after Trump's calls, praised his effort but stressed that international borders "cannot be changed by force." That line was less about Putin and more about warning Trump not to accept a land swap that Kyiv itself rejects. Zelensky, for his part, welcomed the idea of a trilateral meeting with the US and Russia but reminded everyone that Europe must be involved at every stage.

The Nobel committee tends to reward not just boldness but durability. Roosevelt had a treaty. Wilson had the League of Nations. Carter had Camp David, sustained with US support for decades. Obama's prize was more aspirational, but it reflected a belief in a moral shift in US diplomacy. Trump's bid, by contrast, rests on his ability to turn flash into something that endures—no easy task when the core conflict shows little sign of winding down.

Still, the Alaska summit showed why Trump's name keeps popping up in these conversations. He creates high-visibility turning points, even if they end without a deal. He projects confidence that he, alone, can cut through the fog of war. For his supporters, that willingness to try, and to shake hands with adversaries others would not touch, is itself a step towards peace. For critics, it is theatre that allows Putin to buy time while the war grinds on.

When the two men wrapped up their remarks in Anchorage, Putin quipped, "Next time, in Moscow." Trump smiled and didn't rule it out. The line captured the unsettled nature of the moment: nothing resolved, everything still possible, and both leaders walking away with something to claim. For Trump, it is

another chance to frame himself as a peacemaker. For Putin, it is proof he is no longer isolated. For Ukraine, the war rages on, waiting to see if Trump's fast-track diplomacy is substance or

just another show.

Whether Trump's approach can translate vague progress into a lasting framework for peace remains uncertain, but the possibility keeps his

name in the conversation for Oslo. The question lingers like an unfinished play: Nobel or not Nobel—that is the riddle Trump seems determined to keep alive.

## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

অধ্যক্ষের কার্যালয়

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স

ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

[ptc@fireservice.gov.bd](mailto:ptc@fireservice.gov.bd)

তারিখ: ০৫/০৫/১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ  
২০/০৮/২০২৫ খ্রি।

## গাছ বিক্রয়ের উন্মুক্ত নিলাম দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

স্মারক নং- ৫৮.০৩.০০০০.০০২.১৬.০১৩.২৫-১২৬

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি, মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল ডিফেন্স ট্রেনিং কম্পেন্সি মিরপুর, ঢাকা।

ফায়ার সার

## Arnob teases renewal of Coke Studio Bangla

"Ready for a bet?" writes Shayan Chowdhury Arnob from his social handle, posting a photo where he is sitting on his piano chair with a glance that shows a bottle of Coke.

A full-on hint at the return of Coke Studio. He further wrote, "When will the next song of Coke Studio be released, the day after tomorrow, or a day later, or today?" The message directly indicates that a renewal of the show is arriving soon.

With the release of *Obak Bhalobasha*, the third season of the popular show ceased to exist. However, after a long wait, Arnob himself announced the show's return.



SHARMIN JOYA

Small-screen actress Jannatul Sumaiya Heme is spending time with her family in Canada, where she received an unpleasant surprise that left her annoyed and prompted her to post on social media.

On August 17, the actress posted on her Facebook account, tagging record and production label Laser Vision, to protest that the company's verified Facebook page had used her picture with irrelevant and misleading captions. She clarified that she never used such dialogue in any of her projects.

The actress spoke to The Daily Star from Montreal. "I worked with the company a few years ago. They are a reputable and well-known organisation. Usually, they use these photo cards using a caption from the project for their promotions. However, some of my friends and acquaintances forwarded me those photocards carrying highly objectionable captions, which I never delivered as dialogues in any of my projects. I didn't find those dialogues funny, but they seemed cheap to me! It came as a shock to me that they did not just use my pictures,



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

but some of the other renowned actresses as well."

She also said that people might believe these misleading posts, which is why she protested and informed the audience regarding this matter. The company, however, later apologised for its actions and described it as an

"unintentional error". The actress further said that she is grateful to the company for acknowledging their mistake and correcting it immediately.

Heme pointed out that after the monetisation of photos was introduced recently on social media, many are grabbing the chance to make a questionable business out of this.

Meanwhile, Heme added that she has been feeling extremely disturbed by the media's role lately. She shared a recent incident that occurred during the Milestone tragedy. "A few renowned media portals ran headlines claiming I stated support of the pilot, which is absolutely untrue. And during that time, I was flying, I was on the plane. I made a post expressing my grief for the students and their parents. Later, when I contacted them to ask where they found such a statement from me, they couldn't provide an answer. I had to clarify myself through a post that I never shared any such statements with any media. Such activities by the media are highly questionable, and I feel extremely sad that, without even attempting to reach out to me, they create vague news, much of which is often copied from other portals."

## Shobdo Theatre to stage 'Socrates' in Jessore



Theatre troupe Shobdo Theatre (Shobdo Natyacharcha Kendra) is set to present the third performance of its acclaimed play *Socrates* on Friday (August 22), at 7:30pm at

the Jessore District Shilpkala Academy.

The play, written by Masoud Zaman and directed by Arun Majumder, features an ensemble cast bringing the philosophical drama to life.

Shahidur Rahman stars as Archon, Rifat Mahmud as Melitas, Ibrahim Khalil as Enitas, and Sohel Rana as Plato.

Tickets, priced at Tk 100, are available at New Dhaka Bostraloy, Best Choice, and the District Shilpkala Academy in Jessore.

## Tanvir Mokammel to receive Matua Ratna honour

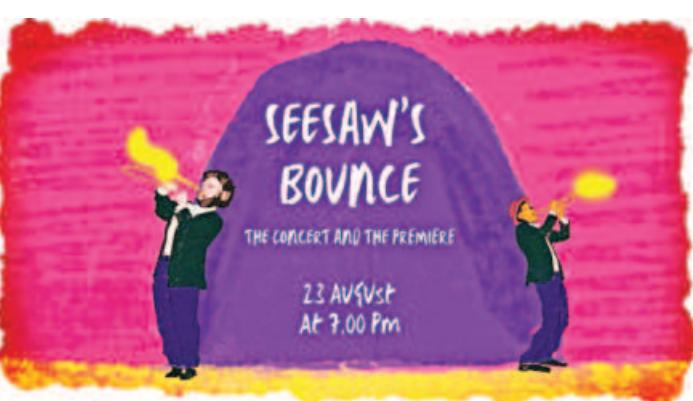


Acclaimed Filmmaker Tanvir Mokammel is set to receive the Matua Ratna Shommonana 2025 for his documentary film *Matua Mangal*.

He will be presented the award on Saturday, August 31, at the Nilpadma Auditorium in West Bengal, under the initiative of the All-India Matua Manganga.

*Matua Mangal* portrays the lives of the people of Matua along with the philosophical aspects of their faith. The documentary premiered on July 12 at the Liberation War Museum auditorium in Agargaon, Dhaka, and was later released on Kino-Eye Films' YouTube channel.

The film explores nearly 200 years of Matua history, their religious and spiritual beliefs, lifestyle, socio-economic context, as well as their present struggles and future possibilities. It also features interviews with community leaders as well as Matua men and women.



## WHAT'S THE HAPS?

JAZZ CONCERT  
'Seesaw's Bounce'

The Seesaw Collective will take the stage at Alliance Française de Dhaka this Saturday for an evening of vibrant rhythms. The event titled *Seesaw's Bounce* will also premiere their latest single with Rupakalpa Chowdhury and an animated video by Mubtasim Alvee.

Joining them are Daruchini b9th's swing trio, along with guest artists Mohaimin Karim and Hasin Aryan, making it a night of outstanding musical collaborations.

Date: Saturday | August 23

Time: 7pm onwards

Venue: Alliance Française de Dhaka, Dhanmondi

## NEWS

## Calls to extend reform timeline

FROM PAGE 12  
beyond rhetoric."

