

If help doesn't reach them now, they [Gaza children] are certainly condemned to death
PHILIPPE LAZZARINI
UNRWA chief

YOUR RIGHT
TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION
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DUCSU POLLS History rewritten with record number of women candidates

TANGILA TASnim

For the first time in its history, the Ducusu polls will see the highest number of women vying for top positions, marking a significant shift in a space long dominated by men.

The last time the Dhaka University Central Students' Union had a female vice president was 59 years ago, and a female general secretary 62 years.

Despite Ducusu's pivotal role in defending students' rights, women's participation in its electoral process has remained very low – until now.

This year, five women are running for the VP post, another is contesting for GS, and four female candidates are in the race for assistant general secretary.

However, the panels of Chhatra Dal, Islami Chhatra Shibir, and Islami Chhatra Andolan did not nominate any woman for the top three posts.

According to former student leaders and historians of student politics, more women are contesting the three posts than in the polls

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"After so many years women are contesting for vital posts. This time we're ready to face anything – we will not move from our places."

Adity Islam
AGS candidate

462 candidates cleared for Ducusu, 1,108 for hall polls

DU CORRESPONDENT

With nominations submitted and scrutinised, Dhaka University authorities yesterday unveiled the draft list for Ducusu and hall union candidates.

According to it, 462 candidates are eligible to contest for 28 Ducusu posts. Of the 509 nominations, 47 were found faulty after scrutiny.

Meanwhile, 1,108 candidates were declared eligible to run for posts in 18 hall unions.

Cancelled nominations can be appealed by tomorrow (August 23), while candidates may withdraw from the race by August 25. The final list will be published on August 26.

Formal campaigning will begin later that day and continue till September 7 midnight. The election will be held on September 9, with vote count and results the same day.

POST-WISE CANDIDACY

Forty-eight candidates will run for vice-president, 19 for general secretary, and 28 for assistant general secretary.

Among the VP candidates, five are female. Only one woman will run for GS, while four are contesting for AGS.

For the 12 secretary posts: 19 candidates will run for literature and cultural affairs secretary, while 15 will contest for three posts -- Liberation War and democratic movement affairs secretary, health and environment affairs secretary, and international affairs secretary.

Other secretary posts have between nine and 13 candidates each.

Meanwhile, 215 candidates are in the race for 13 executive member posts.

No female candidates submitted nominations for international affairs secretary, while nine are running for common room, reading room and cafeteria secretary.

Yesterday, former Students Against Discrimination spokesperson

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JATIYATABADI CHHATRA DAL	BOISHOMMO BIRODI SHIKKARTHI SANGSAD	PRATIRODH PARSHAD	OIKYABODDOH SHIKKARTHI JOTE	SWATANTRA SHIKKARTHI OIKYA	DUCSU FOR CHANGE
VP	VP	VP	VP	VP	VP
ABIDUL ISLAM KHAN	ABDUL QADER	SK TASnim AFROZ EMI	ABU SHADIK KAYEM	UMAMA FATEMA	MD BIN YAMIN MOLLAH
GS	GS	GS	GS	GS	GS
SHAikh TANVIR BAREE HAMIM	ABU BAKER MOJUMDER	MEGHMALLAR BOSU	SM FARHAD	AL SADI BHUIYAN	SABINA YASMIN

Defying outcry, Israel starts Gaza City offensive

World decry 'intolerable' move; at least 40 more killed

AGENCIES

Israel hammered Gaza City and its outskirts overnight, residents said yesterday, as the military announced it had taken initial steps in its push to capture Hamas's last major stronghold.

The newly approved plan authorises the call-up of roughly 60,000 reservists, deepening fears that the campaign will worsen the already catastrophic humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.

"We are not waiting. We have begun the preliminary actions, and already now, IDF (army) troops are holding the outskirts of Gaza City," said the Israeli military.

Israel's plans to expand the fighting and seize Gaza City have sparked international outcry as well as domestic opposition. The Red Cross became the latest voice to condemn the plan yesterday, calling it "intolerable".

The renewed offensive has killed at least 40 people since the early hours, including eight killed while awaiting aid.

Ahead of the offensive, the Israeli military

said the call-up of the reservists would begin in early September, adding the second phase of the so-called operation "Gideon's Chariots" had begun.

Gaza City residents described relentless bombardments overnight.

"The house shakes with us all night long -- the sound of explosions, artillery, warplanes, ambulances, and cries for help is killing us," one of them, Ahmad al Shanti, told AFP.

"The sound is getting closer, but where would we go?"

Another resident, Amal Abdel-Aal, said she watched the heavy strikes on the area, a week after being displaced from her home in Gaza City's Al-Sabra neighbourhood.

"No one in Gaza has slept -- not last night, not for a week. The artillery and air strikes in the east never stop. The sky flashes all night long," she added.

Media reports said that Gaza City now has more than a million people, nearly half of Gaza's population. They have gathered in the city, which has been almost destroyed, after being

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The NBFI accounted for as much as 52 percent of the sector's total defaulted loans of Tk 25,089 crore at the end of last year, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

9 NBFI's staring at liquidation

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Nine non-bank financial institutions (NBFI) out of a total of 35 are likely to be liquidated in the interest of depositors, making it the first such incident in the financial sector.

The nine NBFI's are: FAS Finance, Bangladesh Industrial Finance Company, Premier Leasing, Farest Finance, GSP Finance, Prime Finance, Aviva Finance, People's Leasing and International Leasing.

The NBFI's accounted for as much as 52 percent of the sector's total defaulted loans of Tk 25,089 crore at the end of last year, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

"Those nine NBFI's will be liquidated -- the government has given its opinion in principle," BB Governor Ahsan H Mansur told The Daily Star.

The liquidation process, which will take place under the Finance Company Act 2023, may begin next month.

As per the act, with the approval of the government, the BB can apply to the High Court for the liquidation of any finance company that fails to repay its accepted deposits, loans, borrowings or liabilities, notwithstanding anything

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Rising extremism threat to country's existence: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday called for unity, cautioning that the country's existence is at stake if rising extremism goes unchecked.

"A form of extremism is on the rise in Bangladesh. We must not allow it to grow unchecked. If we do, the very existence of Bangladesh will be threatened," he said at an event at the Engineers Institution in Dhaka, jointly organised by BNP and the Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Welfare Fund to mark Janmashtami.

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman attended the programme virtually as chief guest.

Fakhrul alleged that efforts are underway to erase the memory of the Liberation War.

"1971 gave us an independent country, a sovereign identity. The martyrs of July-August 2024 gave us the chance to dream again of democracy. We must keep both in mind. But there is a deliberate attempt to make us forget 1971. Citizens of Bangladesh must unite against this," he said.

He said communalism has long been used as a political weapon in the country.



Displaced Palestinians inspect the rubble and debris beside a crater created by an Israeli strike at a camp for internally displaced people in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

Govt amends tax reform ordinance; revenue officials to lead NBR

MD ASADUZ ZAMAN and BAHARAM KHAN

The advisory council yesterday amended the much-talked-about tax reform ordinance, paving the way for revenue officials to head the top and senior positions of the Revenue Policy Division.

Now, officials with experience working on the macroeconomy, trade policy and planning can serve as the secretary of Revenue Policy Division, one of the two divisions that will be formed after the dissolution of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) as per the new law.

In the original ordinance issued on May 12 as part of revenue system reforms, there was an ambiguity on whether the officials from tax and customs cadres would be given priority for the position of secretary.

It said an eligible government officer will be appointed as secretary of the revenue policy division, much to the dissatisfaction of the tax and customs officials.

With the aim of amending the law, the officials demonstrated for nearly two months, crippling the revenue administration and hitting business and export import activities.

To address the grievance, the government formed a five-member committee in June.

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Mother, daughter found dead at home in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A woman and her daughter have been found dead with their throats slit at their home in a remote area of Ramgarh upazila in Khagrachhari.

The deceased have been identified as Amena Begum, 95, and Rahena Begum, 42.

Police said locals broke into the house at Purbo Bagantila yesterday after noticing an unusual silence. They discovered the bodies on beds in two adjacent rooms.

After being notified, police rushed to the scene.

Md Moin Uddin, acting officer-in-charge of Ramgarh Police Station, said the bodies were sent to Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital.

Amena had five sons and two daughters. Two of her sons live abroad.

According to a neighbour, Amena had an ongoing dispute over land with her sons who live in the country.

Rising extremism

FROM PAGE 1

"We must abandon such politics. Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Christians -- everyone must unite to build a prosperous Bangladesh based on truth, justice, and human values."

Fakhrul said Bangladesh belongs to all its citizens. "In times of crisis, people must be treated as human beings. That is why we must rise above ethnic, religious, and political divisions and stand united. If we uphold this call for unity under Tarique Rahman's leadership, our struggle to safeguard independence will succeed."

Among others, BNP standing committee members Abdul Moyeen Khan, Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, AZM Zahid Hossain, Vice Chairman Nitai Roy Chowdhury, and Subrata Chowdhury, acting president of Gano Forum and vice president of the Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Welfare Front, spoke at the event.

462 candidates cleared for DUCSU, 1,108 for hall polls

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Umama Fatema announced her full panel in front of Aparajeyo Bangla.

In the panel "Swatantra Shikkharkhi Oikya", she will run for VP, while Al Sadi Bhuiyan, a former president of Dhaka University Journalists' Association, will run for GS. Sociology student Zahed Ahmed has been nominated for AGS.

Nine panels have been announced for the DUCSU election, while many candidates are running independently.

HALL CANDIDATES

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall has the highest number of VP candidates -- nine. For GS, the highest number, also nine, came from Dr Muhammad Shahidullah Hall.

In other halls, the numbers range between three and eight.

Five halls nominated eight candidates each for AGS.

Across all hall union posts, the highest number of candidates -- 81 each -- came from Shahid Sergeant Zahurul Huq Hall and Amar Ekushey Hall, followed by Surja Sen Hall with 79.

Nine panels have been announced for the DUCSU election, while many candidates are running independently.

The lowest number was from Bangladesh-Kuwait Maitree Hall with 31, while other halls ranged between 36 and 78.

Only one faulty nomination was found among those submitted for the hall polls.

UNOFFICIAL CAMPAIGNS

A directive signed by Chief Returning Officer Prof Dr Zashim Uddin yesterday said candidates and panels are prohibited from offering gifts, distributing items, hosting feasts, providing financial assistance, or engaging in service-related activities on campus.

The university administration will treat such acts as violations of the DUCSU electoral code of conduct until September 10.

Though campaigning is not officially allowed till August 26, many candidates have been finding indirect ways to reach voters.



Tom Andrews, the UN special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar, meets Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

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History rewritten with record number

FROM PAGE 1
held in 2019 and 1990.

In addition, at least 54 women are running for other posts in the polls slated for September 9.

This surge in female candidacy reflects a broader awakening among students demanding more inclusive representation.

Meanwhile, at least 48 percent of the 39,775 voters in this year's DUCSU polls are women.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Mohammed Hannan, author of several books on the history of student-led movements, said, "This is unprecedented. This is the first time two [later increased to five] women are contesting for the vice-president post, with another vying for the general secretary post."

He noted that women's active participation in the July mass uprising was remarkable, and the surge in female candidates in the upcoming DUCSU election reflects that.

"It's important to note that these women candidates are not here because of sympathy or tokenism. Many of them are formidable contenders who have earned their place through dedication and meaningful contributions."

Asked why many leading student organisations rarely include women in their electoral panels, Hannan said, "These organisations simply lack women in their leadership ranks. That absence is reflected in their candidate selections."

THE WOMEN CANDIDATES

At least 35 women are in nine panels contesting this year's DUCSU polls, with many others vying independently.

Former Student Against Discrimination spokesperson Umama Fatema is contesting for the VP post from the independent "Swatantra Shikkharkhi Oikya" panel, which has five more female candidates.

Sheikh Tasnim Afroz Emi is vying for the same position from the Gontantrik Chhatra Jote's "Pratirodh Parshad" panel, which nominated 11 women -- the highest in this election.

Chhatra Odhikar Parishad's panel "DUCSU for Change" nominated Sabina Yasmin as GS, the panel's lone female candidate.

"Boishomimo Birodhi Shikkharkhi Sangsad", a panel of Bangladesh Gontantrik Chhatra Sangsad, nominated Ashrefa Khatun for the

AGS post, with five other women running for other posts in the panel.

Independent platform "DU First" nominated Fateha Sharmin Anne for AGS. Two other women are contesting from the panel.

In the last DUCSU election in 2019, one independent female candidate contested for the VP post, while two women ran for the GS post.

That year, two women each from Chhatra Dal and Islami Chhatra Andolan panels, and four from Islami Chhatra Shibir's panel also contested.

In contrast, none of the 21 panels in

WOMEN IN DUCSU

1962: Matia Chowdhury elected as DUCSU general secretary (GS)

1966: Mahfuja Khanom elected as DUCSU vice president (VP)

1990: No women candidate fielded for top two posts from any panel

2019: One independent woman ran for VP, two women for GS

2025: 5 women vying for VP, 1 for GS, 4 for AGS; at least 54 contesting for other posts.

the 1990 election fielded any women candidates for the top two positions, according to "Bangladesher Chhatra Andolner Itihas: Ershader Somoykal" written by Hannan.

Earlier in 1962, Matia Chowdhury was elected DUCSU GS, and in 1966, Mahfuja Khanom was elected VP.

VOICES OF CHANGE

Speaking about this historic participation of women, VP candidate Umama Fatema said it was the July uprising that gave them the courage to contest.

"Women came forward [during the movement] with all their courage. I have joined the polls with that same

policy division can now analyse the impact of tax policy, tax expenditure and revenue collection situation.

In the initial ordinance, the authority said the policy division will also conduct law enforcement and tax collection situation assessment, which was contradictory to the policy division.

The cabinet approved amended draft looks to have incorporated concerns over many of the weaknesses of the earlier version, said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

"However, revenue policy is too important a subject to be left to bureaucracy alone."

Whoever may be the head of the policy division, there should be a formal and legally binding provision of regularly and systematically engaging multiple stakeholders including business, trade and investment leaders, development and distributive justice experts, and academics.

Although the two divisions should function independently, there should be specific provisions to ensure a healthy, constructive and mutually complementary relationship between them to avoid potential risks of failures at both ends.

In the earlier clause, officials with tax collection experience were supposed to get "priority".

In another amendment, the government has clarified that the

confidence."

She said that if elected, she will work against partisan politics. "I'll work for a politically conscious and academically sound campus."

Among her other pledges were introducing a teachers' evaluation by students, redesigning the syllabus, and increasing classroom facilities.

Sheikh Tasnim Afroz Emi, running for VP from Pratirodh Parshad, said, women have been neglected since the foundation of the university.

"I fought for women from the very first day I came to the campus. When the provost of female dormitories decided not to give seats to married students, I raised my voice against it. I worked till the provosts of five female dormitories were bound to cancel the order. It is with the same rigor that I will fight for the rights of all female students."

"Though each panel has men and women contesting, it's us females that face the social media trial and bullying."

Adity Islam, who is running for AGS from the leftist alliance panel "Aparajeyo Ekattor-Adommo Chobibish," said as a woman, she felt a responsibility to fight for others.

She added, "After so many years, women are contesting for vital posts. This time we're ready to face anything that comes our way -- we will not move from our places ... This is a proud moment for us women. After the uprising, we're proving our abilities again. We don't need sympathy or tokenism. We are capable. I'll work to make this campus a free space for women again."

"In this male-dominated society, we have to fight for everything. But through this election, I want to prove that even a fair candidate without political backing can serve their fellow students. I will work to increase the research budget and help make every student in this university an asset to the nation."

Ducusu for Change's Sabina Yasmin, who is running for GS, said the July uprising was her source of inspiration. "This July movement has given us courage; we're no longer afraid."

Her pledges include ensuring nutritious food on campus and tackling the accommodation crisis. "I'll introduce a one-seat and one-table per student system."

She also promised to work to increase research budgets.

agrievied officers who earlier protested against perceived discrimination should be engaged to ensure inclusive ownership of the reform before the new draft is placed for enactment as an Ordinance," he added.

While the changes largely reflect earlier taskforce recommendations and are an improvement over the previous draft, the government could have been more flexible, said Towfiqul Islam, senior research fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

Restricting top posts to government officials limits the pool of expertise, whereas including qualified professionals from outside the bureaucracy, similar to practices at the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority, could bring broader technical experience and help craft policies impartially alongside senior officials.

Another concern is the lack of broad-based discussion during the reform process, with key stakeholders, particularly political parties, inadequately consulted, he said.

"Their engagement is vital as revenue board reforms directly affect development finance and macroeconomic capacity, and without it, the reforms risk being undermined."

