

## STUDENTS' UNIONS

## Legal bars, admin delays stall polls in many universities

ARAFAT RAHMAN

While student union elections are scheduled next month at Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, and Rajshahi University, many other public universities remain uncertain about whether polls will ever be held, either due to legal bars or administrative delays.

Some universities are in talks with students and stakeholders, but the students fear that the authorities are stalling instead of acting.

Of 56 public universities across the country, only seven have the legal provision for a central students' union.

Among those without legal provisions, Jagannath University has recently taken a step forward as its syndicate on Tuesday approved the long-awaited constitution for the central students' union.

JnU Vice-Chancellor Prof Rezaul Karim said final procedures would be

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- » Out of 56 public universities, only 7 have legal provisions for student unions
- » JnU amends rules to allow student union polls
- » BRU, IU, BU, and Maulana Bhashani univ students demand act changes to include provision
- » No poll initiative yet at BAU, BUET despite existing provisions

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## DUCSU POLLS

Authorities pull down campaign posters, banners Candidates now reaching voters with leaflets

DU CORRESPONDENT

Candidates for the Dhaka University Central Students' Union polls started reaching out to students with leaflets yesterday, while the university authorities removed banners, festoons, and campaign boards put up across campus in violation of the electoral code of conduct.

From Tuesday, posters and banners were seen at prominent locations, including the Teacher-Student Centre, dormitory areas, VC Chattar, Mall Chattar, the Faculty of Fine Arts, Curzon Hall, and in front of the central library.

These materials were installed by several Ducsu panels such as Swatantra Shikkharthi Oikya, led by Umama Fatema, former



A DU staffer removes PVC campaign posters of Ducsu candidates from the university's TSC area yesterday, after the university authorities ordered the removal of all such posters for violating section 7(a) of the electoral code of conduct.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Qader vows to end seat crisis, improve food at DU dorms

SADI MUHAMMAD ALOK



Abdul Qader, VP candidate

Abdul Qader, vice president (VP) candidate from the "Boishommo Birodh Shikkharthi Sangsad" panel in the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducsu) election, has pledged to resolve the issues relating to food and accommodation and end the "gono room" culture if elected.

In an interview with The Daily Star, Qader, who is contesting from the panel floated by Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangsad -- a new student body formed by former coordinators of the July uprising -- spoke about his aspirations.

"I was admitted to the university in 2019. Usually, students from across the country come to this university with high hopes, but end up

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## Hamim for Ducsu charter changes to ensure rights

SHARIF M SHAFIQUE



Tanvir B Hamim, GS candidate

Shaikh Tanvir Baree Hamim, the general secretary candidate from the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD)-ominated panel in the Dhaka University Central Students' Union election, has pledged to bring major changes to the Ducsu constitution.

He also pledged to utilise Ducsu effectively to resolve students' housing, food, and healthcare problems and to ensure their safety.

In an interview with The Daily Star, Hamim said, "If elected, one major task I want to accomplish is to amend the Ducsu constitution. We believe the Ducsu should comprise only of elected students."

"At present, the vice-chancellor assumes the presidency of this body without election. We want

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## NEW INITIATIVE FOR GOVT HOSPITALS

## Digital monitoring system for medical equipment by Dec

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The health ministry has moved to introduce a digital monitoring system to ensure that medical devices in public hospitals remain functional, with patients complaining of long delays in diagnosis and treatment due to equipment breakdowns.

In the first phase, 300 medical devices in 114 government hospitals across the country will be brought under the "Medical Equipment Maintenance Information and

Monitoring System" by December this year, said officials.

Seven types of equipment have been selected for continuous monitoring, based on their critical role in diagnosing and treating serious illnesses, including cancer. The devices include MRI, CT Scan, X-ray and radiotherapy machines, they added.

### SUFFERINGS OF PATIENTS

Sixty-one-year-old Sakina Begum travelled to Dhaka from Patuakhali in mid-July, seeking better medical care. Doctors at Dhaka Medical

College Hospital (DMCH) advised her on July 28 to undergo radiotherapy without delay.

But she had to wait nearly three weeks to receive the service as two of the three radiotherapy machines at the country's largest hospital have been non-functional for years.

"Had all three machines been operational, my mother could have received treatment on time," said Sakina's son Hadis Khan on Monday.

"We even contacted Barishal [Sher-e-Bangla] Medical College

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Police charge truncheons on BSc engineering students in front of Hotel InterContinental around 1:30pm yesterday as the students started marching towards the chief adviser's residence to press home their job-related demands.