He criticised what he called a "patron-client" relationship between India and Bangladeshi parties, especially the Awami League. This dynamic, he said, shapes government behaviour.

He also argued that Bangladesh's diplomacy is weakened by poor preparation compared to Indian counterparts.

Saiful called for "careful, tactful diplomacy" rooted in national interest, both to manage relations with India and to support inclusive, democratic politics at home.

On domestic politics, he opposed calls to ban major parties, including the Awami League.

Proscribing the Awami League or other large parties is not practical and would be counterproductive. Political challenges must be addressed through organised, ideological and social means. Accountability for individual crimes is necessary, but banning parties with social bases can backfire."

He expressed concerns over the rise of fundamentalist forces, blaming the previous government's double standards for enabling them.

"While Awami League came to power

on an anti-fundamentalist platform, it is now accused of indirectly supporting and sheltering such groups. They are operating openly in the capital. This has undermined democracy, women's rights and social equality."

He warned of growing violence against women and shrinking safe spaces, describing the trend as "Taliban-like behaviour".

However, he quickly added that Bangladesh is unlikely to become a Taliban state, as the public broadly rejects extremism.

Saiful also criticised the interim government's failure to ensure public safety. "The lives of ordinary people, especially women and marginalised groups, are increasingly insecure."

On youth politics, he said the ethical and moral foundations that once inspired young activists are eroding.

He criticised the newly formed National Citizen Party, which had initially raised hopes but is now plagued by allegations, ideological confusion and declining support. "These trends threaten to stifle future political development."

Although there have been no formal talks with BNP, Saiful acknowledged that they have joined joint movements over the past two years. "BNP has said it wants to form a government with its movement allies, but we have not formally responded."

About possible coordination with BNP, he said, "The basis for understanding is there. We will see how discussions evolve."

He emphasised that parties involved in the movement against the previous regime should be represented in the next parliament.

"Whether through a front, alliance or understanding – these are undecided. But broadly, we want to see that movement represented."

its traditional constituencies as well as new areas where it has gained presence in the past five years.

"We are focusing on outreach, coordination and building organisational capacity. The final decision on seats is pending."

He noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible. "We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gonotronto Mancha has not yet finalised electoral strategy, discussions remain possible.

"We are open to further talks. Given the challenges before the polls, some understanding may help."

He also noted that while Gon

# NEWS

## Focus on regional dev to ease Dhaka's

FROM PAGE 3

She pointed out that 41 wards lack playgrounds, while chemical warehouses operate in residential zones and earthquake preparedness is absent.

Citing Bangladesh Institute of Planners data, she noted that Dhaka's green spaces have shrunk from 22 percent to 9 percent over the last 28 years.

Journalist MA Aziz warned that a 6.5 magnitude earthquake could cause 75 percent of Dhaka's buildings to collapse. He said illegal occupation of canals, lakes, waterbodies, and playgrounds has made the city dysfunctional.

Ruhin Hossain Prince, general secretary of the Communist Party

of Bangladesh, said, "Without employment, education, healthcare, and environmental spaces across the country, sustainable solutions will not be possible."

Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Shihab Uddin Khan said, "Except in the diplomatic zone and a few posh neighbourhoods, Dhaka has no proper footpaths. Our ecosystem has collapsed, and regulatory laws are violated everywhere."

Former NBR chairman Dr Muhammad Abdul Mazid said three "Cs" are vital for saving Dhaka -- "Consistency in applying laws, coordination among agencies, and compliance with regulations without wasteful demolitions."

Moderating the event,

CGS President Zillur Rahman said, "For years, we have been promised visions of a smart city, but today, DAP (Detailed Area Plan) has become a new form of urban terror. Industries are being established in residential areas, and educational institutions are being built without proper planning. Policymakers seem to be mocking citizens with their approach to DAP."

Presenting the keynote paper, Parvez Karim Abbasi, executive director of CGS, said Dhaka is now the world's fourth most populous city. Despite contributing 8 percent to GDP, the real estate sector faces a demand-supply gap, rising costs, and restrictive regulations, he said.

Abbasi criticised the DAP, particularly its Floor Area Ratio rules, for raising housing costs and pushing urban sprawl.

"High FAR, when combined with transit-oriented development, mixed-use planning, and green building practices, can ensure compact, affordable, and sustainable cities," he said.

Abdur Razzaque, vice president (finance) of REHAB, said the DAP should serve as a unified framework for all citizens.

"At present, people are deprived of basic necessities. Whenever someone goes to Rajuk for approval or clearance, corruption becomes a barrier -- without money, no work moves forward," he said.

## Justice still

FROM PAGE 3

of expression, the restoration of their rights, and the establishment of an impartial judicial system. It is imperative that we work together to realise these goals."

Demanding justice for uprisings victims, Sabir Ahmed Lyon, a former student, said, "Just as people united for a discrimination-free Bangladesh, we must continue to work collectively to build a society founded on equality and justice."

PIB Director General Faruk Wasif said, "After the July uprising, due to a lack of proper planning, there is widespread disappointment. Public trust in this government has declined because of a mentality of wanting immediate results."

Presiding over the dialogue, BIP President Prof Adil Muhammad Khan said, "Even after half a century of independence, equality, human dignity, and social justice have not been fully realised. The 2024 mass movement opened doors to new possibilities, and it is crucial to continue working towards a discrimination-free and well-planned Bangladesh."

## 78 retired

FROM PAGE 4

Muhammad Yunus yesterday.

The Press Wing said the committee has recommended retrospective promotions for a total of 78 officers -- 12 to Grade-1 (secretary status), 32 to Grade-2, and 34 to Grade-3. Among them, six officers were recommended for promotion by three grades, 17 officers by two grades, and 55 officers by one grade.

Names of the officers were not disclosed.

It also said, "The committee did not recommend promotions for 132 officers."

These details were not shared with the media.

## Corruption

FROM PAGE 4

people's money couldn't be brought to book," he said, adding that vital state structures remain under foreign control.

"Unless action is taken against these profiteers, the energy sector will not be free from corruption," he added.

Energy adviser of CAB Prof M Shamsul Alam said they have filed at least 15 cases before the High Court to address injustices in the energy sector. "Despite powerful vested interests, we are continuing our efforts to hold the sector accountable," he said.

Mohammad Wahid Hossain, chairman of the Bangladesh Energy and Power Research Council, said although the government provides subsidies to ensure energy rights for all, they often fail to reach the poor and marginalised. Instead, opportunists capture the benefits.

CAB treasurer Prof Manjur-e-Khoda Torofdar chaired the discussion, while students from different departments of Dhaka University shared their thoughts on energy justice.

## Panel to probe controversial

FROM PAGE 3

The inquiry committee will have to submit its report with opinions within seven working days.

In a statement, Mohammad Shahriar Siddiqui, director and main spokesperson of Bangladesh Bank, said, "If the allegations are proven on the basis of the investigation report, legal action will be taken against him."

In the meantime, in the interest of the investigation, the government has directed the BFIU chief to remain on leave, according to the BB statement.

On Tuesday, a section of Bangladesh Bank officials and employees submitted a memorandum to the governor. The memorandum stated that multiple objectionable videos of Shahinul circulating

on social media have severely damaged the image of the state and the institution.

Following the fall of the Awami League-led government, former BFIU chief Md Masud Biswas was forced to resign on August 8 last year amid protests from central bank officials.

The post remained vacant for a long time before Shahinul was appointed in January this year.

## Honouring the stellar women

FROM PAGE 3

was presented with this honour in the "Healthcare" category for her reconstructive work and research in the field of orthopaedic surgery.

In the latest season, several new award categories were introduced, reflecting the Stellar Women initiative's commitment to extending recognition each year and ensuring that deserving women from all

underrepresented sectors receive the spotlight they and their work deserve but are often denied.

This initiative also aims to build bridges between the past and present winners and participants, allowing them to use this expansive network to their advantage.