9 NBFIs staring at liquidation

FROM PAGE 1

contained in the Companies Act.

"We are moving forward with this only to protect the depositors," he said, adding that returning the NBFIs' customers' deposits will be the priority.

BAD LOANS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LOANS

FAS FINANCE | 99.93%

BIFC | 97.30%

PREMIER LEASING | 75.20%

FAREAST FINANCE | 98.13%

GSP FINANCE | 58.49%

PRIME FINANCE | 77.71%

AVIVA FINANCE | 82.64%

PEOPLE'S LEASING | 95%

INT'L LEASING | 95.97%

The liquidation will take place through legal procedures and the central bank will appoint liquidators, Mansur said, adding that more than nine NBFIs may be liquidated eventually.

As much as 73.5 percent of the sector's bad loans at the end of last year are concentrated among 12 NBFIs, BB data shows.

Earlier in January, the banking regulator identified 20 NBFIs with ailing financial health, including high defaulted loans, and placed them in the 'red' category.

The 20 NBFIs are: CVC Finance, Bay Leasing, Islamic Finance, Meridian Finance, GSP Finance, Hajj Finance, National Finance, IIDFC, Premier Leasing, Prime Finance, Uttara Finance, Aviva Finance, Phoenix Finance, People's Leasing, First Finance, Union Capital, International Leasing, BIFC, Fareast Finance and FAS Finance.

The BB wrote to the 20 NBFIs asking them to explain why their licences should not be cancelled within 15 working days.

Of the 20 NBFIs, nine have been initially selected for liquidation as their response were found to be unsatisfactory.

"Not all of their plans were acceptable," said Mansur, also a former economist of the International Monetary Fund.

The Daily Star could not reach the NBFIs as most are running without managing directors or chief executive officers and some are run by independent directors.

Defying outcry

FROM PAGE 1

fold increase in the number of severely malnourished children since March.

Rights group Amnesty International earlier this week accused Israel of enacting a "deliberate policy" of starvation in Gaza.

Without naming Israel, Lazzarini labelled it a "manufactured famine" and said food had been used "as a weapon of war".

The UNRWA commissioner-general warned that a weakened, hungry population would struggle to withstand a new military operation in the next stages of the campaign.

The military yesterday said it had informed medical personnel and aid groups in northern Gaza to start making evacuation plans ahead of a military offensive to seize the area.

The UN humanitarian agency has warned that the Israeli plan to expand military operations in Gaza City would have "a horrific humanitarian impact" on the already exhausted population.

"Forcing hundreds of thousands to move south is a recipe for further disaster and could amount to forcible transfer," OCHA said.

The UN Human Rights office in the Palestinian territories also voiced concern.

"Hundreds of families have been forced to flee, including many children, persons with disabilities, and older people, with nowhere safe to go," it said.

Meanwhile, UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini yesterday warned that severely malnourished children in the Gaza Strip will be "certainly condemned to death" unless aid gets to them quickly.

Lazzarini said an evaluation on how famine has evolved in the Gaza Strip was due to be published soon, adding UNRWA health centres had seen a six-fold increase in the number of severely malnourished children since March.

The latest announcement also drew condemnation from world leaders, including UN chief Antonio Guterres.

Guterres repeated a call for Israel to "immediately halt all settlement activity", warning that the EI project would be "an existential threat to the two State solution", his spokesperson said.

Dhaka seeks more trade ties with Islamabad

Pakistan commerce minister calls on adviser Adilur

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has expressed interest in industrial collaboration with Pakistan in sectors such as leather, shipbuilding, sugar, agro-processing and SMEs.

Pakistan, on its part, stressed the importance of using its economic and industrial base to address food security, promote value addition in the food industry, and strengthen industrial technology for mutual benefit.

The issues were discussed at a meeting between Bangladesh Industries Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan and Pakistan Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan at the adviser's office in Dhaka yesterday.

Pakistan's High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Imran Haider, was also present.

Jam Kamal Khan arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a four day visit. He is scheduled to visit Chattogram and attend a bilateral meeting with Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain on August 24, where Pakistan Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar will also be present.

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A clash broke out between the students of Dhaka College and Dhaka City College in the Science Lab area of the capital yesterday afternoon, leaving at least seven persons injured.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

JULY UPRISING

Recognise UN report as historic document

HC orders govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to declare the fact-finding report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) on human rights violations during last year's mass uprising as a historical document.

The court also ordered the government to publish the UN report in a gazette notification in order to preserve it as evidence and knowledge for future generations and asked the law ministry to submit a progress report on this issue in three months, Deputy Attorney General Mohammed Shafiqur Rahman told The Daily Star.

The High Court bench of Justice Fahmida Quader and Justice Sayed Jahed Mansur issued the directive and order following a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Md Tanvir Ahmed.

The lawyer submitted the petition on August 13 last year seeking HC directives on the interim government to take necessary actions against those responsible for "sustaining fascist rule" and mass killing of protesters during the uprising.

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Army chief leaves for four-day visit to China

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief of Army Staff General Waker Uz Zaman left Dhaka yesterday morning for a four-day state visit to China.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) statement, he will hold courtesy meetings with senior civilian and military officials in Beijing and discuss ways to enhance bilateral military cooperation.

General Waker is scheduled to return home on August 27.

DENGUE SURGE

Delayed hospitalisation driving up fatalities

HELEMUL ALAM

With five new dengue-related deaths reported yesterday, the nationwide death toll this year has climbed to 110, more than half of them from Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) areas.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), of the five latest deaths, three occurred in DSCC and two in Rajshahi division.

So far this year, 18 deaths have been reported from Barisal division, 17 from Chattogram, 11 from Dhaka North City Corporation, six from Rajshahi, five from Khulna, and one each from Mymensingh and areas of Dhaka outside the two city corporations.

Dr HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, identified delayed hospitalisation as one of the main reasons for the higher fatality rate this year.

"Although the number of dengue cases is slightly lower than in previous years, deaths are higher because people are paying less attention to dengue amid the presence of other viruses," he said.

For instance, out of 10 patients with viral fever, eight are currently found to have chikungunya and only two dengue. "Because of this, many patients do not take dengue seriously and reach hospitals late, often already in a critical stage," Dr Ahsan explained.

AT A GLANCE

- 5 new dengue deaths in a day
- Death toll climbs to 110 this year
- Over half of deaths in DSCC areas
- Four viral infections now circulating

He recommended early admission for patients with comorbidities, elderly individuals, and pregnant women to reduce the risk of death. He also warned about the risks of cross-infection from different dengue serotypes, which can cause more severe outcomes if treatment is delayed.

Explaining why DSCC hospitals

record the highest number of deaths, Dr Ahsan said many critically ill patients are referred from outside Dhaka to major hospitals in the city.

"When these patients arrive, their condition is often already critical. They are infected outside the capital but die in Dhaka hospitals, which may explain the higher death count reported here," he said.

He said delays in referral are another major factor. "A patient from Barisal or other distant districts may need five to six hours just to reach a Dhaka hospital and another hour for admission. If the patient is already in shock, this delay can be fatal," he said.

Dr Ahsan urged district-level hospitals to strictly follow the national dengue treatment guidelines and treat patients locally.

Public health expert Mushtaq Hussain echoed the call for earlier treatment and stronger local healthcare capacity.

He stressed the need to strengthen secondary care hospitals for vulnerable groups such as elderly patients, infants, and those with comorbidities, so they can be stabilised before being referred to tertiary hospitals.

At present, four viral infections – influenza, dengue, chikungunya, and Covid-19 – are circulating in the country, according to medical experts.

"Many patients fail to recognise warning signs such as severe abdominal pain, difficulty breathing, bleeding, extreme fatigue, or a sharp drop in urination or platelet count. By the time they arrive at hospitals, their condition is often critical."



EXPLOSIVES CASE

Fakhrul, 64 BNP leaders, activists acquitted

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka tribunal yesterday relieved 65 leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations, including its Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir after accepting the probe report in a case filed under the explosives act.

Standing committee members Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Vice Chairman Shamsuzzaman Dudu, Barkat Ullah Bulu, former Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, Joint Secretary General Barrister AM Mahbub Uddin Khokon, former BNP Chief Whip Md Zainul Abdin Faroque, Engineer Ishraque Hossain, a member of BNP Chairperson's Foreign Affairs Advisory Committee, and Barrister Nasir Uddin Ashim were also relieved.

Judge Md Zakir Hossain Galib of Dhaka Metropolitan Special Tribunal 1 passed the order.

According to the case statement, it was alleged that leaders and activists came to the Ramna Police Station area to attend a pre-announced BNP rally in the capital on October 28 of 2023. During this time, they damaged vehicles and obstructed policemen from discharging their duties.

7 hurt as students of Dhaka College, City College clash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A clash between the students of Dhaka College and Dhaka City College broke out at Science Lab and adjacent areas yesterday, leaving several people injured.

The intermittent clashes, which lasted for more than three hours, caused severe traffic congestion in the surrounding areas, forcing many commuters to walk to their destinations.

AKM Mahfuzul Haque, officer-in-charge of New Market Police Station, said the violence was a sequel to an incident on Tuesday, when some City College students allegedly beat Dhaka College students over seating arrangements at a coaching centre.

Around 11:30am yesterday, students of both colleges took to the streets and started hurling brick chips at each other. They also chased each other with sticks, leading to the clash.

Police said students from both sides attacked law enforcers during the incident, leaving several policemen injured. The law enforcers used batons and a sound grenade to disperse the students. At least seven students from both sides were injured.

Traffic movement began to return to normal on the roads around Science Lab after 3:00pm, as students from both groups retreated to their campuses.

Speaking to reporters at the scene, Masud Alam, deputy commissioner of Ramna Division, said such incidents occur frequently and even trivial matters spark clashes between the two colleges.

"We will talk to the principals of both colleges. This time, we want to identify the root cause. People suffer due to this," he said.

Face people's verdict through politics, not tactics

Tarique urges parties

UNB, Dhaka

Stating that some political parties are resorting to unfair tactics to block his party's victory in the next election, BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday urged all to confront politics with politics instead of preventing people from giving their verdict.

He made the remarks while speaking virtually at a programme arranged by the Bangladesh Hindu-Buddha Christian Kalyan Front at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, marking Janmashtami, the birth of Lord Krishna.

At the programme, he sought the support and active cooperation of the Hindu community for his party in the upcoming national election. "It is a big opportunity to build a safe Bangladesh for the future generation," he said.

"There are still some parties and quarters who fear that if the election is held, people will vote for BNP to form the government. Out of this fear, they are resorting to evil tactics and setting conditions to obstruct BNP's victory," he added.

"I would like to draw their attention by saying -- confront politics with politics. Put your trust and confidence in people's strength. If BNP's victory truly comes from the people, then do not block the people's right to give their mandate just to resist BNP's triumph," he said.

Tarique said his party believes the Proportional Representation system of election is still not suitable for Bangladesh, considering its socio-economic, geographic, and political realities.

"People have the right to know who they are voting for and which individual is being elected as their representative in Parliament. But under the PR system, voters have no clear way of knowing exactly which person is being elected," he said.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

TK 400CR GRAFT

CID sues Al-Aqaba Cooperative directors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department has filed a case against the directors of Al-Aqaba Multipurpose Cooperative Society for allegedly embezzling nearly Tk 400 crore from customers. The case has been filed under the Money Laundering Act.

In a press release yesterday, CID special superintendent of Police (Media) Jasim Uddin Khan confirmed that the cooperative lured customers by promising higher profits than banks and collected substantial amounts of money through deceitful means.

According to the press release, the cooperatives operated under registrations from the Madarganj Upazila Cooperative Office in Jamalpur and carried out banking activities under different cooperative banners.

Among them, Al-Aqaba Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited of Madarganj is notable for attracting customers from Jamalpur and surrounding districts by offering high short-term returns.

The CID statement mentioned that the cooperative reportedly collected funds from around 13,000 to 14,000 customers, promising monthly returns of Tk 1,200 to Tk 1,500 per lakh.

Initially, limited payments were made to maintain credibility, but later the cooperative stopped payouts. The owners and officials then locked the offices and went into hiding.

Investigations revealed that the directors embezzled nearly Tk 400 crore and laundered the money by purchasing properties under their own names, reportedly generating 3,113 decimals of land in assets.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



The Daily Star and ActionAid Bangladesh are jointly organising Season 4 of "Our Planet, Our Responsibility". A Mentoring session was held for the nine finalist teams selected under three categories -- Green Business, Water Rights, and Energy Transition -- at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday. On August 23, the finalist teams will present their ideas to the judges as they compete for the championship title.

PHOTO: STAR

Prosecutor suspended for trying to bribe judge

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
 Patuakhali

The Patuakhali District Bar Association yesterday suspended Advocate Md Ruhul Amin, Patuakhali's public prosecutor (PP) of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal, on charges of attempting to bribe a judge.

The decision came at an emergency meeting of the association around noon, following a written complaint from Judge Nilufar Shirin. A total of 184 members attended the meeting, which was presided over by Bar Association President Advocate MD Humayun Kabir.

A decision was taken in the meeting to issue a show-cause notice to Ruhul Amin, requiring him to explain his actions within seven days.

The complaint quoted
 SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



Children venture out to the banks of the Chengerkhal river and adjacent wetlands with fishing nets, bamboo traps, and baskets to catch fish. For them, fishing is not just a way to gather food, but also a game among friends. The photo was taken in Mogolgaon village of Sylhet Sadar upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

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 Please Call : 01710-878300

Fire guts 12 vehicles at Habiganj filling station

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A fire broke out at a CNG refuelling station in the Aushkandi area of Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj yesterday, destroying at least nine auto rickshaws, a passenger bus, and two motorcycles.

The blaze erupted around 6:00am when a bus was being refuelled at Aushkandi station along the Dhaka Sylhet highway.

A firefighting unit from Nabiganj fire

service went to the spot and brought the fire under control after more than two and a half hours.



Habibur Rahman, station officer of Nabiganj fire service, said, "The fire broke out during the refuelling of a bus when its cylinder exploded. Firefighters managed to bring the blaze under control."

No casualties were reported at the time of filing this report.

Over 100 trees felled at RMU project site

Univ authorities suspect contractor did it; company denies involvement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Over a hundred trees have allegedly been felled on the land acquired for Rajshahi Medical University (RMU), where its academic and administrative buildings are supposed to be constructed.

In a video, several people were seen cutting the trees, claiming they were acting on the instructions of "Hafiz bhai". However, no one has officially taken responsibility.

University authorities suspect that Hossain Construction Pvt Ltd, which is carrying out preliminary sand-filling work, may be involved in the tree felling. On August 13, the company was issued a show-cause notice.

Sirajum Munir, director of RMU's planning division, said the tree felling was not done on university instructions. "At least 137 trees have been cut; most of them were probably cut last Saturday and Sunday. We suspect the contractor might be involved, but they have denied it in their reply to our show-cause notice. If further investigation proves their involvement, action will be taken."

Delwar Hossain, manager (Rajshahi) of Hossain Construction Pvt Ltd, said, "We are a Dhaka-based company and work across the country. We have never faced such accusations before. Why



would we cut down the trees? This is a baseless accusation and a conspiracy."

Asked about Hafiz, Munir said, "There was a cattle farm on the land run by one Hafizul Islam. It was acquired from him with compensation. We are trying to find out who is behind the tree cutting."

Contacted, Hafizul Islam said, "I had a farm there but left after receiving a letter from the university authorities. I do not know anything about the trees being cut."

Request for Expression of Interest

Christian Aid, Manusher Jonno Foundation, and WE CAN are implementing the ECSAP Project in Bangladesh, co-funded by the European Union. We are inviting Expressions of Interest for: "Undertaking research to generate evidence on issues impacting civil society organisations (CSO) in Bangladesh." Eligible applicants are Registered NGOs, Academic institutions, Policy/research think-tanks and Media research institutes. Individuals and consulting firms are not eligible.

Submission Deadline: 06 September 2025

Email: bangladesh-procurement@christian-aid.org (for submission and queries).

Kindly scan the QR code to get details information and documentation.



BRAC University
 Ayesha Abed Library

ENLISTMENT NOTICE

The Ayesha Abed Library of BRAC University invites applications from qualified and experienced agents, distributors, suppliers, importers, and publishers for enlistment to supply printed learning materials, including books, journals, and magazines.