Nominations are still open across two categories, including "Environment" and "Agriculture". If you or

somebody you know deserves the recognition in either of these categories, you can register online for your chance at becoming the next Stellar Woman.

The event was attended by bti Managing Director FR Khan, Digital Growth Editor at The Daily Star Abdul Kalam Azad, and Executive Director of Brand and Communication Management at bti Aysa Siddiqua.

## Everything gone in blink

FROM PAGE 3

When this correspondent visited the spot around 4:00pm, more than 50 homes had already been reduced to ashes. Families, left with nothing, were seen running around in despair.

Jahan Begum said she, her husband, her son and daughter-in-law, and her daughter Rina -- six family members in total -- had been living in the slum for the past two years.

"Just last month, we bought a TV and fridge with our savings. Now everything is gone. I was most worried about my disabled daughter, but she managed to crawl out and survive -- that's the biggest relief," she said.

Jahan added that they rented a room from a man named Ali Hossain, who owns 72 shanties in the slum,

each housing one family. Besides him, homes owned by Parveen and another landlord are also rented out to slum dwellers.

At the time of the fire, Parveen's tenants -- Rani Khatun and her mother Mahamuda Khatun -- were at work in a garment factory. Rushing back after hearing the news, they found all their belongings destroyed.

"At least 50 shanties, including mine, have been burnt down. Everything was gone in the blink of an eye. In the afternoon, most people were away at work, only children and elderly people were in the slum," Rani told The Daily Star.

"Everyone was busy rescuing the children and elderly, so there was no way to save our belongings," she added.

The cause of the fire could not be confirmed immediately.

Contacted, Mohammad Ali, the on-duty officer at the fire service, said, "Locals first tried to douse the fire with water. It broke out around 2:30pm. Because of traffic, three units of the fire service reached the spot around 3:00pm."

"The fire trucks couldn't enter the slum, but by 3:18pm the blaze was under control. It took another hour, until 4:30pm, to completely extinguish it," he said.

Later, around 6:00pm, Tejgaon Fire Service's Senior Station Officer Nazimuddin Sarkar said, "Primary investigation suggests the fire started from a gas cylinder in a kitchen. We estimate that around 70 shanties have been burnt."

## Women, girls bear the brunt

FROM PAGE 3

workshop organised by Plan International Bangladesh at a city hotel yesterday.

Unsafe drinking water remains a major concern, with 72 percent of households depending on saline-contaminated sources. Women and girls, in particular, bear the burden of long and unsafe journeys to collect water, the study said.

Sanitation facilities are also inadequate, with only 24.8 percent of households having access to improved facilities, further complicating menstrual hygiene management during emergencies.

Girls' education is being disrupted, as many are forced to spend hours fetching water or struggle with a lack of menstrual hygiene support, affecting their future opportunities.

Livelihoods in the region are under severe strain, with over 80 percent of households reporting income losses due to crop failure, aquaculture damage, and limited job opportunities. With scarce local employment, many young people are being forced into risky migration

to urban areas.

The study recommended several measures, including ensuring emergency-ready sexual and reproductive health services, training health workers and youth volunteers, establishing safe spaces for girls and women, and integrating menstrual health into school disaster-preparedness plans.

It also advised expanding rainwater harvesting, supporting women-led desalination projects, forming gender-balanced water user groups, and providing affordable reusable sanitary products through school-based social enterprises.

The study further called for climate-smart agriculture and eco-aquaculture training, linking women and youth producers to green supply chains, and ensuring their inclusion in government safety-net programmes through advocacy and digital platforms.

At the event, Mohammad Navid Safiullah, additional secretary of the environment ministry, said, "Climate change is not just an environmental challenge; it is a profound

human development crisis. The findings highlight interlinked vulnerabilities across reproductive health and rights, WASH, and livelihoods, placing women, youth, and marginalised communities at greatest risk."

Dr Ashrafi Ahmad, director general of the Directorate General of Family Planning, said, "The impacts of climate change are also a public health and human rights crisis. Our health and family planning systems must be climate- and gender-sensitive."

Nayoka Martinez-Backstrom, first secretary and deputy head of development cooperation at the Embassy of Sweden, said, "Southwestern Bangladesh is highly vulnerable. Studies like this guide systematic change, but we need support from local governments, policymakers and youth to deliver real solutions."

The workshop also marked the launch of Plan International Bangladesh's DURBAR Programme, a flagship initiative promoting climate justice and gender equality in coastal areas.

## Ducsu's role in Bangladesh's political DNA

FROM PAGE 1

In 2019, most office bearers were elected from the then pro-government Bangladesh Chhatra League, except Nurul Haq Nur, now president of Gono Adhikar Parishad, and Akhter Hossen, currently member secretary of the National Citizen Party.

Abbasi criticised the DAP, particularly its Floor Area Ratio rules, for raising housing costs and pushing urban sprawl.

"High FAR, when combined with transit-oriented development, mixed-use planning, and green building practices, can ensure compact, affordable, and sustainable cities," he said.

Abdur Razzaque, vice president (finance) of REHAB, said the DAP should serve as a unified framework for all citizens.

"At present, people are deprived of basic necessities. Whenever someone goes to Rajuk for approval or clearance, corruption becomes a barrier -- without money, no work moves forward," he said.

Husain elected vice president and general secretary.

Ducsu's defining role in national struggles includes raising the first Bangladeshi flag on March 2, 1971, days before formal declaration of independence, in front of the Arts Building by leaders ASM Abdur Rab and Abdul Kuddus Makhan. Over decades, the student body has consistently acted as a crucible for political leadership and activism.

Since Dhaka University's establishment in 1921, student governance evolved gradually. Initially, three residential halls -- Dhaka Hall, Muslim Hall, and Jagannath Hall -- elected Mujahidul Islam Selim as vice president and Mahbub Zaman as general secretary.

separate student bodies.

The first Ducsu elections took place in 1925-26, electing Mamata Uddin Ahmed as vice president and Yogendranath Sengupta as general secretary. Until 1953, Ducsu polls were conducted indirectly through hall unions, before transitioning to a centralised voting process.

This year's election will be the 38th in DU history. Of the previous 37, 29 were held under British rule and the Pakistan era. After independence, the first polls in 1972 elected Mujahidul Islam Selim as vice president and Mahbub Zaman as general secretary.

## Assets worth Tk 500cr seized from kingpin: CID

FROM PAGE 12

The development comes a month after the CID submitted a final report to a Dhaka court in another high-profile manpower trafficking probe involving influential individuals.

On July 15, the CID cleared a former expatriates' welfare minister, an ex-secretary,

several former lawmakers, and over 100 recruiting agencies of allegations of human trafficking and money laundering in relation to the Malaysia recruitment process.

That clearance followed a request from the Malaysian government to either review or dismiss the cases.

In that case, the CID reported finding no evidence to substantiate the charges, stating that although agents had claimed to collect between Tk 4 and Tk 5 lakh from each worker, official documents showed the agreed recruitment cost was Tk 78,990.

The CID noted that

no victims had filed formal complaints about overpayments.

However, the plaintiff, Altab Khan, rejected the findings and filed a no-confidence petition, alleging that the investigating officer had been influenced by the accused parties, which, he argued, compromised the probe.

The CID noted that



### Step into Leadership

Be the Next Chief Human Resources & Administration Officer (CHRO) at Jamuna Bank PLC.

Jamuna Bank PLC, one of the Bangladesh's top-rated private commercial banks, is undergoing a major transformation towards becoming a future-ready, technology-driven institution. To lead this transformation, we are seeking a visionary and accomplished Chief Human Resources & Administration Officer (CHRO) - a pivotal leadership role responsible for driving people strategy, organizational excellence and centralized operational efficiency. The CHRO will serve as Head of Human Resources, Administration and Training & Development, ensuring the Bank achieves world-class HR practices while building a modern, agile and technology-enabled workplace. This role demands strategic foresight, deep knowledge of HR and operations and the ability to integrate governance, compliance and digital transformation in line with Bangladesh Bank guidelines and global best practices.