Duration of Enlistment	October 2025 to September 2029
Eligibility Criteria	Vendors with a minimum of three years of proven business experience are eligible to apply. The following documents must be submitted: a) Valid Trade License; b) Income Tax Certificate; c) VAT Registration Certificate; d) Import Registration Certificate (IRC), where applicable, and e) Other documents as mentioned in the schedule
Schedule Collection Location, Time, and Cost	The schedule can be collected from the address below upon submitting the original receipt for the non-refundable fee of BDT 1,500, deposited into the bank account mentioned below, between August 24 and September 24, 2025, from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM on working days. Bank Details: Account Name : BRAC UNIVERSITY Account Number : 1501100132106001 Bank Name : BRAC Bank Limited Branch : Gulshan Branch Routing Number : 060261726
Application Submission Location and Period	Submit completed applications labeled "Application for Enlistment of Printed Learning Material Supplier" in the designated box at the following address: The University Librarian Ayesha Abed Library (Level 09), BRAC University, Kha-224, Bir Uttam Rafigul Islam Avenue, Merul Badda, Dhaka-1212. Deadline: September 25, 2025 (9:30 AM - 4:00 PM). Contact: +88 09638464646 Ext. 1743, 1747

Recognise

FROM PAGE 3

The HC on August 15 last year issued a rule questioning the authorities' apathy and reluctance to take action in this regard.

The fact-finding team of the UNHCHR office analysed rights violations in Bangladesh between July 1 and August 15, 2024, after speaking to many protesters, including those seriously injured and published a report on this issue in February.

Later, the petitioner submitted a supplementary petition to the HC in May, attaching the report.

The HC on May 14 issued a rule asking the authorities to explain why the report should not be declared as a "historical document" and why the report should not be preserved as evidence.

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পুটি বিক্রয়

রাজার্ক পুর্বাঞ্চল এলাকায় ৭.৫ কাঠার, পুটি নং ০৩, সেক্রেট ২৬, রোড ৮০৩, পুটি বিক্রয় হচ্ছে।
 নম্বরঃ ০১৮৩৩০২০৮৯৯

PRAYER TIMING

AUGUST 22

Fazr Juma Asr Magrib Esha
 AZAN 4-25 12-30 4-45 6-38 8-00
 JAMAAT 5-00 1-15 5-00 6-41 8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Department of Environment

Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh Project
 9th Floor, Room: 903, Poribesh Bhaban New Building
 E/16, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.doe.gov.bd

Request for Expression of Interest (EoI) for Selection of Consultant Firm/ Organization (National)

1. Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
2. Agency	:	Department of Environment (DoE)
3. Procuring entity name	:	Project Director
4. Procuring entity district	:	Dhaka
5. Expression of Interest for	:	Consultant Firm (National)
6. Title of Service	:	Development of site-specific Management plan and operational guideline for Morjat baor.
7. EoI Ref No.	:	22.02.0000.045.14.01.02-199
8. Date	:	20 August 2025

KEY INFORMATION

9. Procuring method	:	Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)
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10. Budget and source of funds	:	Global Environment Facility (GEF)
11. Development partners	:	GEF-UNDP

12. Project code	:	223053500
13. Project name	:	Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh Project
14. EoI closing date and time	:	28 September 2025, 02:00pm

INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

15. **Eligibility of the Consulting firm/organization:**
 - a. The consulting firm/organization must have minimum 10 years' experience in developing conservation management plans and operational guidelines for similar ecosystems, NRM sector, Environment, climate change, institutional assessment, policy formulation.
 - b. The consulting firm /organization should have a multidisciplinary team, including experts in ecology, hydrology, environmental policy, and community engagement.
 - c. Submission of latest (2023-24 and 2024-25) Annual audit reports of the firm that should be at least BDT 02 crore net turnover from competent authority or firm.
 - d. Successfully completion at least two (2) similar assignments in the last 10 years with the evidence of Job completion certificate/ Work Order/ Purchase order/ Any Professional contract from competent authority.
 - e. Submission of bank solvency certificate along with last three months bank statement (Income statement and balance sheet to indicate its financial stability, liquidity, credit standing, and market reputation, etc)
 - f. Submission of VAT and Tax Registration Certificate and evidence of payment issued by competent authority evidencing that the Bidder is updated with its tax payment obligations, or Certificate of Tax exemption, if any such privilege is enjoyed by the Bidder
 - g. Certificate of Registration of the business, including Articles of Incorporation, or equivalent document if Bidder is not a corporation or valid trade license or registered as Joint Stock Company.
16. **Other Details (if applicable):** The Terms of References (ToR) for the services including the scope of works, deliverables, team composition with educational qualifications, and experiences are available on the DoE's official website (www.doe.gov.bd). Applicants are advised to provide all the necessary information and proven documents with a cover letter. One original and two copies of the EoI must be submitted in a sealed envelope and be clearly marked the title of service for the EoI.

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

17. Name of official inviting EoI	:	Farhana Mustari
18. Designation of official inviting EoI	:	Project Director, Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh Project
19. Address of official inviting EoI	:	Department of Environment, 8th Floor, Room: 903, Poribesh Bhaban New Building, E/16, Agargaon Administrative Area Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.
20. Contact details of official inviting EoI	:	Phone: +880-2222218305, Email: fmmunni@yahoo.com
21. Place of submission of EoI	:	Office of the Project Director, Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh, 8th Floor, Room: 903, Poribesh Bhaban, E/16, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
22. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all EoIs.	:	

The Department of Environment (DoE) is implementing a project titled "Implementing Ecosystem-based Management in Ecologically Critical Areas in Bangladesh". The project aims to apply an ecosystem-based framework for managing Morjat Baor Ecologically Critical Areas (ECAs) in Jhenaiahd and proposed Biodiversity Heritage Haldia river in Chittagong in Bangladesh to enhance the conservation of globally significant biodiversity and support local livelihoods. The Project period is July 2024 to June 2029.

10:20:25

Farhana Mustari

INTERNATIONAL

DHAKA FRIDAY AUGUST 22, 2025

BHADRA 7, 1432 BS

The Daily Star

5

India, Russia agree to boost trade ties

REUTERS, Moscow

India and Russia agreed to boost trade ties yesterday as their foreign ministers met in Moscow, giving little indication that US President Donald Trump's hefty tariffs on India for buying Russian oil would disrupt their relations.

Indian goods face additional US tariffs of up to 50%, among the highest imposed by Washington, due to New Delhi's increased purchases of Russian oil.

Western countries boycotting Russian crude say India's purchases are helping to fund Moscow's war in Ukraine. But New Delhi says its purchases are purely commercial transactions.

Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, after meeting with Russian FM Sergei Lavrov, said that ties between the two countries had been among the steadiest of major nations in the world since WWII.

The two countries reaffirmed their ambition to expand bilateral trade, including by increasing India's exports to Russia, Jaishankar said, according to a statement from India's foreign ministry.

Study: Tourism polluting Antarctica

AFP, Santiago

Soaring numbers of tourists and expanding research projects are increasingly polluting Antarctica, scientists warned Wednesday, a fresh blow for one of Earth's most pristine environments already threatened by human driven climate change.

In Antarctic areas where humans have been active, the concentration of fine particles containing heavy metals is 10 times higher than it was 40 years ago, the international team of researchers said in a new study.

That change has come as the number of annual tourists visiting the white continent has risen from 20,000 to 120,000 over the last two decades, according to the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators.

The increasing human presence in Antarctica raises concerns about pollutants from fossil fuel combustion, including those from ships, aircraft, vehicles and supporting infrastructure," the study in the journal *Nature Sustainability* said.



Palestinian children jostle for food at a charity kitchen in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Suspended Thai PM defends herself in court

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's suspended prime minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra testified on Thursday in a case seeking her removal from office over her handling of the kingdom's border row with Cambodia.

Paetongtarn, daughter of controversial but influential billionaire ex-prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, is accused of failing in her duties by not standing up for the country properly in a call with former Cambodian leader Hun Sen, audio of which was leaked online.

The Constitutional Court will rule on Friday next week whether Paetongtarn should be thrown out of office.

The court suspended her from office last month and summoned her to answer questions in the case yesterday - her 39th birthday.

Dressed in a black business suit, Paetongtarn answered judges' questions for around an hour and a half, but the court has issued an order banning any reporting of what was said during



the hearing.

The case centres around her call in June with Hun Sen, Cambodia's longtime ruler and father of its current premier, which focused on the two neighbours' then brewing row over their disputed border.

In the call, Paetongtarn addressed Hun Sen as "uncle" and referred to a Thai military commander as her "opponent", sparking a furious reaction in Thailand.

Conservative lawmakers accused her of kowtowing to Cambodia and undermining the military - a hugely powerful institution in Thailand.

The main partner in Paetongtarn's ruling coalition walked out in protest over her conduct in the leaked call, a move that almost collapsed her government.

A group of senators filed a petition with the Constitutional Court arguing Paetongtarn should be removed from office for breaching constitutional provisions that require "evident integrity" and "ethical standards" among ministers.

US sends warships near Venezuela

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump is deploying three warships off the coast of Venezuela as part of efforts to curb drug trafficking, a source familiar with the move said Wednesday.

The deployment comes as the Trump administration steps up pressure on Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro, doubling its bounty to \$50 million earlier this month on drug charges against the leftist strongman.

The three Aegis-class guided missile destroyers are heading to the waters off Venezuela, the US source told AFP on condition of anonymity. It is not clear how they will combat drug trafficking.

Washington was also planning to send 4,000 Marines to the region.

Female candidates

FROM PAGE 12

According to the JCSU Election Commission, only 128 nominations came from 10 female halls compared to 289 from 11 male halls. Several women's dormitories did not receive enough candidates to fill all 15 posts.

At the central level, out of 276 nominations for 25 JCSU posts, only 57 are from women - five times fewer than men.

Participation is especially low for top posts. Two women are running for general secretary, 10 for the reserved assistant general secretary seat, but none for vice president. Most panels have fielded women only in reserved positions.

"Cyberbullying and harassment also discouraged us," she said.

Faiza Mehbabin Priyonee, president of Jahangirnagar Sanskriti Jote, said women are losing interest in politics in the absence of a supportive and inclusive environment on campus.

"There's been a noticeable erosion of women-friendly political and social spaces, and in the aftermath of the mass uprising, we haven't seen a decisive stance from the administration. Each time women have lodged complaints about abuse on campus, impunity has prevailed, and the perpetrators have continued to assert their dominance with arrogance."

Rezwana Karim Singha, an associate professor of anthropology at JU, said the decades-long absence of JCSU elections meant many students never understood their importance. She said since last August, women in politics have faced widespread online harassment, making students more hesitant.

JU's women have been bold in protests but not equally active in campus politics. A lack of recognition and a sense of insecurity have fuelled their apathy, Rezwana said.

Jamaat, NCP deny involvement

FROM PAGE 2

Sylhet city BNP's acting president Rezaul Hasan Koyel Ludhi said, "We are challenging the authenticity of the report; [if the allegations are not proved], the newspaper [that cited it] should apologise. It's the Awami League who has been behind stone looting for the past 15 years. We're being accused so the real culprits can hide."

For over a year, stones in different areas across Sylhet have been looted. The situation escalated recently after stones worth

hundreds of crores of taka were looted from popular tourist destination Sada Pathor in Companiganj upazila, sparking nationwide criticism.

Responding to the situation, the ACC on August 13 visited the Sada Pathor area and later submitted a preliminary report with names of offices, officers and others involved.

The ACC report included names of Rezaul Hasan Koyel Ludhi, acting president of Sylhet city BNP, and its General Secretary Emdad Hossain

Chowdhury; Md Fakhrul Islam, Ameen of Sylhet city Jamaat, and its secretary Joynal Abedin; Nazim Uddin, chief coordinator of Sylhet district NCP; and Abu Sadek Mohammad Khairul Islam Chowdhury, chief coordinator of NCP's Sylhet city unit; and 36 others.

The Daily Star has seen a copy of the ACC's authentic report.

Meanwhile, newly appointed Deputy Commissioner for Sylhet Sarower Alam vowed stern action to stop illegal stone extraction.

Within a few hours of joining office yesterday, he visited the Sada Pathor area in the afternoon.

Briefing journalists there, he said, "I'll ensure that not a single stone can be removed from here and will restore Sada Pathor's beauty."

"Who was involved in the looting and how the stones were looted will be evaluated properly. I am not under any pressure as the people are my power and they stood against the stone looters."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Project Director

Integrated Livestock Development Project in 3 Hill Districts.

3 No. Jetty gate, Fakirhat, Chattogram-4100.

Date: 19/08/2025

Invitation for Tender

Memo No. 33.01.0000.842.04.007.25/15

1. Ministry/Division : Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock

2. Agency : Department of Livestock Services

3. Procuring Entity Name : Project Director

4. Procuring Entity Code : 144-14404-224410400

5. Procuring Entity District : Chattogram

6. Invitation for : Vehicle Hiring (Along with Driver, Fuel and others)

7. Invitation Ref. No : Memo No: 33.01.0000.842.04.007.25/15

8. Date : 19/08/2025

KEY INFORMATION :

9. Procurement Method : Open Tendering Method (OTM) (Non-consulting Services)

FUNDING INFORMATION :

10. Budget and Source of Funds : Development Budget GOB

11. Development Partner : N/A

PARTICULAR INFORMATION :

12. Project/program Name (if applicable) : Integrated Livestock Development Project in 3 Hill Districts.

13. Tender Package No. : SD-2

14. Tender package Name: : Vehicle Hiring (Along with Driver, Fuel and others)

15. Tender Publication Date : 20/08/2025

16. Tender Last Selling Date : 17/09/2025 (up to 5pm)

17. Tender Closing Date & Time : 18/09/2025, Time 12:00 (noon).

18. Tender Opening Date & Time (if different from 17) : 18/09/2025, Time: 2 pm.

19. Name & Address of the Office(s) :

- Selling Tender document : Office of the Project Director, Integrated Livestock Development Project in 3 Hill Districts. 3 No. Jetty gate, Fakirhat, Chattogram-4100.

- Receiving Tender Document : Do

- Opening Tender Document : Do

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER :

20. Eligibility of Tenderer : As stated in RFP, ITT and GCC clauses of the tender document.

21. Brief Description of Services : As stated in TOR in RFP.

22. Price of Tender document : Tk. 500/= (Tk. Five Hundred only) (Nonrefundable)

23. Package No. : SD-I Lot No. : - Identification of Package/Lot : Vehicle Hiring Location : Office of the Project director, Tender Security Amount (Tk.) : 264000.00 Completion time in Days/Weeks/Months : 36 Months or Duration of the project : Two Lakh Sixty-Four Thousand only

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS:

24. Name of the Official Inviting Tender : Dr. Md. Nazrul Islam

25. Designation of the official Inviting Tender : Project Director

26. Address of the official Inviting Tender : Office of the Project Director, Integrated Livestock Development Project in 3 Hill Districts, 3 No. Jetty gate, Fakirhat, Chattogram-4100.

27. Contact Details of the official Inviting Tender : Cell: 01711316303, E-mail: pd.hilltracts.dls@gmail.com

28. Special instructions: a) Due to unavoidable circumstances, if the tender cannot be received and opened in the schedule date and time, the same will be shifted on the next working day. b) All other instructions are described in tender documents. c) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject whole or part of any tender.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer

Education Engineering Department

Noakhali District

Invitation for e-Tender

Tender Notice No. 04/e-GP/EED/ND/2025-2026, Dt: 21-08-2025

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

SL No.	Package No.	Tender ID No.	Name of tender	Last date and time for tender document selling	Last date and time for tender security submission	Last date and time for tender closing & opening
01	Noa/TMED/64/20-21/01	1141859	Repair and renovation of Academic Building and Administrative Building at Begumgonj Technical School and College, Begumgonj, Noakhali.	07-Sep-2025 15:00	07-Sep-2025 16:00	08-Sep-2025 12:00
02	Noa/TMED/64/20-21/02	1141860	Extension of boundary wall at Begumgonj Technical School and College, Begumgonj, Noakhali.	07-Sep-2025 15:00	07-Sep-2025 16:00	08-Sep-2025 12:00

To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

21.08.25

Khandaker Nazrul Islam
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Noakhali District
E-mail: ee_noa@eedmoe.gov.bd

GD-1844

NORD STREAM BLASTS Ukrainian suspect arrested in Italy

AFP, Berlin

A Ukrainian suspect has been arrested in Italy over the sabotage of the Nord Stream underwater gas pipelines from Russia to Europe in 2022, German prosecutors said yesterday.

The suspect, identified as Serhii K., is accused of being part of a cell "who placed explosive devices on the Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 gas pipelines", they said.

He is "believed to have been one of the coordinators of the operation" in which a group allegedly hired a yacht in the German Baltic Sea port of Rostock to carry out the attacks.

Female candidates

FROM PAGE 12

According to the JCSU Election Commission, only 128 nominations came from 10 female halls compared to 289 from 11 male halls. Several women's dormitories did not receive enough candidates to fill all 15 posts.

At the central level, out of 276 nominations for 25 JCSU posts, only 57 are from women - five times fewer than men.

Participation is especially low for top posts. Two women are running for general secretary, 10 for the reserved assistant general secretary seat

Collusion fuelling Sada Pathor looting

Govt must act on probe reports implicating agencies, individuals

It is quite disturbing, if not as surprising, to learn how the rampant looting of white stones from Bholaganj's Sada Pathor area has enjoyed broad support from influential quarters. As per a probe committee formed by the Sylhet district administration, some government officials, including members of law enforcement agencies, were involved in or beneficiaries of illegal extraction. A preliminary report by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) was more damning, as it specified the Bureau of Mineral Development (BMD), the Sylhet administration, police, Bangladesh Border Guard (BGB), and 42 individuals with political and business links as being involved, either directly or indirectly.

Among the accused named are Sylhet's divisional commissioner, now-former deputy commissioner, superintendent of police, now-former UNO of Companiganj, etc. Besides administration and law enforcement officials, the names of leaders from across the political spectrum also came up in the ACC report, underscoring how high up the chain of authority this nexus of exploitation goes. While we acknowledge the flurry of interventions, including joint forces drives and administrative reshuffles that followed public outrage over Sada Pathor looting, doubts remain as to how effective these will be in the long run. The "all-party consensus" that seems to prevail over stone extraction—reflecting decades of elite capture and policy failures—cannot be undone by short-term measures alone. And how do you prevent a practice that syndicates have turned into an organised crime with mass participation?

This wide net of beneficiaries highlights just how entrenched the business of stone and sand extraction, not just around Sada Pathor but across Sylhet's tourist spots, has become. It is no longer just a case of a few unscrupulous traders, politicians, or local opportunists exploiting natural resources; rather, it has become a well-oiled system of plunder sustained by collusion among state officials and vested groups. That the very agencies tasked with protecting natural resources and ensuring law and order have been found complicit only shows the extent of this problem.

But now that the matter has come to light again, the authorities must ensure that ongoing efforts and investigations do not lose momentum or get buried under political pressure, as has so often been the case in similar scandals. Accountability must be established at every level, and those responsible, no matter how influential, must face justice. Besides joint drives to recover stolen stones, the district administration has reportedly taken the initiative of restoring them at Sada Pathor. Such efforts must persist as part of a broader strategy to prevent illegal extractions and other harmful activities that our natural commons are routinely subjected to in the country.

Address the crisis of community clinics

Govt must regularise medicine supply, renovate crumbling clinic buildings

It is quite concerning that community clinics, the primary healthcare facilities most accessible to the rural populace, remain plagued by multiple issues. As things stand, many are housed in dilapidated buildings and suffer from a shortage of essential medicines. This is severely disrupting the vital services they provide, including 22 types of free medicine to 4.9 lakh people daily.

According to a report in this daily, 3,136 of the 14,467 community clinics in the country have been identified as high-risk and need immediate replacement, while another 1,944 require urgent repair. The situation worsened after the sectoral programme that funded the medicine supply to community clinics came to an end in June 2024. Following the change in government in August 2024, the new programme proposed by the previous regime was scrapped because of anomalies and coordination failures. Although the interim government has drafted a two-year project to support the clinics through June 2026, the proposal is still awaiting approval. In the meantime, only a limited supply—15,000 boxes of medicine—has been distributed to clinics through a lump-sum allocation, according to officials of the Community Clinic Health Support Trust.

The medicine supply is quite insufficient, with a *Prothom Alo* report pointing out that 180 community clinics in Laxmipur have not been able to provide medicine to patients for the last three months. Similarly, reports from northern Bengal show severe shortages of contraceptives, provided at the community clinics under a separate health sector programme. As a result, poor villagers are being forced to purchase over-the-counter drugs—like pain relievers and cough syrups—from pharmacies, further burdening households already struggling with some of the highest out-of-pocket healthcare costs in the world. This situation is especially alarming amid ongoing public health threats such as dengue, influenza, and chikungunya. The shortage of contraceptives is particularly concerning as the decline in the country's fertility rate has remained stagnant since 2011.

Despite past political exploitations of community clinics, and conflicting stances about their necessity between the local government and health reform commissions, the fact remains: these clinics are indispensable for lakhs of rural people. Therefore, the government must act swiftly to repair unsafe buildings, ensure a consistent supply of medicines and contraceptives, and allocate sufficient manpower and equipment to the clinics. The health of rural citizens must not be compromised while policy decisions regarding the funding of community clinics or their revamping as per the health commission's reform recommendations await approval.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

The Scream stolen

On this day in 2004, Edvard Munch's iconic painting *The Scream* (1910 version) and *Madonna* were stolen in broad daylight from the Munch Museum in Oslo, Norway. Both works were recovered two years later with minor damage.

EDITORIAL

Political parties must support the election drive



THE THIRD VIEW

Mahfuz Anam
is the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

MAHFUZ ANAM

We cannot say it vociferously enough that to regain a semblance of global and regional support and strengthen our confidence about our future, holding elections is a must-do. Prof Muhammad Yunus is the best and perhaps only person able to head the interim government, but his government is still an interim one. We must replace it with an elected one, which will come to power through a free and fair expression of public will.

When we hear about the numerous conditions that are being placed by various political parties, we cannot help but wonder whether we really understand the true importance of a national election. We seem to think of it more as an event rather than a process through which people exercise their right to select the leadership that will govern us. We cannot forget for a moment that the polls belong to the people, not to any political party. None of them has any right to declare that elections cannot be held unless this or that demand is met. They have no right to deprive the voters of their fundamental right to exercise their franchise. It is the most basic of rights and every citizen is entitled to it the moment he/she is born. Vote is the symbol of a citizen's political existence.

The introduction of the caretaker government system to oversee elections served us well. Under the caretaker government system, we had four elections—1991, June 1996, 2001, and 2008—which lived up to acceptable standards. Though the losing parties always complained about the outcome, they functionally accepted the results and joined the governance process.

However, through a constant process of walkouts, followed by long-term boycotts and even resignations, both the Awami League and BNP stymied the growth of parliament as the House of the People. The frequent absence of the opposition in parliament gave the ruling party the opportunity to make it an extension of the executive branch. Yes, the ruling party must be held responsible for preventing the parliament from playing its due role, but the opposition must also share the blame for debilitating the House by failing to make use of it to ensure accountability and transparency.

One of Sheikh Hasina's biggest crimes was manipulating elections and engineering their outcomes. She not

only produced fraudulent results but also destroyed democracy, made the institution of people's representatives questionable, and cast doubt on the election, which is the most authentic process through which we can understand people's minds.

Through that one action, repeated three times, the previous regime turned parliament into a rubber stamp body and MPs into pliant clerks who, with some honourable exceptions, carried out the boss's wishes in exchange for various benefits, including usurping development funds. The parliament, instead of being the watchdog over the executive, became the latter's lapdog, abdicating all its supervisory and monitoring role.

It needs to be mentioned here that an agreement has already been reached

If we believe in democracy, which all our political parties claim to do, then we must work together to hold the coming election and make it credible for our people to celebrate and the world to honour.

among all the parties, including the BNP (with a note of dissent, of course), for setting up a bicameral legislature with an Upper House. BNP wants the seats of the Upper House to reflect those in the Lower House, while the rest want it under the proportional representation (PR) system.

BNP has been consistently seeking the election as early as possible. Some, if not all, feel that the party's insistence for an early election is based neither on their love for democracy nor a desire to implement people's right to vote, but to cash in on the opportunity that the present situation provides. It is based on the fact that, given the peculiar circumstances, it is most likely to get the majority votes in the polls. So the earlier the election, the better it is for them. The fear is that the longer it stays on the sidelines, the more its reputation will be eroded as a section of their rank and file has already started indulging in practices that dragged the previous ruling party through the mud.

The newest political party, National

Citizen Party (NCP), feels that the later the election is held, the better the party's chances are to gain people's support. So while it has accepted the election timeline, it wants to see the implementation of the July Charter—produced by the National Consensus Commission—before the polls, and which should have precedence over the constitution or any law. This demand



VISUAL: BIPLOB CHAKROBORTY

raises fear of unconstitutional behaviour that will set a dangerous precedent. Therefore, we see merit in the question raised by BNP leader Salahuddin Ahmed, "Can an agreement among political parties be considered as a 'supra constitutional document'?"

Jamaat-e-Islami also supports the election timeline, but it has presented a new demand that is complicated and challenging, and one that our people are completely unfamiliar with.

If we believe in democracy, which all our political parties claim to do, then we must work together to hold the coming election and make it credible for our people to celebrate and the world to honour.

While agreeing to having the election in February 2026, Jamaat is demanding that the election for both the lower and upper houses be conducted through the PR process. In the past, whatever percentage of the overall votes that Jamaat got, they did not get as many seats under the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system. Under the PR system, they expect to get more seats. Hence, the demand.

However, a major shortcoming of the PR system is that people don't get to vote for their chosen candidates, but for their parties. Hence, a direct link between a candidate and a voter is not there, which deprives the voter from choosing a specific candidate on the basis of their merit, honesty, capabilities, and human qualities. In our country, people generally prefer to vote for candidates that they know and can hold accountable. An MP's link with his/her constituency is vital, and that is what motivates people to vote.

Why is the PR system practised so rarely in the world? Why do most countries prefer the direct election of

a candidate chosen by the voters? No country in the world, except Germany and Israel, have the PR system. Nepal, after more than five years of negotiations, has adopted a hybrid system of electing the Lower House of 275 MPs, 60 percent of whom (165 MPs) are elected directly through the FPTP system; the rest (110 MPs) are elected through the PR system. People's preference globally is clear—

for the FPTP system as against the PR system. Jamaat must keep this in mind and not impose a system that our people have no experience of, just out of party interest.

NCP, which has yet to test public trust in them, aligns itself with the PR demand, again thinking that they are likely to get a few more seats that way, putting party interest above that of the nation.

If we believe in democracy, which all our political parties claim to do, then we must work together to hold the coming election and make it credible for our people to celebrate and the world to honour.

Our capacity to complicate matters, especially the political ones, seem to be inexhaustible, even when we know that doing so may affect the process of restoration of democracy by postponing elections. We have seen this happen many times, yet we fail to learn. The election in February 2026 is among the most important challenges that we are going to face, and once completed, it may hopefully pave the way not only for restoring economic and sociopolitical stability but also the implementation of much-needed reform initiatives. Our political parties can either create situations that will impede the election process, or they can adopt a collaborative attitude that will expedite our march towards it. We must not forget that our democratic journey has faltered many times in the past. After 54 years of independence, we cannot further delay or distort our democratic path forward.

Architectural peacekeeping for violent campuses



Maruf Ahmed
is an architect and lecturer at Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET).

MARUF AHMED

I have long believed that space is not merely a backdrop to human action but an active participant in shaping it. In Bangladesh, campus violence is usually discussed in terms of political factions, administrative failures, or law enforcement. Rarely do we look at the built environment itself. But walls, gates, corridors, and open grounds are not passive; they are drawn and arranged in ways that either provoke or pacify confrontation. The recurrent eruptions of violence in our public universities have convinced me that the architecture of these campuses is not innocent.

Walking through Dhaka College, with its singular entries, tight corridors, and controlled circulation, I feel the constant undercurrent of control. Chokepoints force bodies into close quarters where encounters are inevitable and often confrontational. The architecture becomes a holding environment for hostility. By contrast, the Fine Arts Institute of Dhaka University (Charukola) offers porous boundaries, shaded courts, and visual transparency. Muzharul Islam's design allows for drifting, lingering, and quiet withdrawal. Even in tense moments, the openness offers people the dignity of choice—whether to join, observe,

conflict, but to create conditions where disagreement can de-escalate.

Architectural peacekeeping begins with multiple permeable thresholds. No campus should have only one way in and out; single gates become territorial flashpoints. Multiple entries with visual openness allow movement to disperse naturally and make it harder for any group to monopolise access.



Fine Arts Institute of Dhaka University offers porous boundaries, shaded courts, and visual transparency.

FILE PHOTO: PRINON MOSTAFI FAHAD

and subtle elevation changes can ensure safety through presence rather than through the cold glare of surveillance. Finally, campuses need holding environments—spaces that contain emotional intensity without amplifying it, such as shaded courtyards, verandas, and gardens that invite movement and conversation instead of standoffs.

These ideas are not expensive or technically difficult. They require, instead, the political will to see architecture as part of governance. Without this, we produce an "architecture of inevitability," in which daily movement patterns make confrontation predictable. A single narrow gate compresses life into a geometry of collision; no neutral space means every space is contested. By designing for porosity, multiplicity, and neutrality, we create an "architecture of possibility"—not a guarantee of peace, but the space for it to occur.

Better design will not end campus violence, but it can change its temperature. We cannot continue to place our young people into pressure vessels and then act shocked when they explode. Our universities deserve more than post-riot repairs; they deserve spaces designed to absorb disagreement and hold it without harm. If architecture is a teacher, we must ask what lessons our campuses are giving: the habit of openness, or the reflex of siege? Charukola shows that a campus can be both an institution and a living commons; Dhaka College warns what happens when enclosure of space becomes enclosure of the mind. In that contrast lies the blueprint for peacekeeping—and the urgent need to redraw our lines.

STUDENT UNION ELECTIONS

Rescuing the universities from decline



Anu Muhammad
is a former professor of economics at
Jahangirnagar University.

ANU MUHAMMAD

After many years, student union elections are going to be held in Dhaka, Jahangirnagar, and Rajshahi universities. This is a good development, and I hope the elections will be fair and free from violence or intimidation, and the students will be able to participate in them safely. If student unions in all universities are formed through credible elections regularly, genuine young leadership will be able to emerge in the country.

However, public universities are currently facing numerous problems, and their credibility has been severely diminished. Those who still opt to study in public universities often worry about session jams, campus violence, quality of education, or whether classes and exams would take place properly. The trust that these universities once commanded has eroded, creating a wide gap between public expectations and present realities. We must identify the causes of this decline and address them.

During the British colonial period, Dhaka University was established in 1921 as the first public university in present-day Bangladesh. In the Pakistan era, other big public universities were established: Chittagong University, Rajshahi University, the agricultural university (now BAU), the engineering university (now BUET), and Jahangirnagar University. After independence, particularly in the past two decades, many more public universities were established. In the early 1990s, private universities first came into being. At the same time, several colleges were upgraded into universities—Jagannath College to Jagannath University, for instance. As a result, the numbers of both public and private universities has increased significantly, though this rapid expansion has created serious concerns about their quality, role, and governance.

The core issue here is how public universities should function: what the role of teachers should be, how student activism should run, how students' rights and safety are preserved, how education and research should get proper

League, when they came to power (along with Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami), sought to seize full control of the universities. They relied on two main instruments for that: installing a spineless administration by appointing compliant and subservient teachers to various posts, and by patronising their student wings to dominate residential halls and campuses through violence.

Whichever party came to power, its student

research and academic work were neglected. Many teachers competed for favour with the authorities instead of focusing on scholarship.