#### Key Responsibilities

- Strategic Leadership
  - Lead the Bank's HR, Administration and Training & Development functions, ensuring alignment with corporate vision and long-term goals.
  - Act as a strategic advisor to the Managing Director & CEO and the Board on people, succession planning, governance and workforce strategy.
  - Drive centralization of core operations (account services, card operations, branch administration and transaction processing) across all department A to Z ensuring uniformity, efficiency and compliance with highest quality standard human capital.

#### Human Resources & People Strategy

- Oversee full-spectrum HR: recruitment, performance management, compensation & benefits, employee relations, labor law compliance and succession planning.
- Lead talent acquisition, retention and leadership development to build a future-ready workforce.
- Implement data-driven HR analytics, HRIS and automation to optimize decision-making and efficiency.
- Design and enforce HR policies, SOPs and governance frameworks ensuring compliance with Bangladesh Bank and BSEC regulations.

#### Training & Organizational Development

- Develop and deliver learning & development programs to build employee skills for future banking and fintech demands.

## BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

# Letters across the silence

Review of 'Thorns in My Quilt: Letters from a Daughter to Her Father' (Rupa Publications India, 2024) by Mohua Chinappa

**The book resonates on multiple levels. It is a daughter's reckoning, but also a shared memory of displacement. The grandeur of the Cumilla household and the intellectual legacy of Dhaka are not just Mohua's inheritance. They belong to a collective Bengali past fractured by borders. Her family's migration to Shillong mirrors the stories of many East Bengalis who were forced to start anew, carrying only memories of what was left behind.**

**NAMRATA**  
In *Thorns in My Quilt*, Mohua Chinappa offers readers a searingly honest and emotionally resonant series of letters addressed to her late father. But before these letters unfold, we are led into a history that anchors the personal in the political—a story of displacement, privilege, and loss that stretches from Dhaka to Shillong.

Mohua's father, one among 11 siblings, was raised in an educated East Bengal family. Her grandfather, Jamini Kumar Bhattacharjee, was a gold medallist from Dhaka, a principled man whose values were rooted in knowledge and integrity. Her grandmother, Thamma, came from an established household in Cumilla. The vivid image of her childhood home, complete with a temple, a large pond teeming with fish, and a bustling atmosphere of care, evokes the pre-Partition Bengali world that many in Bangladesh will recognise intimately.

But like countless Bengali families uprooted by Partition, theirs too became a life of fragments. The ancestral home was left behind, and the family rebuilt itself in Shillong, carrying with them the echoes of a lost homeland and the weight of survival in a new one. This layered legacy of privilege turned precarity, of memory strained by migration, forms a quiet yet persistent undercurrent through the book.

Against this backdrop, the letters from daughter to father feel even more poignant. Mohua writes not only to grieve her Baba, but to confront the complexity of their relationship. He was, she says, "as kind as he was cruel, as well-read as he was unworldly." In this paradox lies the core of the memoir, an aching tenderness entwined with unresolved pain.

The cover, too, speaks volumes. A photograph of Mohua standing behind her aged father, both staring off into the distance, captures the emotional tenor of



ILLUSTRATION: MAISHA SYEDA

the book perfectly. There is space, both physical and emotional, between them. Yet there is also presence, loyalty, and longing. It is a powerful image of connection and distance, of a bond shaped by time, silence, and everything in between.

Her prose is direct and intimate, capturing not only the love and disappointment she felt, but also the solitude of dealing with his death. Childhood memories, like the scent of vanilla in the butter cookies he baked, or the image of her small hand in his as they walked the rainswept roads of Shillong, are recalled with sensory richness and emotional clarity. These memories are neither idealised nor embittered. They are held gently, examined with care.

What sets *Thorns in My Quilt* apart is its courage in acknowledging that love does not erase hurt. Mohua's letters are at times raw and selfish, but never dishonest. They reveal a woman grieving not just her father, but the version of herself she lost in a

failed marriage, in abandonment, and in trying to measure up to an impossible ideal. In these confessions, there is a quiet resilience, a refusal to look away from emotional truth.

The book resonates on multiple levels. It is a daughter's reckoning, but also a shared memory of displacement. The grandeur of the Cumilla household and the intellectual legacy of Dhaka are not just Mohua's inheritance. They belong to a collective Bengali past fractured by borders. Her family's migration to Shillong mirrors the stories of many East Bengalis who were forced to start anew, carrying only memories of what was left behind.

Despite all this, *Thorns in My Quilt* does not dwell in nostalgia. Instead, it becomes an act of reclamation. By writing these letters, Mohua not only confronts the silence between her and her father but also stitches together the fragments of a life shaped by exile, love, and endurance.

This is a memoir of grief,

but more importantly, it is a portrait of a woman finding voice in loss. Mohua's emotional honesty, combined with her sharp eye for detail, makes this an unforgettable read. What truly elevates *Thorns in My Quilt* is her writing. It is measured, lucid, and deeply intimate. She writes not with the flourish of a performer but with the clarity of someone unburdening the heart. Her style is emotionally restrained yet piercing, allowing the reader to feel the unsaid as much as the spoken. Each letter reads like a quiet act of courage, stitched with vulnerability, sharp introspection, and a poetic sensitivity to both place and feeling.

*Thorns in My Quilt* is not just a memoir. It is an act of remembering, of reclaiming, and, finally, of release. It speaks quietly, but powerfully to all those who have loved and lost, and to those still carrying the ghosts of places once called home.

**NAMRATA** is a literary consultant, columnist, and podcast host.

## BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

# Revisiting the hidden scars and echoes of Bengal Partition

Review of 'Bengal and Its Partition: An Untold Story' (Rupa Publication, 2025) by Bhaswati Mukherjee

**REZAUL KARIM REZA**

Bengal was partitioned twice. First in 1905 when the heightened protest against this reunited Bengal in 1911. Then, it was divided again in 1947 during the partition of India. But this time, it was unavoidable. Although the trauma of the Punjab Partition has been widely written about in English, the experiences of Bengal partitions have often remained underrepresented. This is where Bhaswati Mukherjee aims to fill the gap through her book *Bengal and Its Partition*. It offers a compelling, accessible narrative that situates Bengal's Partition not as an isolated event, but as the result of long-term socio-political maneuver.

A retired Indian diplomat, Bhaswati Mukherjee

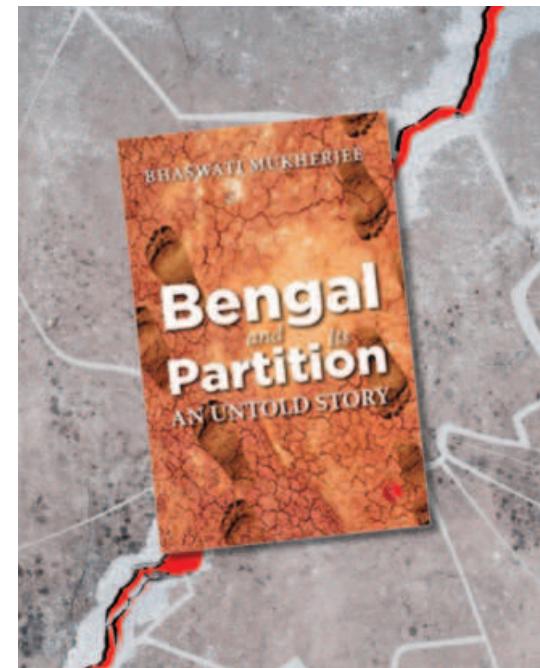


ILLUSTRATION: AMREETA LETHE

**The final chapters of the book delve deep into the hurried and chaotic process of demarcation. And thus was the result of the Bengal Partition in 1947. Sadly, it decided so quickly that the division was done without proper demarcation, consultation, or transition planning.**

is an acclaimed scholar. She has deep personal and ancestral ties to the Bengal region. Mukherjee served both as high-ranking roles in the Indian Foreign Service and as an international policy forum. Her diplomatic insight and lived family memory approaches the Partition of Bengal with a rare mix of analytical precision and emotional depth. Her works with this book reflect correcting historical omissions and reviving the erased Bengali narratives.