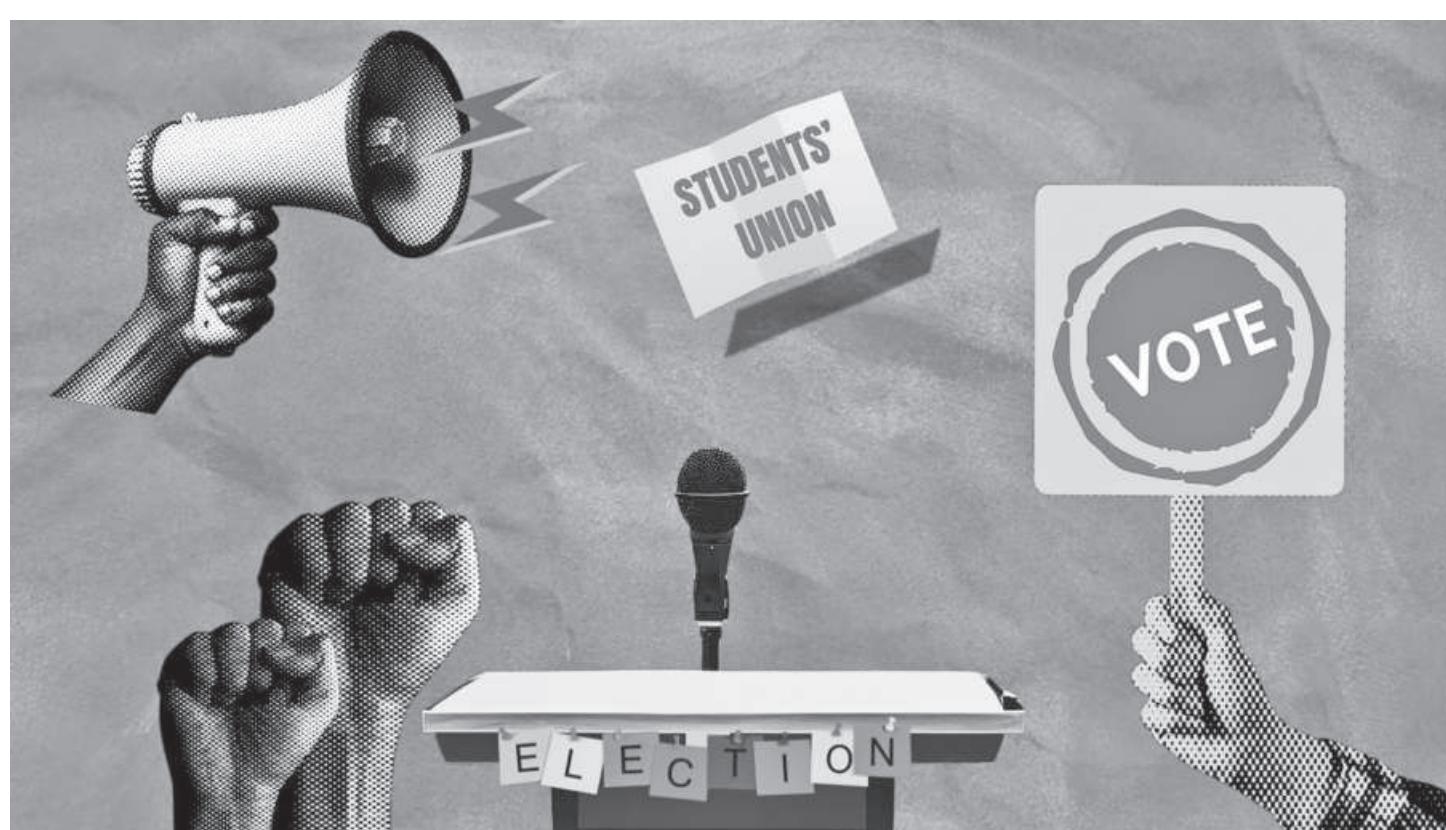
Another serious problem has been the increasing commercialisation in public universities. Many public universities introduced weekend and evening programmes that operate like private ventures, charging high fees. Teachers also began working at private universities. While supporting the

In fact, a combination of neo-liberal policy and violent authoritarianism has caused a disastrous effect on university operations. As a result, the country's higher education system has become increasingly driven by money rather than scholarship. It is true that a number of teachers enjoy financial comfort from these extra income opportunities, but the quality of teaching and research has deteriorated. Students in residential halls live under the domination of partisan leaders engaging in extortion and intimidation. Teachers, meanwhile, are distracted from research and academic development, focusing instead on personal gain or appeasing the authorities. The government appears content with this arrangement, investing heavily in construction projects that often serve as vehicles for corruption rather than academic progress.

What is needed instead is a return to the original mission of public universities: to serve as the centres of learning, research, and free thought, dedicated to public interest rather than the ruling parties or private profit.

To overcome the present crisis, student politics must be revitalised in a creative and visionary manner. Student leaders need to play a constructive and responsible role to ensure desired changes in universities, especially public ones. Elections should not be about winning power alone but about rescuing public universities from decline. Students and teachers must agree on certain principles: universities should be autonomous, free from government interference, and supported only in their academic and research functions. Appointments must be based on merit, not political loyalty. Students must not be used to engage in extortion, tender manipulation, or violence. All forms of discrimination—class, gender, religious, and ethnicity—must be opposed. Public universities must remain public in character.

If the upcoming student union elections can inspire this shift, they may mark the beginning of a much-needed change. Genuine reform requires not only the courage of students and teachers, but also the awareness and support of the wider society. Moreover, the approach of the government towards universities must go through a fundamental change. They should leave universities to education and research, and not use them as an instrument for extending ruling party dominance through unwanted intervention, violence, and corruption.



VISUAL: MAHIY TABASSUM

priority. The history of public universities shows that much of this depends on the government: how it perceives universities, what role it plays, and what it wants from universities.

Student union elections in Bangladesh began in the early 1970s, though the first one was marred by violence. They resumed in the late 1970s, and during the 1980s, under Ershad's autocratic rule, several elections were held as students were united against military dictatorship. But after elected governments returned in 1991, both the BNP and the Awami

organisation gained overwhelming dominance while all other groups were silenced or marginalised. Among many teachers, a culture of obedience and opportunism developed in the process.

This reached its most extreme form under the Sheikh Hasina government. Vice-chancellors were appointed based on loyalty rather than merit, and many actively facilitated corruption, tender manipulation, extortion, and violence by ruling party student organisations. Universities, especially residential halls, became places of fear, while

privatisation drive, the World Bank argued that private universities would create healthy competition and raise standards of both. In practice, both public and private universities have been suffering due to substandard quality. Public university teachers have been diverting their time and energy to commercial programmes and working part-time at private universities, while many private universities—operating on a profit-driven model—have been relying mostly on part-time teachers to minimise costs. Students in both systems have been left without proper academic attention.

Could Bangladesh become a global halal powerhouse?



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IFTEKHAR UL KARIM

Many of us remember that Jamuna Group's Aromatic halal soap, made with vegetable fat and marketed as a cleaner, faith-aligned choice, once seemed set to become a household name in Bangladesh. Despite early momentum, it faded due to a lack of sustained investment and nurturing, a cautionary tale for the nation's ambitions in the \$7 trillion global halal economy. If Bangladesh treats its halal ambitions the way Jamuna treated Aromatic, it may win headlines but may lose the market. Most halal products still come from non-Muslim countries, a gap Bangladesh aims to fill through policy reforms, halal-focused industrial zones, and partnerships with Malaysia's certification experts. To succeed, the country must approach the halal economy as a long-term brand project or commitment.

Bangladesh has demographic, cultural and geographic advantages, along with a strategic position in Asia to expand the halal sector at one of the fastest rates in the global food industry.

PHOTO: FREEPIK



yet to translate this advantage into a globally recognised brand. Markets in the Middle East, Europe and North America already import and consume black seed products, often from non-Muslim majority countries that have mastered packaging, certification and marketing to both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. To claim a share of this growing sector,

regulatory frameworks that inspire confidence among both domestic and international investors, turning Bangladesh into a trusted destination for ethical capital.

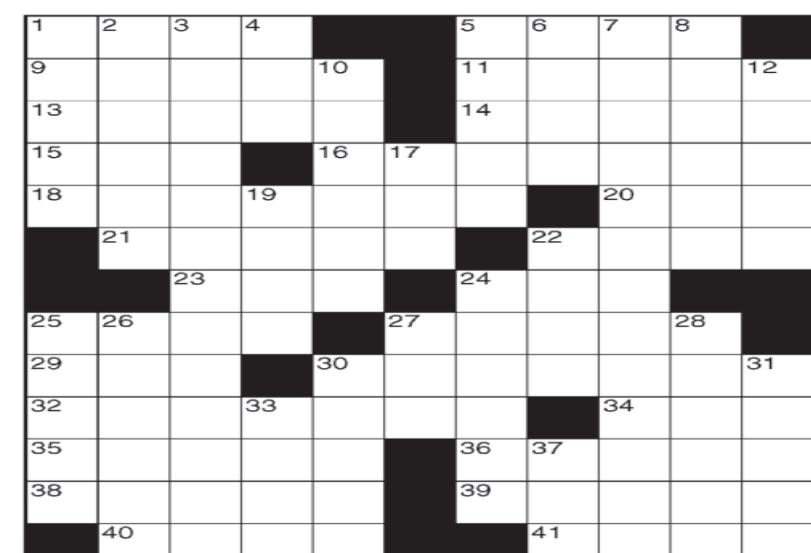
Many expatriates maintain strong cultural and culinary ties to their homeland, creating steady demand for halal food, cosmetics, and wellness products from the country, and also scoping out halal investments here. Beyond consumption, diaspora entrepreneurs can play a pivotal role in building distribution networks, promoting Bangladeshi brands abroad and bridging regulatory requirements in foreign markets. By actively engaging this community through targeted trade fairs, business partnerships and diaspora investment incentives, Bangladesh can turn its overseas population into brand ambassadors and market entry points.

Halal tourism is another emerging frontier where Bangladesh can combine its cultural heritage, natural beauty, and Islamic traditions to attract a growing segment of Muslim travellers. This sector goes beyond offering halal food and extends to prayer facilities, family-oriented recreation, modest accommodation options, and Islamic heritage experiences. With the global halal tourism market also projected to grow rapidly in the coming decade, Bangladesh could leverage destinations like Cox's Bazar, the Sundarbans, and historic Islamic sites, including the Sixty Dome Mosque, while developing service standards that meet international halal certification. By integrating tourism promotion with its broader halal economy strategy, the country can generate foreign exchange, create jobs, and diversify income streams.

These shifting consumption patterns are creating fertile ground for increasing demand across product and service categories. By building a competitive halal sector that serves both domestic and international markets, the country can reduce over-reliance on saturated sectors such as RMG and tap into high-growth value chains. Expanding halal production also strengthens trade competitiveness by introducing products with higher margins, broader consumer appeal, and stronger resilience to market fluctuations.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS									
1 Tag sale proviso	27 Flashlight, in Britain	6 Night fliers							
5 Clark's colleague	29 Museum stuff	7 "Oh!" and "yo!"							
9 Low cards in	30 Leaves	8 Venus's sister							
pinochle	32 Like dividends	10 Drenched							
11 Deed holder	34Sort	12 Air traffic aid							
13 Reach	35 In the area	17 Pay stub line							
14 Extreme	36 "All Ye Faithful"	19 Was imagined							
15 Try out	38 Subsequently	22 Mystique							
16 Licoricey flavoring	39 Freshen	24 Hospital worker							
18 Part of a baseball	40 Invites	25 Half of a '60s rock							
count	41 Superlative suffixes	group							
20 Gene messenger	26 Mideast peninsula								
21 Good feature	27 Letter after sigma								
22 Slightly open	28 Tackle's topper								
23 Break off	30 Campaign goal								
24 Bill word	31 Distorts								
25 Accord	33 Pond paddler								
	37 Semicircular shape								



8-4

WEDNESDAY'S ANSWERS

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WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO
dsopinion@gmail.com.



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

ART EXHIBITION

'ARANYAREKHA'**An earnest appeal to preserve the Sundarbans**

AISHWARYA RAIHAN

Bhumi Gallery in Lalmatia is hosting a five-day group art exhibition titled *Aranyarekha*, featuring 12 Bangladeshi artists whose works stem from a workshop in the Sundarbans. The inauguration was graced by Prof Mohammad Eunus, Prof Dr Md Anwarul Islam, and bird specialist Inam Al Haque.

Adyapanto, an artists' collective formed in 2019, recently held an art camp in the

Sundarbans, sponsored by Dr Anwarul Islam and Inam Al Haque. Inspired by the mangrove forest, the artists produced captivating works.

Md Robiul Islam's large, translucent watercolours soothe both heart and eyes. Farzana Rahman Bobby created monotype prints inspired by mangrove roots, some dark, others joyous. Upoma Das Trina's striking blue cyanotype manipulation depicts herons, trees, boats, and waterbodies, evoking Hans Andersen's

fairy tales.

Shakti Noman crafted wooden sculptures of Sundari tree roots alongside acrylic canal paintings. Monjur Rashid painted splendid birds, while Ihsrat Jahan portrayed warm-toned leaves with cheerful vibrancy. Kanak Aditya's minimalist black-and-white painting stood apart.

Zemrina Haque offered vibrant small landscapes. Mamun Hossain used watercolour splatters and crisp ink lines to imagine the Sundarbans uniquely. Couple

Morsena Rahman Rupa and Md Zahid Hossain filled canvases with deep blue hues; Rupa's baby Kaani Bawk stood out.

Nargis Akter Punam painted the majestic Royal Bengal Tiger, likening them to cacti—admired yet untouchable—warning their numbers dwindle due to neglect.

Running from August 16 to 22, *Aranyarekha* celebrates the Sundarbans' beauty while urging preservation of our national treasure and vital greenery.

Govt to ensure higher standards in grant-funded films: Mahfuj Alam

Information and Broadcasting Adviser Md Mahfuj Alam has affirmed that the government will provide full support to enhance the quality of films produced with state funding. While handing over the first instalment of grants to producers



of nominated full-length and short films at the secretariat yesterday, he announced that a workshop featuring filmmaking experts will soon be organised to help improve standards.

The adviser stated that this year's selection process was transparent, and urged producers to complete films on time. He added that all films will be preserved in the Bangladesh Film Archive. This year, 12 feature films and 20 short films have received Tk 1.80 crore and Tk 1.20 crore respectively.

'Coke Studio Bangla' Season 3 returns

Coke Studio Bangla has officially announced that it will resume on August 23, continuing the lineup of Season 3. The announcement follows a teaser earlier this week from Shayan Chowdhury Arnob, who hinted at the platform's next release.

Season 3 has already gained wide acclaim with three songs, the latest being a new interpretation of Warfaze's classic *Obak Bhalobasha*. With more tracks to follow, the season promises to showcase a mix of celebrated artistes and fresh talent, reflecting Coke Studio Bangla's vision of blending tradition with contemporary sound.

**Shakib Khan confirms 'Soldier' for December release**

Shakib Khan has confirmed that his upcoming film *Soldier*, directed by debutant Sakib Fahad, will release this December. Speaking from the United States, where he has been vacationing with actress Shobnom Bubly and their son Shehzad Khan Veer.

The megastar said, "This time I want to bring a story-driven film." Rumours suggest he will play a former intelligence officer, with casting details yet to be announced. Shooting is scheduled to begin next month.

Recently, Shakib faced criticism over a Facebook post on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's death anniversary, which he clarified carried no political intent. With *Soldier* now confirmed, fans anticipate a new dimension to his career through a film focused on duty, personal conflict, and politics.

NEWS**Charges framed against ex-MP**

FROM PAGE 12

opening statements.

Prosecutors earlier said 29 people were killed in Ashulia during the uprising, but the current charges relate to one protester killed on August 4 last year and six others the next day.

In the latter incident, five bodies and one injured person were reportedly set ablaze inside a police van.

CHANKHARPOOL CASE

Two more prosecution witnesses yesterday made statements in the case filed over crimes against humanity committed during the killing of six people in Chankharpool on August 5 last year.

With their testimony, a total of eight prosecution witnesses have so far testified in the case at the International Crimes Tribunal I.

Witness Rahat Hawlader broke down in tears seeing a video clip played in

court and cried, "Sir, this man is my beloved brother!"

Another clip showed a policeman firing from a flyover into a crowd, moments before a man collapsed. Rahat, weeping, shouted again, "Sir, this is constable Sujan. He killed my brother, Rakib Hossain Hawlader!"

Rakib's father, Jahangir Hawlader, the other witness, rushed to the stand to console his son as tears streamed down his own face.

Jahangir said his son worked at a plastic factory in the city's Chawkbazar area. Around 1:00pm on the day of the incident, Rakib left the factory and joined the protest at Chankharpool, where he was shot dead by police.

He alleged that his son was killed under directives from former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, former joint commissioner Sudip Kumar Chakraborty, and in the

presence and supervision of former additional deputy commissioner Shah Alam Mohammad Akhtarul Islam, former assistant commissioner (Ramma zone) Mohammad Imrul, and former inspector (operations) of Shahbagh Police Station Arshad Hossain.

He said the fatal shots were fired by former constables Sujon Hossain, Imaz Hossain, and Nasirul Islam.

He demanded justice and exemplary punishment for those responsible for his son's death.

Arshad, Sujon, Imaz, and Nasirul, who are in custody, were present during the hearing, while the rest, including Habibur, remain absconding.

Defence lawyers, including the state defence counsel representing the four absconding accused, cross examined the witnesses.

The tribunal adjourned further witness testimony until September 3.

Bangladesh, Pakistan okay visa-free travel

FROM PAGE 12

with 31 other countries.

Also at the briefing, Alam said the government has planned three international conferences with the aim of bringing the Rohingya crisis to the forefront of international discussions.

The interim government is working with utmost importance on the Rohingya issue, he said.

The first of the three conferences is scheduled to take place in Cox's Bazar from August 24 to 26.

Representatives from the United Nations and around 40 countries are expected to attend the conference, with attendance from Yunus expected on the second day.

'No polls unless our demands are met'

FROM PAGE 12

Under the PR system, voters would be properly valued.

Jamaat is preparing candidates for all 300 constituencies and is reaching out to the people.

"We are working to build public opinion," he said.