The book unfolds as a deeply researched yet highly readable history of the Bengal Partition. The research is grounded in archival data, oral histories, and literary references. It explores the roots of communal division in Bengal long before 1947. It exposes how the British colonial regime nurtured those divisions through policies of divide and rule. Through the book, the author critically examines the political negotiations between the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, and colonial administrators.

It has the finest illustration of how Bengal's fate was shaped by a mix of ideological rigidity, communal anxiety, and geopolitical expediency. Mukherjee's narrative stands out for placing East Bengal (now Bangladesh) at the heart of the discussion. She has proved that it was a long-overdue Bengali-centric lens on Partition. The book has also portrayed the cultural fragmentation, administrative chaos, and deep sense of betrayal. This was the pain felt by millions on both sides of the Bengal border.

*Bengal and Its Partition* is a nonfictional work, but the book is structured with the flow of a narrative history. Mukherjee begins with the 1905 Partition of Bengal which was created by Lord Curzon. She has clearly set the tone for how administrative manipulation laid the foundation for communal division. She then moves through the rise of Bengali nationalism, and outlines the failed Bengal Pact of 1923, as well as the roles of key figures like Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and Shyama Prasad Mukherjee through various plots.

The final chapters of the book delve deep into the hurried and chaotic process of demarcation. And thus was the result of the Bengal Partition in 1947. Sadly, it decided so quickly that the division was done without proper demarcation, consultation, or transition planning. Mukherjee has also brought stories of displacement, the collapse of culture, and the long-term implications for Indo-Bangladeshi relations.

*Bengal and Its Partition* is not only a history of political events but also a tribute to a lost cultural unity and a call to remember the human cost of division. Mukherjee's work clearly claims that remembering East is just as important as remembering West within Bengal.

**Rezaul Karim Reza** is an English teacher and an academic.

## BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

# No heroes in Shonagachhi

Review of 'A Death in Shonagachhi' (Pan Macmillan India, 2011) by Rijula Das

**SEJAL RAHMAN**

Don't mistake *A Death in Shonagachhi* for a murder mystery, or you'll be setting yourself up for disappointment. Some moments will remain unexplained, threads will refuse to tie neatly, and certain ends will stay frayed. Strictly speaking, Rijula Das's explosive debut can be classified as literary noir. More poetically, it is a soul-baring depiction of a community built in the most unexpected of places—a testament to resilience in the face of crushing blows, and a promise that love can overcome the agony of circumstances beyond one's control.

Tenderness is difficult to find in a neighbourhood like Shonagachhi, yet Das's words evoke a softness you'd be thoughtless to ignore. Asia's largest red-light district becomes unexpectedly homely—despite the gore and grit of the horrors that unfold. Her prose is both kind and unrestrained; it does not shy from pain, nor does it hide the agony waiting behind those walls. It is maddeningly honest and, at times, disastrously funny.

So you trust her—and her characters—as they descend into hell. It's bodies all the way down, with degradation and decay on every side. You might pray for the unfortunate, the wicked, or the dead, but it would do no good. God hides them far away. Das's characters are shaped by the impediments placed before their dignity, hope, and spirit—a damning indictment of society's careless treatment of its outcasts. This is ostracisation for ostracisation's sake.

The first person we meet is Tilu, though all eyes are on Lalee—the woman of Tilu's dreams and the source of his addiction. Lalee is the river in Tilu's bloodstream: thoughts of her ebb and flow without cease. Barely clinging to the lowest rungs of the caste system, Tilu is without charm and desperate for some. He is Lalee's most dependable customer, and lust's most dependable sinner. Lalee, meanwhile, seldom spares him a glance outside of business; she is the archetypal cynical, practical prostitute familiar from

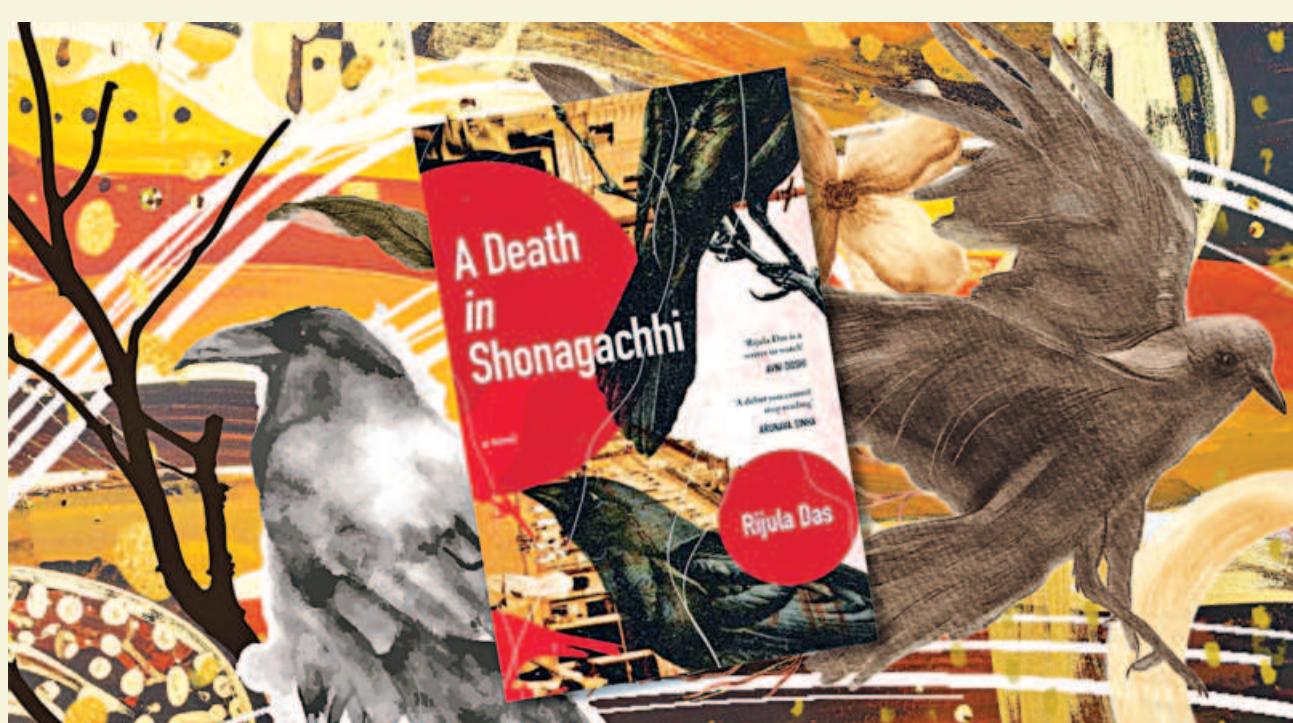


ILLUSTRATION: AMREETA LETHE

brothel portrayals in fiction. Other stock figures populate the novel: the cruel madam Shefali, the comically villainous zealot Maharaj, the greedy upstart pimp Rambo Maity, corrupt policemen who exploit the women they disdain, and frustrated social workers chasing leads that go nowhere.

Yet, despite these archetypes, moments of originality shine through—like when macho cop Samsher Singh shyly tells his terrified wife he would love to have a daughter, despite his mother's protests. Or when the number one fan of Tilu's explicit works joins him in a high-stakes chase to rescue the woman he loves, knowing nothing about her. Or when the indifferent Sonia, prized for her exotic looks, comes to Lalee's aid in her darkest hour. These small moments coalesce into a portrait of community, starkly contrasted by the "small deaths" that slowly erode it.