Earlier in the afternoon, a five-member Jamaat delegation -- Jamaat central working council member Jasim Uddin Sarkar, Dhaka city north Nayeb-e-Ameer Abdur Rahman Musa, Dhaka

city secretary Yasin Arifat, and head of engineering division Abid Hasan -- met with the CEC at the Election Commission headquarters in the capital.

The delegation discussed parliamentary constituency boundaries, among other things.

"We spoke on an overall basis. We have presented our viewpoints. The EC said that wherever our points are valid, legal or rational, they will consider examining those."

Four judges on the five-member appeals court voted to let the fraud finding stand, but all found problems in the judge's handling of the case and two would have ordered a new trial.

A fifth judge would have dismissed the case altogether, and all five judges would have voided the payout. There was no majority opinion.

Then would-be witness accuses Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

include former chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, former ICT chairman Justice Nizamul Huq, ex-law minister Shafique Ahmed, and former state minister for law Qamrul Islam.

Former ICT judge justice ATM Fazle Kabir, former ICT investigator Helal Uddin, former ICT chief prosecutor Syed Haider Ali, ex-prosecutor Rana Dasgupta, former chief of the ICT investigation agency Md Sanaul Haque, and former Pirojpur lawmaker AKM Awal alias Saidur Rahman.

The others are 10 to 15 then leaders and activists of Pirojpur district Awami League, Jubo League and Chhatra League, listed as unidentified accusers.

In the complaint, Bali claimed that in July-August 2010, ICT investigator Helal interrogated him at a local school regarding the killing of his brother Bisha Bali during the 1971 Liberation War.

"I told him the truth, but Helal tried to force me to name Sayedee along with the real killers and give testimony against Sayedee before the tribunal."

"When I refused, saying Sayedee

was in no way involved in the murder of my brother, he started physically assaulting me to give false testimony," Bali wrote.

He alleged that Helal, along with local Awami League leaders including former MP Awal and former Pirojpur mayor Habibur Rahman Malek, repeatedly threatened and beat him for declining to give false testimony.

"They warned me that if I didn't agree to testify as instructed, the next day would be my last," the complaint read. Bali said he went into hiding for months to save his life.

Later, he said, Sayedee's son Masud Sayedee approached him and requested him to testify in favour of Sayedee to reveal the truth. "I agreed and came to Dhaka on November 3, 2012 and contacted Masud Sayedee," Bali said.

On November 5, while being taken to the tribunal by defence counsel Mizanul Islam in his car, Bali alleged he was intercepted near the ICT gate by plainclothesmen and police officers. "They dragged me out of the car, beat me, blindfolded me, and took me away in a white pickup," he wrote.

He alleged he was held in a dark room for nearly two months and subjected to severe physical and psychological torture, including electric shocks to his private parts to force him to give statement against Sayedee.

Bali further alleged that his captors offered him "crores of taka and a house" in exchange for the false statement.

When he refused, they allegedly continued the torture until he fell unconscious. He was treated in hospitals at times but after recovery, he was always taken back to confinement and tortured, he added.

Bali alleged that after months of abuse, he was handed over to members of India's Border Security Force (BSF) illegally. BSF also tortured him severely and took him to a sub-jail in Basirhat where he was kept for 22 days, according to the complaint. It added that Bali was shifted to Dum Dum Central Jail where he was kept in captivity for about five years.

Bali has described his alleged ordeal as a "crime against humanity" and demanded accountability and punishment for all those he accused.

Better to beg here than die there

FROM PAGE 12

survived by drinking bathroom water and eating rotten bread. The mafia would even pull out people's nails and send videos to our families to demand money."

But Nazrul was not freed; he was sold to another group that kept him in confinement for five months.

To ensure his release, his father-in-law sold 24 kathas of land to gather Tk 8 lakh.

"But the syndicate never freed me -- they handed me over to the local police instead."

He remained in jail until his repatriation along with 174 Bangladeshis. Sakhawat was among them.

Like him, most of the returnees shared similar stories of starvation, torture and extortion inside the mafia-run camps or Libyan prisons.

Victims said hundreds more Bangladeshis remain trapped in camps, known among migrants as "Game Ghor", where traffickers keep people chained and torture them to extract ransom.

Among those who arrived yesterday was also a key syndicate member: the 42-year-old Sakhawat Hossain.

Based on information, the International Organisation for Migration and the Libyan police conducted a raid and rescued 40 Bangladeshis. Sakhawat was among them.

"He was actually involved in torturing and extorting migrants. He had no plan to return home but acted as a victim when detained by Libyan police," said Mostafizur Rahman, additional superintendent of the Criminal Investigation Department's Human Trafficking Cell.

He boarded the chartered flight disguised as a victim. The CID and the National Security Intelligence identified and arrested him after interrogating returnees.

This was the third such arrest in the last five months.

Last time, Sakhawat was in Libya

for five years and was involved in extorting money from migrants. He is wanted in two separate cases.

Sakhawat confessed to sending 400 to 500 Bangladeshis on four boats -- 125 to 150 people in each boat -- to Italy after extorting huge sums from them.

"We are now trying to trace where these Bangladeshis are. We have also learned that several thousand are still trapped in Libya, waiting for what they call the 'game', the dangerous boat journey to Italy," Mostafizur said.

In 2024, 8,667 Bangladeshis entered Europe illegally, with 7,574 crossing the central Mediterranean, the same deadly route Nazrul had hoped to take, according to the EU's border agency Frontex.

More than 4,000 Bangladeshis reached Italy that year, while at least 700 died in boat accidents and other incidents.

Bangladeshis are now the largest group crossing the Mediterranean to

Cops' case statement

FROM PAGE 12

We later got a copy of the statement from the police station on Monday. "False, fabricated and offensive information has been included," she told The Daily Star last night.

Her daughter Nurpur Robidas said, "A mob beat my father and my cousin's husband until they were half-dead in presence of the police. I reached the Burirhat High School field around 11:00pm that day with relatives after hearing the news. In my presence, police rescued my father."

Yesterday she said, "We were all crying, shattered with grief. That's why we did not read the case paper. My mother trusted the police and signed. But the case was manipulated with false information."

Rupral's son Joy Robidas said, "When our father was being killed, police were there. But this was not mentioned in the case. Instead, it says police saw him at the hospital. They even blamed my father."

"Police are not taking any action. We don't know if we will ever get justice."

We strongly protest this fabricated case prepared by police," he added.

The case states that on the night of August 9, Rupral and Pradip were returning by rickshaw-van from the Chharan Baluva area of Mithapukur to Rupral's home in Ghorampur village in Taraganj upazila. Around 8:30pm, locals stopped them in the Burirhat Bottola area.

It claims that villagers found an energy drink bottle and some medicines in their bags. When the bottle was opened, several people including one Mehedi reportedly fell ill due to the foul-smelling liquid inside.

Enraged, villagers took Rupral and Pradip to Burirhat High School field around 9:00pm, where they were beaten with sticks and rods until they started bleeding from their ears. Both were admitted to Taraganj Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared Rupral dead. Pradip was referred to Rangpur Medical College Hospital in critical condition.

The case statement

says police later recovered Rupral's body from the upazila health complex.

But widely circulated video footage shows police present while the mob was assaulting the two men. Instead of intervening, officers left the scene as the beating continued.

Eight police personnel were suspended on August 13 for negligence over the incident.

MA Faruk, officer-in-charge (OC) of Taraganj Police Station, had told the media that police tried to save the two men but were outnumbered and were forced to retreat that night.

When this correspondent dialled the OC's official number last night, an inspector identifying himself as Rafiq received the call. He said the OC was on leave. He also mentioned that four suspects had been arrested.

About the family's allegations, OC Faruk told Bangla daily the Prothom Alo, "Who files a case – police or the plaintiff? Who makes the allegations? The plaintiff always says such things... this is normal."

Ferry services suspended at Paturia as ramp snaps

STAR REPORT

Ferry services at Ghat-4 of Paturia in Manikganj have remained suspended since early yesterday after a pontoon and ramp were washed away by the Padma river.

Abdus Salam, deputy general manager of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation in the district, said operations came to a halt around 4:00am when the rope of the ramp snapped as Ro-Ro ferry "Baigar" attempted to dock.

The pontoon and ramp drifted away under strong currents before being pulled back near the ghat with the help of a tugboat, he added.

According to the BIWTC official, efforts are underway to reinstall the structure, but ferry services will remain suspended until repairs are completed.

Face people's

FROM PAGE 3

Meanwhile, in a Facebook post yesterday, Tarique said, "Bangladesh belongs to no single person, no group, and no party. It belongs to all of us. Every citizen, regardless of party or faith, race or ethnicity, whether believer or non-believer, shares one proud identity – being Bangladeshi. The BNP's politics is rooted in this simple truth that every citizen must enjoy equal rights in every sphere of life."

"We believe no citizen should be forced to hide behind party labels for the sake of safety. Religious or political identity will not elevate anyone above the rule of law. Only democracy and the rule of law can guarantee the safety and dignity of all citizens."

"The national election before us is more than a political contest. It is a historic opportunity to build a safer, more tolerant Bangladesh for today and for generations to come."

Prosecutor

that the PP sent the judge a WhatsApp message two days ago, requesting bail for the accused in a rape case pending in her court.

On Wednesday, around 9:00am, Ruhul Amin allegedly sent court documents and a bundle of Tk 50,000 in a bag to the judge's residence through an unidentified person. The package was handed over to her house help, who then gave it to the judge.

The judge further alleged that the PP had also lobbied in favour of the accused in several other cases.

Calling the complaint a "conspiracy" against him, Ruhul Amin said, "The case in question was filed against BNP leaders and activists during the tenure of the previous fascist government. I merely informed the judge about the matter."

Feni univ students block road for permanent campus

UNB, Feni

Students of Feni University blocked the Dhaka-Chittagong highway yesterday to press home their six-point demand, including permanent campus and shuttle bus services.



They took to the street at noon at Mohipal in Sadar upazila, halting vehicular movement on the highway for three hours from 11:00am.

The other demands include banning student politics on campus, changing the Board of Trustees, appointing a VC, and appointing an adequate number of teachers and

other staff.

Maisha Akter, a student of the university, said, "Without a permanent campus, the UGC may place our university on a 'red list', putting thousands of students amid uncertainty."

Sajidul Islam, another student, said they have boycotted classes to force the authorities to fulfil their demands.

Mentionable, on Wednesday, Vice-Chancellor Prof M Jamal Uddin Ahmed resigned amid growing unrest.

Md Ariful Islam Siddique, additional superintendent of Feni (Sadar circle), said police dispersed the students from the highway with a promise to sit with the deputy commissioner over their demands.

Dhaka seeks more trade ties

FROM PAGE 3

Trade between the two countries rose to US \$865 million in fiscal year 2024-25. Bangladesh's exports to Pakistan reached US \$78 million, up 20 percent from the previous year, while Pakistan's exports grew by 28 percent.

Since August last year, the two countries have started direct shipping, eased visa and trade regimes, and are preparing to launch direct flights.

At the meeting, Adilur Rahman Khan highlighted Bangladesh's industrial progress and growing needs.

Jam Kamal Khan expressed Pakistan's interest in collaborating through joint ventures and mutual investment. He called for a shared vision

to create an economic ecosystem that supports industrial growth and stressed the importance of value-added industries for revenue generation and socio-economic development.

He also praised Bangladesh's achievements in pharmaceuticals, textiles and information technology.

Jam Kamal Khan also met Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) President Taskin Ahmed to explore opportunities for trade and investment.

He appreciated DCCI's collaboration with Pakistani chambers of commerce and invited Bangladeshi businesses to participate in the 3rd International Food and

Agricultural Exhibition (FoodAg), to be held in Karachi on November 25-27, 2025.

The discussions covered potential cooperation in renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, automotive parts, FMCG, IT, and the fashion sector.

Taskeen Ahmed suggested enhancing bilateral trade through delegation exchanges, participation in exhibitions and knowledge sharing. He also highlighted the importance of connecting SMEs from both countries. The two sides also discussed tariff and non-tariff barriers and steps to improve logistics. The meeting ended with a commitment to create a supportive environment for bilateral trade.

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e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, খুলনা (উত্তর) দপ্তরের আওতাধীন নিয়ন্ত্রিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টেলে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

ID	Title of Works	Last selling Date & Time	Opening Date & Time
1139975	Tower Leg protection (Tower-54) of Gpalpara-Bagerhat 132 kV Transmission Line under GMD, Khulna (North), Power Grid Bangladesh PLC.		
1140002	Supply & Installation of 2 No's 60000 BTU Split type Air-cooler at Naraili and 2 No's 60000 BTU Split type Air-cooler at Benapole Grid Sub-station under GMD, Power Grid, Khulna (North), Power Grid Bangladesh PLC.	14-Sep-2025 at 12:00	14-Sep-2025 at 15:00
1140013	Capacity upgradation of Khulna Central-South Ckt-1&2 Bay Jack Bus and Loop, replacing 636 mm Grosbeak Conductor by 410 sq.mm Inver conductor at Khulna Central Grid Sub-station Under GMD, Khulna (North), Power Grid Bangladesh PLC.		

অগ্রহী ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে www.eprocure.gov.bd সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।তরুণ কুমার বিশ্বাস
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, জিএমডি, খুলনা (উত্তর)

বাংলাদেশ মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি

নেজিস্ট্রেটর দপ্তর (সংস্থাপন শাখা)

১৪/৬-১৪/২৩, পল্লবী, মিরপুর-১২, ঢাকা-১১২৬, মোবাইল: ০১৭৬৯-৯২১০১০

ই-মেইল: regoffice@bmu.edu.bd, ওয়েব: www.bmu.edu.bd

তারিখ: ২১/০৮/২০২৫

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের ২০১৩ সনের ৪ দিন আগে প্রতিষ্ঠিত বাংলাদেশ মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি-এর জন্য নিয়োগবিজ্ঞপ্তি পদসমূহে শিক্ষক নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকদের নিকট হাতে আবেদনপত্র আবেদন করা যাইতেছে।

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও পদ সংখ্যা	যেতে ও বেতনক্রম	সর্বোচ্চ বয়স	মন্তব্য
১.	সহযোগী অধ্যাপক মেরিম কিশোরজ এ্যাজ এ্যাক্যুয়াকালচার-০১ (এক)	যেত-৪, বেতাকেল- ৫০,০০০- ৭১,২০০/-	-	১। শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা এবং আবেদনের শর্তাবলী সংক্রান্ত বিস্তারিত তথ্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের ডেবেসাইট (www.bmu.edu.bd)-এর Job Notice-এ দেখুন। ২। আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের প্রের তারিখ ০৮ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫। ৩। বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের স্থায়ী ক্যাম্পাস টেক্টাইম- (৫৬ মোহরা ওয়ার্কার্স ব্যবস্থা, জেলা চার্টার্মেন্ট)-এ নির্মাণবিহু বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় ২০২৬-এ স্থায়ী ক্যাম্পাসে (টেক্টাইম) স্থানান্তরিত হতে পারে।
২.	সহকারী অধ্যাপক মেরিম কিশোরজ এ্যাজ এ্যাক্যুয়াকালচার-০১ (এক)	যেত-০৬, বেতাকেল- ৩৫,৫০০- ৬৭,০১০/-	-	

বাংলাদেশ মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি

নেজিস্ট্রেটর

জিডি-১৪১

Procuring Entity Details:

23	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Shobnam Mushatry Rikta		
24	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Deputy Secretary (Admin-2)		
25	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, 5 th Floor, Room No-611, Transport pool Building, Secretariat Link Road, Dhaka-1000.		
26	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	02223388201 (Off) Fax: 41050901 mail: dsadmin2@molwa.gov.bd		
27	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the Tender proceedings			



ILLUSTRATION: SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM

The meaning and importance of ikigai for young adults

Physical hobbies like hiking, cycling, or yoga boost resilience and mental clarity. They give us space to breathe amidst daily stress, allowing us to explore passions without the demand for immediate rewards. In doing so, they help us not only become more interesting as people but also more capable of facing life's challenges.

If there's one certain thing about life, it is that at one point or another, we all feel uncertain. It's a bittersweet phase of life which holds significance, because we usually end up discovering ourselves amidst that feeling. Though this can happen multiple times throughout our lives, for many of us, it hits the hardest as a young adult.

Being a young adult isn't easy, you don't quite feel done being sixteen. Suddenly though, you're faced with life-altering decisions: choosing a degree, committing to four or more years of study, and imagining a future that feels both distant and incredibly real.

Friends drift in and out of your life. In essence, you remain the same person, but you feel your tastes, ambitions, and priorities start to evolve. Everything feels like an exciting, gut-wrenching question mark, possibility in every direction, but also a fair equal amount of confusion. Somewhere between the excitement and the choices, a question appears in your mind – one that feels almost scary to admit out loud: "What am I really doing with my life?"