The first major shock is the brutal, graphic murder of Lalee's neighbour, Mohamaya—known as Maya—an "A-lister" in The Blue Lotus hierarchy.

What is less shocking is the response: the police do not visit the scene until ten days later. Singh, the examining officer, arrives to find the room scrubbed clean and already occupied by another sex worker. Maya's death propels the plot, driving Lalee to take her place, and leading the reader into what will become her own grave. The story meanders through Tilu's plans for a novel, Singh's domestic life, and everyone's rage at demonetisation. These tangents can frustrate, especially as the most compelling figure—Lalee—is often sidelined.

None of the events in the novel would occur without the underlying degradation of safety for women and girls, particularly in rural areas. In forgotten corners of the Indian subcontinent live countless innocents, sold to settle debts, to feed fewer mouths, or to quench a father's drunken thirst. They are thrust into the hands of unforgiving madams, chained to bedposts, forced into the arms of violent men, and trapped in a system

that refuses to acknowledge them. As Samsher Singh observes: "It's not for nothing that they put them in one corner, in these floating towns where they can remain among their own folk and not be a part of 'normal' life."

*A Death in Shonagachhi* builds to an excruciating crescendo that ultimately rings hollow. There is no resolution, no solution to the world's oldest problem: how do you protect the innocent? Whether that emptiness is deliberate or not, it forces the reader to confront the blindness with which society treats sex workers. More enduring, however, is the lesson tucked within its winding paragraphs: friendship among the forgotten, the camaraderie of laughing at one's woes, the comfort of knowing that "once loved is always loved." Even in a world that tries to swallow you whole, you can carve out your own place—and, if you dare, swallow the world right back.

**Sejal Rahman** is a contributor. Reach her at [sejalrahman@gmail.com](mailto:sejalrahman@gmail.com).

SAFF U-17 WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

## Bangladesh off to winning start despite 'mistakes'

SPORTS REPORTER

Alpi Akter scored twice and Sauravi Akanda Prity added another as Bangladesh started their SAFF U-17 Women's Championship campaign with a 3-1 win against hosts Bhutan at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu on Wednesday.

It was a comfortable victory for the charges of Mahbubur Rahman Litu, the assistant coach stepping in for Peter Butler, but far from a convincing one for a team that had brushed aside the same opposition with a 6-0 drubbing on way to claiming the title in the under-16 event last year.

The girls in red and green had their chances though to claim a much bigger margin of victory, but Bhutan goalkeeper Kelzang Wangmo was in inspired form, especially in the first half, as she thwarted a number of goal-bound attempts from Bangladesh.

It started in the second minute when Wangmo made a one-handed diving save to deny Alpi the opening goal



before denying Prity from a one-on-one situation in the 20th minute. The Bhutan shot-stopper produced another fine save to deny Alpi again in the 28th minute before the Bangladesh No. 9 saw her header cleared off the goalline by a Bhutan defender.

Prity, who had emerged as the top-scorer and the best player last year, hit

the crossbar from the edge of the box in the 42nd minute before finally breaking the deadlock in the third minute of stoppage time, heading in Shiuly Roy's lob as Wangmo and two defenders were caught in a tangle.

Alpi doubled Bangladesh's lead nine minutes after restart with a powerful shot from the edge of the box following

a nice little pirouette as Bangladesh started to breathe easy. However, two unfortunate injuries – one for midfielder Moumita Khatun in the first half and another for Prity early in the second half, debilitated Bangladesh's attacking options.

It was trouble at the back too as goalkeeper Meghla Roy's fumble in the 62nd minute helped Bhutan reduce the margin, courtesy of Rinzin Choden's fine finish. Alpi, however, restored Bangladesh's two goal cushion four minutes later, bundling in a corner on the second attempt before Mamoni Chakha had a shot cleared off the goalline by a Bhutan player.

Coach Litu expressed his concern over the mistakes that the team made as Bangladesh will face India, who beat Nepal 7-0 in the first match on Wednesday, in their second match of the four-team competition on Friday.

"I think we made a few mistakes, especially early on but we came back well. We will work on the mistakes we have made," Litu said.

## Jessy to officiate in Netherlands series

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh umpire Shathira Jakir Jessy will be officiating in the Tigers' upcoming T20I series against the Netherlands.

Jessy, who was earlier informed that she is set to officiate in the upcoming women's ODI World Cup in Sri Lanka and India in September, was announced as the fourth umpire in the first and third T20Is of the Netherlands series. She will be in charge as a TV umpire in second T20I.

"I would like to thank Bangladesh Cricket Board for giving me an opportunity to officiate in a men's national team series for the first time. I think it will help me to take good preparation for the upcoming World Cup," Jessy told The Daily Star yesterday.

Tanvir Ahmed, Masudur Rahman Mukul, and Morshed Ali Khan have been named on-field umpires for the series, which will take place in Sylhet on August 30, September 1, and 3, respectively.

Jessy has umpired in the Dhaka Premier League previously and has also officiated in the Women's Asia Cup, the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifiers held in Pakistan in April, and during the recent men's Emerging Team's series between Bangladesh and South Africa.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh team are in Sylhet and have begun their skill camps. The Tigers will play a practice match against BCB HP on August 26.

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Women's cricket in Bangladesh still receives far less attention than men's, and their preparation continues to lag. Yesterday's Challenge Cup match in Savar showed just how poorly the team's arrangements have been, given a quadrennial global event is fast-approaching.

In a match designed to help fine-tune the Tigresses ahead of September–November's ICC Women's World Cup, national captain Nigar Sultan Joty-led team – named Red Team, which include several players from the 50-over set-up – lost by 87 runs to Bangladesh men's U-15 side, a bunch who had never played a white-ball match.

The defeat itself was less significant than the circumstances surrounding it. Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) had tried but failed to secure international oppositions after being turned down by neighbouring countries. In the end, the only available solution was a makeshift three-team event, featuring two women's squads and a men's youth team.

The Tigresses have not featured in an international fixture since April, and the shortcomings of such an appalling preparatory arrangement quickly became apparent, further exposing the national team's "inconsistent" batting.

At the BKSP-3 Ground, Red Team folded for just 94 runs after reaching 50 without loss in pursuit of 182, while the boys – assembled barely a fortnight ago – looked sharper and hungrier despite their sheer lack of match experience; and that too in front of a decent crowd, media presence and a live telecast.

"After forming this U-15 team, we had

only two weeks of camp, and most of the boys had only played red-ball cricket before," said the winning team's pace bowling coach Mahbubul Alam Robin.

For Joty, the match offered perspective rather than despair. "We weren't getting matches for preparation, so it's better to face different opponents than to just play intra-squad games," she said.

Beyond results, however, deeper concerns lie in the conditions and resources available. Matches in Savar are being staged on slow, low pitches – ones that bear little resemblance to what awaits in India and Sri Lanka.

"If you compare these wickets with the World Cup tracks, the difference is huge. The wicket was slightly better [than the first fixture] because the sun came out, but still not ideal for preparation," said one

experienced player.

The lack of pace bowling options adds another layer to the challenge. "Apart from Marufa [Akter] and Trishna [Fariha], we don't really have pacers. You can't take rookies to a World Cup, but you need a proper pace attack to back up the spinners. There's no pipeline for pacers in the women's game, and our batting is inconsistent too," admitted another cricketer, also requesting anonymity.

Despite the concerns voiced by players, the selectors remain unfazed. "In the subcontinent, most teams don't play with more than two pacers," said women's chief selector Sazzad Ahmed Shipon.

For Bangladesh, the scoreline in Savar mattered less than what it revealed: a team heading into a global tournament after seemingly being set up to fail.