It is in moments like these that a simple yet powerful Japanese concept, *ikigai*, can offer clarity. The word *ikigai* roughly translates to "a reason for being."

It's the intersection of four elements: what you love, what you're good at, what the world needs, and what you can be paid for. When these areas overlap, you find your *ikigai*. A simple way to practise this is by taking a notebook, writing down the categories, and finding something that is in common with all four. It's

not always grand or dramatic: it might be running your own small business, painting, writing, teaching, caring for family, or even a new hobby entirely.

If there is one thing we tend to forget as young adults, it's that hobbies aren't just a way to pass time or make money; they shape who we are. A creative pursuit, whether it's painting, music, or cooking, can sharpen problem-solving skills, improve patience, and reduce stress.

Physical hobbies like hiking, cycling, or yoga boost resilience and mental clarity. They give us space to breathe amidst daily stress, allowing us to explore passions without the demand for immediate rewards. In doing so, they help us not only become more interesting as people but also more capable of facing life's challenges.

Ikigai recognises that and encourages us to find and rediscover our hobbies.

Ikigai is also more than just a guide to purpose, it is a practice in self-awareness, something that rigid schooling rarely teaches us. Self-awareness grows when we examine not just what we want, but why we want it, and how our choices align with who we truly are.

Young adulthood is a prime time for developing this skill because the decisions we make often shape our identity. By actively exploring your *ikigai*, you're not just finding direction; you're learning to understand yourself on a deeper level, which can significantly influence the relationships you build, the friendships you keep, and the personality you develop.

One of the most freeing, and unique, aspects of *ikigai* is that it isn't solely tied to work. In Japan, people

often find their sense of purpose in small, everyday joys like gardening, cooking, morning walks, or mentoring others. For young adults, this is a liberating thought: you don't need to land your dream job right away to live a meaningful life. You can start by paying attention to the things that light you up outside of work: your hobbies, your friendships, your spare time.

This mindset also carries important benefits for mental health. Your late teens and twenties, especially in today's hustle and grind culture, can bring so much anxiety, loneliness, or self-doubt. These are further exasperated by the pressure to have it all together and to measure your worth by what you have achieved. *Ikigai* offers a gentler perspective. It encourages you to move at your own pace, guided by what genuinely matters to you.

Finding your *ikigai* is not about creating a perfect plan but about beginning with curiosity. Ask yourself: what activities make you lose track of time? What type of help do people come to you for? What problems in the world do you feel deeply about? Which job would you do even if nobody paid you for it?

These questions might seem simple, but the real question is – when was the last time you sat down and asked yourself these? Write your thoughts down, talk to people you trust, try new things, and remain open to being surprised.

Tinath Zaeba is an optimistic daydreamer, a cat mom of 5 and a student of Economics at North South University. Get in touch via mailing to tinathzaeba25@gmail.com

What are we losing sight of when we confide in AI?

SILWAT QUADER

Amidst all the recurring conversations about the implications of AI, it has also made its presence felt in another, very integral part of our lives: interpersonal relationships. It seems as though many of us now opt to type our troubles into AI chat boxes, instead of talking to a loved one. Without mutual emotional exchange, however, I am left to wonder what these exchanges entail for our emotional well-being, as well as the possible consequences of essentially outsourcing human emotional labour.

Considering the strides that large language models (LLMs) have made over the years – the possible consequences of which have largely not been considered – this technology has gradually begun to seep into the cultural and social realm as well.

In a blog post by OpenAI, they admitted that an update of the model made it "agreeable, sometimes saying what sounded nice instead of what was actually helpful." The same blog post outlined the changes they had been working on to improve these pitfalls. They emphasised supporting users when they're struggling, helping them keep control of their time, and aiding in solving challenges. "ChatGPT shouldn't give you an answer. It should help you think it through," it said.

Regardless of the changes, people now confide in AI – in the same way they do with a friend – by sharing details of their life. In turn, AI studies these conversations and remembers each detail to generate future responses. It wouldn't be wrong to say that it engages with its users to emulate human conversation.

What exasperated my concern, though, was a comment I came across. The user said that they would prefer not to talk to a real person, who could potentially dismiss their ideas and belittle them. Instead, they can just talk to LLMs without dealing with this risk. There are a few ways to look at this. But what does it really mean when there are so many of us depriving ourselves of social interactions intentionally? Could an increase in dependence on LLMs for day-to-day conversations translate to a distorted perception of real relationships?

AI creates false expectations by failing to comprehend the complexities of real human interaction. After all, it is always available and ready to say what we want to hear. OpenAI themselves have written

about sycophancy in GPT-4o, and the subsequent steps they'd take in an attempt to rectify it. This is not a risk that human conversation poses.

Real interaction and relationships demand emotional effort and are not



ILLUSTRATION: ABIR HOSSAIN

always as convenient or agreeable as conversations with AI. The more we seek comfort from an entity meant to simulate humans, the further we sink into isolation, away from people who offer authentic and honest opinions, lessons, and

experiences. While it may feel like a space away from unnecessary noise, the growing dependence risks alienating us from the vulnerability and depth that relationships offer.

When we constantly turn to AI for validation, advice or just someone to talk to, we become less inclined to turn to our friends and family. Over time, we may be reduced to a shell of a person, growing intolerant of disagreements and differing opinions.

The negatives of treating AI as a real person are that it exacerbates the feeling of loneliness as people continue to further isolate themselves from social situations. Given AI's transformative rise and growing popularity, it would be unfair to dismiss its functionality completely. AI does act as a companion by listening and responding through careful

study of the users' behaviour patterns, likes, and dislikes. It has the potential to make users feel heard. However, it does so through pattern recognition, which can feel reassuring despite having no genuine connection. What it cannot do, however, is replicate the depth of human empathy.

Even then, there have been cases where people have claimed to have fallen in love with their chatbot. This proves how easily humans project emotions onto anything that aligns with their expectations, which, again, creates a warped version of reality. Ultimately, it leads to the formation of a one-sided artificial bond that can gradually cause individuals to detach from their need to seek out, sustain and build relationships with others.

Real bonds and the conversations that emerge out of them do far more than just fill social gaps. They guide, challenge, and teach us empathy, which goes well beyond a well-worded reply. Human relationships involve navigating misunderstandings and processing an array of emotions. When we only engage with systems for our emotional needs, we don't just risk losing ourselves; we also risk losing our ability to listen, empathise, reason, and maybe even accept.

The world may feel overwhelming, but retreating entirely into the comfortable bubble of AI companionship is not the answer. Disconnecting from reality may feel simpler, but we must learn and grow through these imperfect human experiences. As AI becomes more pervasive in our lives, the challenge is not to reject it outright but to stay anchored with the fundamental realities of human experience.

Learning to navigate personal finances early in life

PUNOMI RAHMAN TITIR

We've all been there: stashing away birthday presents into a little savings jar, only to have our parents borrow the amount in the face of 'adversity', making us feel like we'd been outwitted in the greatest money heist of all time! Looking back, these experiences of betrayal were perhaps the first indication that financial literacy is an important skill to obtain.

However, it wasn't until I began watching *Sesame Street* on television that I first began to grasp the idea of how real-world money works. Muppet and Elmo would carefully drop coins into their piggy bank while Cookie Monster hilariously wondered why cookies couldn't be used as currency.

The question remains, though: why is it important for children to understand money?

A study conducted by Cambridge University researchers suggests that money habits begin to sprout as early as the age of seven, developing a basic awareness of the role finances play in day-to-day life. Early experiences of having to choose between spending and saving are more than just exercises in patience; they are vital lessons in saving, budgeting, and distinguishing between needs and wants. By learning such concepts, young thinkers are better equipped to adapt to responsibilities.

In general terms, financial literacy refers to the ability to make wise money decisions. The idea of being financially literate, however, goes beyond simplistic concepts of earning and spending. It's also about building a relationship with money that promotes long-term stability, learning to assess liabilities, and recognising the real value of a product.

Thus, we must ask ourselves: What are some steps that one can take to develop financial literacy?

Starting with a budget
Learning to budget is the roadmap to productive money management. Carefully crafted budgets can prevent one from overspending while also strengthening secure financial planning. But what exactly is their source of income for children?

In many households, it is common for children to receive pocket money from parents as a form of monthly allowance.

Young people may also be rewarded with financial compensation for helping parents with household chores or

tutoring a younger sibling. Such practices introduce children to the concept of 'working to earn a paycheck', teaching them the value of every penny from a tender age.

Student banking and saving accounts
For young people, opening their first bank account can be both exciting and empowering. Several banks in Bangladesh offer diverse opportunities for students eager to manage their own finances and start saving through various schemes.

A student bank account comes with many perks, one of which includes the ability to carry out transactions remotely. Students can also enjoy features like applying for education loans, no maintenance fees, earning reward points, and using multi-currency debit cards, making these accounts highly beneficial.

Use of digital finance tools
Digital banking simplifies financial management by granting users online access to their accounts and services, enabling smooth transactions from virtually any location.

For students, making purchases or payments with the aid of Internet banking can be easily obtained by creating a student account online.

Initiating open-ended discussions
It is essential for young people to engage in meaningful conversations regarding personal finance with adults. Parents should serve as role models to guide children with the necessary skills, sufficient knowledge, and valuable insights. Being able to encourage open dialogue and share personal experiences without hesitation empowers the younger generation to make smart money decisions.

Understanding the worth of money from an early age has never been more crucial. As the global economy grows increasingly complex, young people face a financial landscape vastly different from that of previous generations. Today, financial literacy is more than just a tool; it is a necessity for the youth if they want to navigate their future with confidence and competence. The sooner you start, the better off you'll be at overseeing the financial challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

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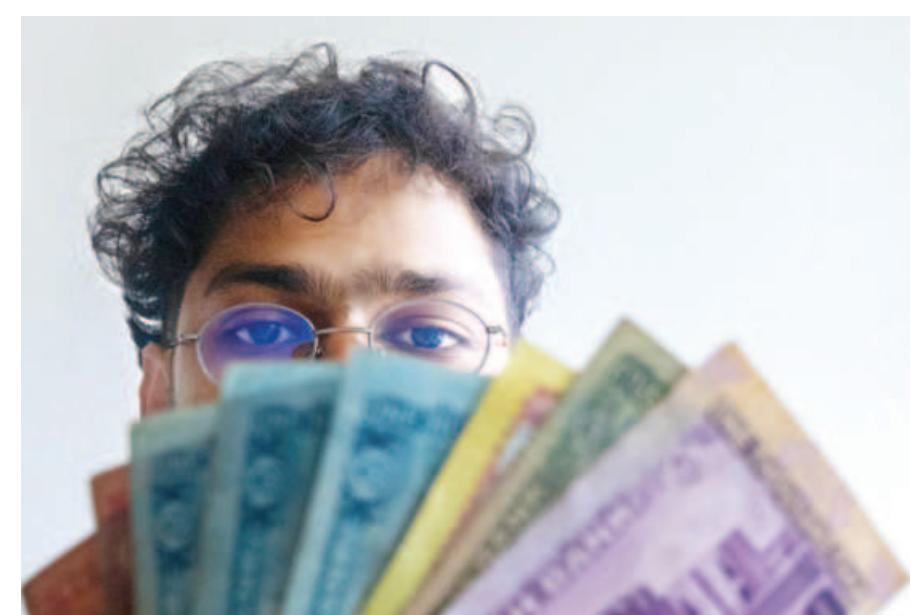


PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA



IMRANUR RETURNS with a point to prove

SPORTS REPORTER

Sprinter Imranur Rahman is set to return to domestic competition after more than a year as the 17th Summer Athletics Championships begin today at the National Stadium.

Since representing Bangladesh at the Paris Olympics in 2024, the country's record holder in the 100m sprint (10.11s in England) has been absent from the domestic scene. Injury rehabilitation forced him to miss the 48th National Athletics

Championships last February, and he was later overlooked for the Asian Indoor Championships in China in March.

Now recovered, Asia's 60m champion returns with a point to prove. Imranur, who will compete for Bangladesh Navy after previously running for Bangladesh Army, aims to reclaim his title from Mohammad Ismail and secure a spot in the national training camp. The Bangladesh Athletics Federation (BAF) has made it clear

that only performances at national competitions will be considered for upcoming international meets.

Both men's and women's 100m sprints are scheduled for this afternoon.

Though Imranur has won all four domestic events he entered, he has yet to reproduce his record-breaking times on home soil. His best domestic timing remains 10.29s at the 2022 Summer Athletics Championships.

While Imranur's return is the

main attraction, BAF is also focused on avoiding unwanted incidents that have been a feature of the past national meets. In 2024, clashes broke out between service teams after incidents of unsporting conduct, and judges' errors.

This year's meet will feature 40 events – 22 for men and 18 for women. Around 400 athletes from 35 organisations are expected to participate, slightly fewer than the 450 competitors from 41 organisations at last year's nationals.

India clarifies sports policy with Pakistan

AGENCIES

India's Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports yesterday issued new guidelines on sporting ties with Pakistan, confirming that while there will be no bilateral contests, athletes and teams from both nations can compete against each other in multilateral tournaments.

The clarification comes ahead of India hosting the men's Asia Cup in the UAE in September and the women's ODI World Cup in India and Sri Lanka in September-November, with both tournaments featuring Pakistan.

The statement comes amid calls for a boycott of all sporting ties with Pakistan following political tensions and past incidents. India and Pakistan, drawn in the same Asia Cup group, are set to meet in Dubai on September 14.

The guidelines formalise India's longstanding position: no bilateral cricket with Pakistan since 2012, but regular meetings in ICC and ACC events such as World Cups, Champions Trophy, and the Asia Cup.

Kings question capabilities of Cabrera and Co

SPORTS REPORTER

Bashundhara Kings have raised doubts over the capabilities of national football team head coach Javier Cabrera and his backroom staff, questioning their insistence on two to three weeks of preparation before each FIFA international friendly.

The club's concerns were outlined in a letter sent to Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag on August 20, after the federation requested the release of 10 Kings players for the ongoing national camp ahead of September's friendlies against Nepal.

"If a national team head coach requires 15-20 days of training sessions before each FIFA international match calendar days, then this raises a serious concern on the capabilities of the coaching panel of the Bangladesh national team," read a three-page letter signed by Bashundhara Kings general secretary Biddut Kumar Bhowmik, which also argued that such demands "hamper the preparation of clubs and domestic competitions."

For the two matches on September

6 and 9, Cabrera named a 24-member squad, but has so far been training with only 13 senior players. Kings declined to release their 10 players, citing pre-season preparations and injury risks. The club has previously delayed releasing players for camps but eventually complied under FIFA regulations.

The matter is complicated by the dual role of Kings president Imrul Hasan, who



also serves as BFF senior vice-president and deputy chairman of the national teams committee. In an earlier interview with a Bengali daily, Imrul said that as chairman of the professional football league committee, he had approved the domestic calendar after consulting Cabrera, who at the time had indicated that the September FIFA window would not be used.

Cabrera, asked about this apparent contradiction, admitted the discussion but said he did not want to enter into conflict with Imrul, someone he "respect a lot".

In their letter, Kings also criticised the BFF secretariat, accusing it of incompetence and poor communication.

"The BFF secretariat representatives are not complying with FIFA regulations," the letter read.

Ultimately, the five-time Bangladesh Premier League champions have stuck to their stance: they will not release players early but will do so in line with FIFA's rules.

"We believe a national icon such as Hamza Chowdhury will only be available to the BFF national team on August 31, 2025, after the match between Leicester City FC and Birmingham City FC. Bashundhara Kings will also release their players on the same date, both maintaining FIFA regulations on the status and transfer of players, July 2025 edition."



Pace in the bloodline

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

Cricket has long seen families pass the game down generations, with father-son pairs making their mark across the world.

From India's Amarnaths (Lala, Surinder and Mohinder) and Gavaskars (Sunil and Rohan) to Australia's Marshes (Geoff, Shaun and Mitchell) and England's Broads (Chris and Stuart), many sons have followed in their fathers' footsteps, some surpassing their legacies while others fell short.

In Bangladesh, such examples are rare.



Last year, during the National Cricket League T20, Jishan Alam, son of former keeper-batter Jahangir Alam, made headlines by smashing a century on debut. Jahangir played only three ODIs, but Jishan, now 20, has already made his way into the Bangladesh 'A' team.

Now another father-son story is unfolding, this time with former pacer Alamgir Kabir and his son, Abdul Aziz.

Alamgir played three Tests for Bangladesh and is credited with discovering talents like Shoriful Islam

and Nahid Rana. He now works as pace-bowling coach of the women's national team, while his son Aziz, a right-arm quick like him, is part of the national U-15 set-up.