Affiliation: Biplob Kujur, Nuruzzman Nayan, Ashraful Islam, Rezaul Karim Babu, Fahad Ahmed Shitul, Sohanur Rahman Sabuj, Hojaiya Hossain, Amrul Islam, Mehedi Hasan, Roman Sarkar, Fazle Hossain Rabbi, Al Nahian Shuvo, Tayeb Ali, Tanvir Rahman Siam, Rokibul Hasan, Obaidul Hossain Joy, Arshad Hossain and Mohammad Abdullah.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) dismissed allegations of bias in the selection of the national team for the upcoming Men's Hockey Asia Cup, beginning August 29 in Bihar, India.

The BHF yesterday finalised an 18-member squad with two standbys, leaving out most recent captain Pushkar Khisha Mimo, seasoned campaigner Moinul Islam Koushik, along with Nayeem Uddin and Abed Uddin – all of whom featured in April's AHF Cup in Indonesia.

The dropped players, who had been staying at the BHF dormitory, reportedly confronted general secretary Riazul Hassan after the announcement and engaged in a heated exchange with a joint secretary.

"Both spoke loudly but it was amicable and later it was settled down because they [players] understood it," BHF general secretary Riazul Hassan told the reporters yesterday.

"If anyone thought that there has been bias in the selection, then it was a wrong idea because the members of the selection committee watched the training in the last 10 days – even I also watched the matches. The effort was to form the squad with the best available



**Squad:** Biplob Kujur, Nuruzzman Nayan, Ashraful Islam, Rezaul Karim Babu, Fahad Ahmed Shitul, Sohanur Rahman Sabuj, Hojaiya Hossain, Amrul Islam, Mehedi Hasan, Roman Sarkar, Fazle Hossain Rabbi, Al Nahian Shuvo, Tayeb Ali, Tanvir Rahman Siam, Rokibul Hasan, Obaidul Hossain Joy, Arshad Hossain and Mohammad Abdullah.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

players."

One of the excluded players claimed they had been punished for protesting against food and other issues during the

AHF Cup. Hassan, however, denied the accusation.

"I also heard the allegation, but the fact is that there was no such official allegation in the manager's report. If there are any such allegations, then we must investigate the incident. And we never called those players to the camp, but we called all those players in the camp," said Hassan, adding that the players who were dropped would have the opportunity to join the preparation camp in future.

Head coach Moshirul Rahman Biplob said, "What we wanted from them in the preparation camp, they could not deliver, and the players have been picked up on the basis of performance and some other things."

Reazul Karim Babu has been named captain, with Ashraful Islam as his deputy.

"The squad is a mixture of senior and junior players. Senior players are experienced, but the junior players are ahead of the seniors in terms of fitness."

"If we can provide the right guidelines to the junior players and follow the instructions of the coach, then we expect something good," said Babu, hoping that they can qualify for the World Cup if they perform as per their strength despite the lack of preparation.



Fluminense goalkeeper Fabio overtook Englishman Peter Shilton's longstanding record for the most competitive appearances in men's football, playing his 1,391st match during his side's 2-0 victory over America de Cali on Tuesday. After the game which confirmed Fluminense's qualification to the quarterfinals of the Copa Sudamericana at the Maracana in Rio de Janeiro, the 44-year-old was honoured with a plaque and a commemorative painting during a ceremony also attended by his family.

Cabrera finds 'positivity' despite player shortage

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national team head coach Javier Cabrera remains confident about preparing his side for the two upcoming FIFA friendlies against hosts Nepal on September 6 and 9, despite 10 Bashundhara Kings players expected to join the national camp only next month.

Cabrera began training on August 15 with just 13 players after Kings declined to release their squad members, citing pre-season preparations and injury concerns. To fill the gap, the 40-year-old coach called up eight U-19 players, and he is pleased with how the camp is progressing.

"We have 13 senior players in camp, as some others are with the U-23 team, while Kings players stayed back. To complete the group, we brought in some U-19 players, and we are happy with the positivity so far," Cabrera told reporters before yesterday's training at the National Stadium.

"I think it is going to be effective. There is enough time to prepare. Kings players will hopefully join next month, and we will still have time to get ready for the Nepal matches."

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is still hoping to have England-based Hamza Choudhury arrive directly in Nepal, but Canada-based Shamit Shome will miss the friendlies. Despite this, Cabrera remains optimistic about the young players stepping up.

"The more games we play, the more players will be ready for the future. We still have many senior players, but with U-23s coming in, some seniors will naturally get less time. Now the young ones have a chance to prove themselves as we play practice matches before traveling to Nepal for the two friendlies," Cabrera said.

The Spanish coach also admitted that he had spoken with Bashundhara Kings president Imrul Hasan, who is also BFF senior vice president and deputy chairman of the National Teams Committee, regarding domestic and international schedules. Cabrera emphasised he has "a lot of respect" for Imrul and does not want to get into any controversies over the issue of player availability.

## Dutch announce squad for Bangladesh T20Is

SPORTS REPORTER

Netherlands on Wednesday have named a 15-member squad for their three-match T20I series against Bangladesh, starting August 30 in Sylhet.

Led by skipper Scott Edwards, the squad includes seasoned opener Max O'Dowd, pacer Paul van Meekeren, the Klein brothers Ryan and Kyle, off-spinner Aryan Dutt, and leg spinner Shariz Ahmed.

The Dutch will arrive in Dhaka on August 26 before moving to Sylhet for a three-day training camp ahead of the opener.

**Netherlands squad:** Max O'Dowd, Vikramjit Singh, Anil Nidamanuru, Scott Edwards, Noah Coes, Saqib Zulfiqar, Ryan Klein, Kyle Klein, Aryan Dutt, Paul van Meekeren, Shariz Ahmed, Ben Fletcher, Daniel Doran, Tim Pringle, Fred Klaassen.

## 'No bias': BHF defends Asia Cup squad selection

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) dismissed allegations of bias in the selection of the national team for the upcoming Men's Hockey Asia Cup, beginning August 29 in Bihar, India.

The BHF yesterday finalised an 18-member squad with two standbys, leaving out most recent captain Pushkar Khisha Mimo, seasoned campaigner Moinul Islam Koushik, along with Nayeem Uddin and Abed Uddin – all of whom featured in April's AHF Cup in Indonesia.

The dropped players, who had been staying at the BHF dormitory, reportedly confronted general secretary Riazul Hassan after the announcement and engaged in a heated exchange with a joint secretary.

"Both spoke loudly but it was amicable and later it was settled down because they [players] understood it," BHF general secretary Riazul Hassan told the reporters yesterday.

"If anyone thought that there has been bias in the selection, then it was a wrong idea because the members of the selection committee watched the training in the last 10 days – even I also watched the matches. The effort was to form the squad with the best available



**BSRM**  
THE ONLY STEEL FACTORY IN BANGLADESH TO RECEIVE THE  
**GREEN FACTORY AWARD 2025**

**HIGHEST  
SELLING  
CEMENT** for more than  
**20  
YEARS**



## Dhaka asks Delhi to close alleged AL offices in India

**Delhi says it's unaware of any anti-Bangladesh activities there**

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka has urged New Delhi to immediately close any party office of the Awami League in India and ensure that no Bangladeshi engages in any anti-Bangladesh activity there.

It said any form of political activity or campaign by Bangladeshis against the interests of Bangladesh is a clear affront against the people of Bangladesh and the state.

This development also jeopardises the upholding of the good-neighbourly relations with India driven by mutual trust and mutual respect and carries serious implications for the political transformation underway in Bangladesh, said the foreign ministry in a statement yesterday.

"This may also trigger public sentiment in Bangladesh which may

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



**A cross-dam of nets and bamboo under Khegoraghata Bridge in Kashimpur village, Bagerhat Sadar, has blocked the Huji River's natural flow. Once vital for boats, fishing, and irrigation, the river is now largely divided into similar private fish enclosures. Photo was taken recently.**

PHOTO: PARTHA CHAKRABORTTY

**ICT CASE**  
Doctors falsified records to treat injured protesters

**2 physicians tell tribunal that police threatened them**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As police threatened doctors not to treat protesters with gunshot wounds during last year's uprising, physicians falsified records to ensure their treatment, doctors of two Dhaka hospitals told the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday.