A class nine student at Rajshahi Cantonment Board School and College, Aziz was introduced to cricket at his father's academy in Chapainawabganj.

"My father took me there when I was young. I started with tennis-ball cricket, then moved on to playing seniors and gradually made it from district to divisional level," he said.

Alamgir had initially encouraged his son to be a leg-spinning all-rounder, wary of the injuries fast bowlers face. But Aziz soon switched to pace after watching Shoriful Islam at the academy.

"He was a good leg-spinner, but after seeing Shoriful bowl fast, he just wanted to bowl pace," Alamgir said.

"His main skill was batting, but he couldn't quite deliver at district level, so he's stuck to pace bowling. I only want him to enjoy the game without setting targets like the national team. If opportunities come, he should just try to make the most of them."

The two recently faced each other in an unusual setting. During the ongoing Challenge Cup at BKSP in Savar, Aziz's U-15 side played against the women's Red Team, where Alamgir serves as coach. The boys, fielded as a third team in the competition due to training disruptions caused by weather, surprised many by defeating the women by 87 runs in their opening match. Aziz opened the bowling, taking 1 for 12 in four overs, though his father felt he could have done more.

BAYERN AGAIN THE TEAM TO BEAT

Champions Bayern Munich kick off the new Bundesliga season against visitors RB Leipzig on Friday, knowing they are the team to beat once more, even though they had a shortened pre-season following the Club World Cup in the United States. Bayern's prolific striker Harry Kane, who finished as the league's top scorer for the second time in a row last season, will have the added support of Luis Diaz this time around. Having won the league title 12 times in the last 13 years, the Bavarians have spent more than any other club in the close season to bring in Diaz from Liverpool for a reported 70 million euros -- their third highest transfer ever -- as well as Germany internationals Jonathan Tah and Tom Bischof to boost the quality of their squad.

PHOTO: BAYERN MUNICH



What to WATCH

SPORTZWORKZ YOUTUBE CHANNEL
SAFF U-17 Women's C'ship
Bangladesh vs India
Live from 3:00 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
Premier League

West Ham vs Chelsea
Live from 1:00 am (Sat-
urday)
SONY TEN 2
Bundesliga
Bayern Munich vs Leipzig
Live from 12:30 am

(Saturday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD2
CPL
Antigua & Barbuda vs
Amazon
Live from 5:00 am (Sat-
urday)

SAFF U-17 CHAMPIONSHIP

Girls face India in crucial tie

SPORTS REPORTER

Fresh from a 3-1 win over Bhutan in their tournament opener, Bangladesh will look to step up against a strong Indian side in their second match of the SAFF U-17 Women's Championship in Bhutan today.

The match kicks off at 3:00pm (Bangladesh time) at Changlimithang Stadium, Thimphu.

Both Bangladesh and India collected three points each in their opening matches. However, India sit ahead on goal difference following a dominant 7-0 win over Nepal. With the tournament being played in a double round-robin format, the outcome of today's clash -- and the second meeting between the two sides -- could prove decisive in the championship race.

Head coach Mahbubur Rahman Litu's charges are expected to face a tough test against India, especially after their hard-fought win over Bhutan, which exposed areas for improvement.

Assistant coach Abul Hossain said the team is working on correcting their

mistakes from the first game.

"Though we made some mistakes in the match against Bhutan, we still came away with a victory," Abul said in a video message sent by the Bangladesh Football Federation. He added that the players had



gone through a recovery session after the game.

"We will take the field against India after rectifying our mistakes. We don't want to look back; our focus is on the India match," he said, adding that they would finalise game plan after analysing India's game against Nepal.

Tigresses set for Sylhet camp under lights

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's team will complete a nine-day preparation camp in Sylhet early next month as part of their final build up for the upcoming ICC Women's World Cup, running from September 30 in India and Sri Lanka.

The Tigresses -- split into two sides -- are currently taking part in the Women's Challenge Cup at BKSP, where the men's U-15 team is also competing. The tournament will continue until August 28.

Since all of Bangladesh's World Cup fixtures will be day-night matches, the team will also play three practice matches under floodlights at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium.

"After the tournament [Challenge Cup], the girls will rest for six days. Then the team will move to Sylhet," women's chief selector Sazzad Ahmed Shipon told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We will then travel back to Dhaka and practice here under lights for three days. Then the team will travel to Colombo on September 23," he added, noting that the squad for the World Cup is yet to be finalised. The final squad is expected to be announced by September 5 or 6.

Before starting their World Cup campaign against Pakistan on October 2, Bangladesh will play two official warm-up matches against Sri Lanka 'A' and Sri Lanka on September 25 and 27.



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



Female candidates scarce in Jucsu polls

Only 57 file nominations out of 276

SAKIB AHMED

Female students of Jahangirnagar University have long stood at the frontlines of campus protests, from the 1999 anti rape movement to last year's mass uprising that toppled an authoritarian regime. But as the university prepares for the first Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union (Jucsu) election in 33 years, many women are stepping back from the ballot.

The election is scheduled for September 11 with 11,919 registered voters, almost evenly split between men (6,102) and women (5,817). Yet the number of female candidates is far lower than that of their male counterparts.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 5

CASE AGAINST SAYEDEE
Then would-be witness accuses Hasina, others of torture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sukhranjan Bali, who was listed as a prosecution witness in the crimes against humanity case against Delawar Hossain Sayedee, has accused ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 31 others of trying to force him to make a false statement.

In a complaint he filed with the office of the International Crimes Tribunal's chief prosecutor yesterday, Bali alleged he had been abducted, tortured and held captive in India for his refusal to make "false testimony" against Jamaat-e-Islami leader Sayedee.

He also alleged he was picked up by law enforcers while on his way to testify that Sayedee "was innocent".

The accused in the complaint

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



The Dhaka North City Corporation is conducting development work, including sewerage upgrades, on Paris Road in Mirpur-11. However, the sluggish pace has put locals and other road users in serious difficulty.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

ASHULIA KILLINGS Charges framed against ex-MP, DIG, 14 others

Cop pleads guilty, turns approver

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday framed charges against 16 people, including former Awami League lawmaker Muhammad Saiful Islam and former Dhaka range deputy inspector general (DIG) Syed Nurul Islam, over the killing of seven people during last year's uprising in Ashulia.

According to the charge sheet submitted in the crimes against humanity case, six of the victims were set on fire, with one still alive at the time, on August 5.

After the charges were read out against eight accused who are currently in custody, the tribunal asked whether they pleaded guilty.

Seven pleaded innocence, while one, former sub-inspector Sheikh Abzalul Haque, pleaded guilty and applied to become an approver.

The three member tribunal led by Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury accepted his plea conditionally. Prosecutor Md Mizanul Islam told

reporters,

"The plea was accepted on the condition that he disclose the full truth about the incident. He will remain in custody until the case is disposed of and will testify at an appropriate stage," Mizanul said.

Those in custody include: former additional SP (Savar circle) Shahidul Islam; former Dhaka district additional SP Abdullahi Kafi; former DB inspector Arafat Hossain; former Ashulia sub-inspectors Arafat Uddin Abdul Malek and Sheikh Abzalul Haque; former ASI Kamrul Hasan; and constable Mukul Chokder. All were present in the dock.

The other accused, including former Dhaka SP Md Asaduzzaman Ripon, former Ashulia police OC AFM Sayed, inspectors Muhammad Masudur Rahman and Nirmol Kumar Das, ASI Biswajit Saha and Saiful's aide, Jubo League leader Rony Bhuiyan, are absconding.

The tribunal has set September 14 for

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

GOVT OFFICIALS
Bangladesh, Pakistan okay visa-free travel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Diplomatic and official passport holders of Bangladesh and Pakistan will be able to travel to each other's countries without visas.

A draft agreement to this effect was approved yesterday at the weekly meeting of the advisory council, chaired by Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, at his office, according to a press release from the cabinet division.

This agreement with Pakistan will be valid for five years, said Shafiqul Alam, the chief adviser's press secretary, in a press briefing yesterday.

At present, Bangladesh has similar agreements

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Better to beg here than die there

Says trafficking victim on return from Libya; trafficker posing as migrant held in Dhaka

MD ABBAS and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Nazrul Islam returned home yesterday with scars on his body and memories of brutal captivity in Libya, where traffickers and mafias shattered his dream of a better life in Italy.

"It is better to beg in Bangladesh than to fall into this death trap -- you will lose yourself and your family," said the 36-year old Nazrul from Jhenaidah, breaking down as he described his two-year ordeal.

In January 2023, he paid Tk 16 lakh to one Ruhul Amin, a Bangladeshi broker in Libya, for the journey; Tk 6 lakh came from his savings, with the rest coming from a loan taken by mortgaging his fertiliser shop.

Upon landing in Libya, Amin took him to a camp at Benghazi, in what was the beginning of his harrowing cycle of captivity.

Nazrul was kept in the camp for the following nine months, with salt water to drink and barely any food.

He was then taken to a torture cell and released only after his family sent another Tk 4 lakh more.

"I was chained, beaten and starved. For months, I

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

'No polls unless our demands are met'

Says Jamaat after meet at EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 13th national election will not take place unless the demands and conditions of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami are met, said Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman Azad.

"A level playing field is yet to be established in Bangladesh. Therefore, along with other demands, we have strongly emphasised that equal opportunities must be ensured for all, which is still absent," he told reporters after a meeting yesterday with the chief election commissioner.

Asked about the challenges of holding elections in February next year, he said: "We have no problem with elections being held in February. From our side, we had proposed either February or April for the election timeline. If the government is ready, it can be done within this timeline."

On whether Jamaat would participate in the election without the Proportional Representation (PR) system, he said: "We have always been sincere about fair elections. We sincerely believe this system would be beneficial for the country and would be the best method to ensure fair elections."

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



FLAMES
BENEATH THE WAVES

PHOTO: SHARIF SARWAR

A stunning moonlum or burrowing anemone sways like a living flame in the Bay of Bengal off Saint Martin's Island. Scientifically known as *Anthopleura artemisia*, the creature inhabits intertidal zones down to 30 meters, anchoring in sandy or muddy bottoms. Like other sea anemones, the predator uses stinging cells to capture crustaceans and fish in a deadly embrace. Despite its vital environmental role of providing refuge for tiny symbionts and supporting reef food webs, it faces threats from coastal development and habitat degradation. Beautiful but dangerous, its sting can pack a serious punch, demanding admiration from a safe distance.

US court quashes Trump's \$464m civil penalty

REUTERS, New York

In a triumph for Donald Trump, a New York state appeals court yesterday threw out a half billion-dollar penalty while preserving a fraud case against him, enabling the US president to rebound from one of his biggest legal defeats.

The deeply divided decision by the Appellate Division in Manhattan is also a defeat for New York Attorney General Letitia James, one of Trump's biggest foes, who he accused of bringing the civil fraud lawsuit to advance a political witch hunt and

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

RANGPUR MOB KILLING Cops' case statement doesn't reflect reality

Family alleges distortion

S DILIP ROY

The family of Ruplal Robidas, who was beaten to death along with his nephew-in-law Pradip Lal Robidas by a mob in Rangpur, has alleged that the case statement prepared by police does not reflect what actually happened.

According to the family, officers wrote the statement at the police station and then went to Ruplal's home to have the document signed by his widow and plaintiff Maloti Rani Robidas.

Maloti told The Daily Star, "That day I was weeping, overwhelmed with grief. Some men in plainclothes came and said they were from the police station. At their request, I signed the case paper."

"I studied only up to class five, I don't understand much. They did not read the statement to me. Police wrote it themselves."

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিসন এন্ড ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন পিএলসি
(পেট্রোবাল্টার একটি কোম্পানি)
কলম্বেটা-১৬৪৯৬

Smart Metering Energy Efficiency Improvement Project
[Installation of Prepaid Gas Meter for TGTDCCL]

স্মার্ট প্রিপেইড গ্যাস মিটার স্থাপন সংক্রান্ত "জনসচেতনতামূলক বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

এতদ্বারা তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিসন এন্ড ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন পিএলসি এর আবাসিক শেহিরের সম্মানিত সকল গ্রাহকের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, গ্রাহক পর্যায়ে প্রিপেইড গ্যাস মিটারের ব্যাপক জনপ্রিয়তা ও চাহিদার প্রেক্ষিতে এশিয়ান ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক (এডবিবি), গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার ও তিতাস গ্যাসের নিজস্ব অর্ধায়নে "Smart Metering Energy Efficiency Improvement Project [Installation of Prepaid Gas Meter for TGTDCCL]" শীর্ষক প্রকল্প গ্রহণ করা হচ্ছে। উক্ত প্রকল্পের আওতায় তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিসন এন্ড ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন পিএলসি এর সার্বিক তত্ত্বাবধানে মেট্রো ঢাকা বিপণন-দক্ষিণ (ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন, কেরানীগঞ্জ) এবং আক্ষণিক বিপণন-দক্ষিণ-নারায়ণগঞ্জ (নারায়ণগঞ্জ সিটি কর্পোরেশন, নারায়ণগঞ্জ সদর, আড়াইহাজার, বন্দর, নরসিংদী সদর, পলাশ, শিবপুর, মনোহরাদ, মুসিগঞ্জ সদর, সিরাজিদান, টঙ্গীবাড়ি, গজীরংশ ও কিশোরগঞ্জ-বৈরো) এর আওতাধীন এলাকাসমূহে বিদ্যমান আবাসিক গ্রাহকদের অনুমোদিত চুলা/গ্যাস স্থায়োগে ৬,৫০,০০০ (ছয় লক্ষ পঞ্চাশ হাজার) স্মার্ট প্রিপেইড গ্যাস মিটার স্থাপনের কাজ শীর্ষই শুরু করা হবে।

স্মার্ট প্রিপেইড গ্যাস মিটারের উত্তোলিক্য সুবিধাদি:

- এটি অত্যাধুনিক প্রিপেইড গ্যাস মিটারিং ব্যবস্থা। এর মাধ্যমে প্রকৃত ব্যবহার অনুযায়ী গ্যাসের বিল প্রদানের সুযোগ থাকায় গ্রাহকের অবগতির জন্য প্রয়োজন।
- মোবাইল অ্যাপ/ওয়েবসাইট থেকে অনলাইনে মিটার রিচার্জ করা যাবে এবং গ্রাহকের গ্যাস ব্যবহার ও মজুদ সংক্রান্ত তথ্যাদি জানা যাবে;
- গ্যাস ফুরিয়ে গেলে ইমারজেন্সি ব্যালেন্স চালুর সুবিধা থাকায় গ্রাহকের গ্যাস সরবরাহ নিরবিচ্ছিন্ন থাকবে;
- স্মার্ট প্রিপেইড গ্যাস মিটারের উত্তোলিক্য সুবিধাদি:

উক্ত প্রিপেইড গ্যাস মিটারের স্থাপন কাজের আওতায় গ্রাহককে এককালীন কোন অর্থ প্রদান করতে হবে না। মিটার ভাড়া হিসেবে গ্রাহকের নিকট হতে রিচার্জের সময় প্রতি মাসে ভাড়া আদায় করা হবে। তবে স্মার্ট প্রিপেইড গ্যাস মিটার স্থাপনকালীন গ্রাহকের অভ্যন্তরীণ গ্যাস লাইনের কোন চালি/ভাল্ব/সরঞ্জাম পরিবর্তনের প্রয়োজন হলে তা গ্রাহককে সরবরাহ করতে হবে এবং বাড়ির অভ্যন্তরীণ গ্যাস লাইনের কোন প্রকার পরিবর্তন/পরিবর্ধন/রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ কিংবা পৃথকীকরণের প্রয়োজন হলে তা তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিসন এন্ড ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন পিএলসির তালিকাভুক্ত ১.১ বা তদুর্ধি শ্রেণির ঠিকাদারের মাধ্যমে গ্রাহকের ব্যয়ে।

তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিসন এন্ড ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন পিএলসির প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী প্রতিনিধিত্ব/প্রতিনিধিগণকে গ্যাস বিল বই প্রদর্শন করতে হবে। উক্ত জরুরী প্রতিনিধির সময়সূচী ও প্রয়োজন হলে তার প্রতিনিধিত্বকারী প্রতিনিধিত্বকারীর স্বাক্ষর সহ স্মানিত গ্রাহকের নিয়মসমূহ সহ স্মার্ক তথ্য প্রদানের জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

এবিষয়ে অসাধু ব্যক্তি/চরেকের সাথে কোন প্রয়োজনে তিতাস গ্যাস ট্রান্সমিসন এন্ড ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন পিএলসি এর ইটলাইন নম্বর: ১৬৪৯৬ অথবা সংযোগ জোন অফিসে যোগাযোগের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

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