They said they showed on paper that the protesters were either suffering from diseases or were victims of accidents.

Mahfuzur Rahman, associate professor at the National Institute of Neurosciences & Hospital (NINS), told the court that on July 19, when the number of bullet-wounded protesters surged, a team of DB police pressured him not to admit the injured.

"Don't be overenthusiastic. You will be in danger. Don't release those already admitted. There are instructions from high-ups. Legal action will be taken against them," he quoted the police as saying.

Then doctors altered admission registers to conceal the true nature of the wounds sustained by students and civilians, recorded them as road accidents or illnesses, and secretly provided treatment to victims, he said.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

## RECRUITING SYNDICATE Assets worth Tk 500cr seized from kingpin: CID

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department has seized about Tk 500 crore worth of assets belonging to Ruhul Amin Swapani, the alleged chief of a syndicate formed to send manpower to Malaysia.

In a press release issued yesterday, CID's Special Superintendent of Police (media) Jasim Uddin Khan said the agency's Financial Crime Division sought a court order to freeze the assets. Acting on the petition, the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court ordered the seizure.

Through his recruiting agency, Ruhul embezzled Tk 8,000 crore, which was spent on buying houses and land, according to the release. It accused him of money laundering.

The CID statement mentioned that Ruhul's recruiting agency, Catharsis International, owns 231 kathas of land in Dhaka's Bashundhara Residential Area, Banani, and Uttara under seven separate deeds.

While the devalue of the land stands at Tk 15.55 crore, the market value of the land, including infrastructure built on them, has been estimated at Tk 500 crore.

The CID added that investigations are still underway against Ruhul and other members of the syndicate, and actions will be taken against them under the Money Laundering Act.

**22 percent of the clinics are housed in buildings classified as high risk and need immediate replacement**

Authorities say medicine supply disruption to end soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Infrastructure at more than one-third of the 14,467 community clinics, which serve 4.9 lakh people daily, has become risky and now requires replacement or repair to continue providing healthcare, said officials of the Community Clinic Health Support Trust.

Of them, 3,136 clinics -- or 22 percent -- are classified as high risk and need immediate replacement, as some have broken roofs while others have different parts damaged.

The buildings that house 5,080 of the clinics, which provide primary healthcare and 22 types of medicine, are found to be risky, Monzoor KH Uddin, an architect who works with the trust to prepare a model for the clinics, told a seminar yesterday.

Seeking anonymity, another official said that out of the 5,080 clinics, 3,136 were found highly risky and 1,944 moderately risky. Highly risky buildings need to be replaced while those at moderate risk require repairs.

The trust is preparing a project for repairing and constructing new buildings, and the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is expected to fund the project, he said.

The infrastructure problem has been compounded by a disruption of medicine supply at community clinics over the past year, leaving thousands deprived of necessary medicines.

The supply of medicine got severely disrupted after the sectoral programme, under which funding for community clinic medicine comes from, ended in June 2024 and the interim government could not initiate a project to continue the supply of medicines.

The trust officials, however, said it has already supplied 15,000 boxes of medicines to the clinics and that the medicine supply will be normal soon. The organisation is planning to construct 516 more community clinics, and Japan is expected to finance those, officials said.

The issues came to the fore at a seminar titled "Media Participation in Grassroots-Level Health Services", held

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

**Polls will be in February**  
**Says Adviser Asif Mahmud**

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Latmonirhat

Youth and Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain

yesterday said the upcoming national election will be held in February and there is no possibility of delays.

The Election Commission has already completed the necessary preparations. If the meeting between the commission and political parties on the July charter proves successful, the electoral road map will become clearer. But there is no possibility of deferring the polls," he said after laying a wreath at the memorial of Shaheed Abu Sayed at Park Mor in Rangpur city.

He also highlighted government plans to boost development in northern and disadvantaged regions, focusing on reducing regional disparities and strengthening local government.

In the evening, the adviser attended the final of the July 36 Gold Cup Football Tournament.

MD ABBAS

Biplabi Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Huq warned that removing secularism while retaining Islam as the state religion is a fundamental deception of the people.

Addressing the debate over religion in the constitution, he said the people aspired to an inclusive state.

"A modern democratic state must be secular by definition. If state religion stays, we can't call it democratic -- it directly contradicts the goal of inclusivity," he told The Daily Star in a recent interview.

Challenging narratives that seek to delay the election until after reforms, Saiful dismissed the long-term versus short-term reform debate as a "misrepresentation".

"If the government acts with genuine political intent, the election can be held before February. The issue is not time but political will. If that exists, reforms can be completed within months."

He said those calling for extended reform timelines are actually trying to create uncertainty. "That is an indirect attempt to extend the interim government's tenure."

Saiful stressed that reform and elections must go together. "Without an elected parliament, no constitutional reform is legitimate. We need elections to begin that process."

On regional issues, Saiful spoke of Bangladesh's relationship with India, calling it complex but critical.

"Maintaining a respectful, balanced relationship based on mutual interests and international law is essential. With deep interdependence on issues such as security and trade, both countries must cooperate

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Palestinians rush for cover as an Israeli strike hits a building near refugee tents in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

## Govt to discuss reducing metro costs with Japan

**Adviser Salehuddin to lead team to Tokyo for talks**

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A high-level team of the interim government led by Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed will hold meetings with the Japanese government on the possibilities of reducing the metro rail project costs.

The delegation will leave Bangladesh for Japan on Sunday and return on September 5.

Japan is financing several projects in Bangladesh, including three metro rail projects.



Of these, MRT Line 1 and MRT Line 5 are at the initial stage, while MRT Line 6 is about to be completed, with its major part from Uttra to Motijheel already in operation.

When the MRT Line 1 and MRT Line 5 were approved in 2019, their estimated cost was Tk 95,000 crore. Now, according to bidders' proposals, the cost might be almost double the initial estimate.

"Even the initial costs approved for the two projects are

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

## Star INTERVIEW

**Calls to extend reform timeline a bid to stretch interim govt tenure**

**Saiful Huq tells Star**



MD ABBAS

Biplabi Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Huq warned that removing secularism while retaining Islam as the state religion is a fundamental deception of the people.

Addressing the debate over religion in the constitution, he said the people aspired to an inclusive state.

"A modern democratic state must be secular by definition. If state religion stays, we can't call it democratic -- it directly contradicts the goal of inclusivity," he told The Daily Star in a recent interview.

Challenging narratives that seek to delay the election until after reforms, Saiful dismissed the long-term versus short-term reform debate as a "misrepresentation".

"If the government acts with genuine political intent, the election can be held before February. The issue is not time but political will. If that exists, reforms can be completed within months."

He said those calling for extended reform timelines are actually trying to create uncertainty. "That is an indirect attempt to extend the interim government's tenure."

Saiful stressed that reform and elections must go together. "Without an elected parliament, no constitutional reform is legitimate. We need elections to begin that process."

On regional issues, Saiful spoke of Bangladesh's relationship with India, calling it complex but critical.

"Maintaining a respectful, balanced relationship based on mutual interests and international law is essential. With deep interdependence on issues such as security and trade, both countries must cooperate

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

## India tables bill to remove ministers jailed for 30 days

**Opposition calls move draconian**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian Home Minister Amit Shah yesterday introduced the Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha, proposing automatic removal of a prime minister, chief minister, or any other minister if they remain in jail for 30 consecutive days on serious criminal charges.

The bill seeks to amend Article 75 of the Indian Constitution, which outlines the powers and responsibilities of the Council of Ministers.

According to the draft, "A Minister, who for any period of 30 consecutive days during holding the office as such, is arrested and detained in custody, on allegation of committing an offence... punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years or more, shall be removed from his office by the President on the advice of the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1