## Police charge truncheons on students marching to Jamuna

58 hurt; DMP commissioner apologises; students want home adviser to say sorry; govt forms committee to deal with their demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students have declared a "complete shutdown" at all engineering universities across the country for today over their job-related demands and to protest the police action against students in front of Hotel InterContinental yesterday.

Their declaration came last night after police yesterday charged truncheons and fired teargas shells to disperse protesting students marching

towards the chief adviser's residence to press home their demands.

The violence in the afternoon left at least 50 students injured, according to protesters, while the home ministry said eight policemen were also hurt.

The protesters regrouped at Shahbagh and continued their sit-in until evening, demanding an apology from the home adviser.

After the clash, BSc engineering students also blocked roads in other

parts of the country, including in Rajshahi and Chattogram.

Later at night, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sheikh Mohammad Sajat Ali went to Shahbagh and apologised to the students. He said a committee would be formed today to investigate the incident involving police.

Meanwhile, the government formed an eight-member committee led by Energy Adviser Muhammad

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TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

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# Why Old Dhaka's Siddiqui Bhai nihari is a must-try

RRB

Recently, I drove to Subal Das Lane in Lalbagh to try the latest breakfast craze that has captivated Dhaka in the metaverse: Siddiqui bhai's Nihari.

Nihari is haute cuisine prepared with premium ingredients by specialised chefs, and it isn't an everyday meal. But weekend breakfasts call for something special, both in the old and new parts of Dhaka. Thanks to food vloggers and bloggers, Siddiqui bhai is on everyone's radar, making our weekends extra palatable.

Served in his hole-in-the-wall restaurant, Maa Shahi Halim, this delectable shank broth is available for a short window of time, mainly till his big stock pot or "degchi" is emptied of its contents.

I started my journey at half past six in the morning, and by the time I reached 40 minutes later, I was among the last few to get myself a bowl.

It is Friday, and weekends mean a rich and fancy breakfast. Nothing is fancier than a big bowl of nihari made by Siddiqui bhai. His portions are big and filling, the shanks -- soft kuruli meat, pulled beef, and the gelatinous chunks of bone marrow -- are to die for. I have come from Uttara to join my friends from Gandaria for this delicious broth, and we do this quite often, at least two weekends in a month or more," says Parvez Malik, a young executive working in a bank.

Parvez's group was wiping off the last bits of nihari with a butter naan and praising the chef for his perfect dish.

Nihari is a melt-in-your-mouth, slow-cooked nalli (bone marrow) stew made with meaty bones that have a lot of tissue, cartilage, and marrow, like oxtail, shanks, and knuckles. The slow-simmer breaks the collagen to make a gelatinous bone broth with a jiggly consistency.

"There is no secret to my recipe; the flavour and taste depend on slow cooking for a long time. The spices I



add besides the regular ones are long pepper, star anise, galangal, allspice, and organic dried rose petals," says the amiable chef, who starts cooking his nihari right after maghrib prayers and continues till the crack of dawn.

"One big metal degchi or stock pot full of shanks, hock joints, and premium bone-in beef Kuruli, which is rich in flavour, tender, and excellent for slow-cooked dishes like stews, soups, and broths, goes through a 17-hour slow-cooking process. I do it myself, as it requires expert attention," Siddiqui says while serving a bowl to his customers.

He prefers doing this himself because the taste lies in the final mix. "I insist on serving because my clients want various sorts of meat cuts in their bone marrow broth. Some prefer soft meat chunks, some pulled

meat, some add mogoj or offal, but the caramelised onions and a spoonful of my special spice mix make my nihari bowl so enjoyable. It should be served hot and eaten with roti or naan fresh from the tandoor," he adds.

His countertop has separate pots of simmered mutton, beef, and chicken. And according to his client's choice of meat, he adds his soup stock that is prepared separately in a big degchi, and then, as a final touch, he adds his garnishes.

Siddiqui's scouts roam the local cattle markets of old Dhaka every morning to buy almost 50 kg of paya or shanks, which is the cut from the lower leg of the cow, containing sinewy muscles and often, bone with marrow. And on Fridays, they make extra to cater to the weekend rush.

In the evenings, when the all of the nihari craze dies down, Siddiqui bhai then serves Haleem. I will write about his Haleem later; for now, I shall savour the nihari.



PHOTO: STAR

## Legal bars, admin delays stall polls in many universities

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done within days before sending the draft to the education ministry. "After the president issues an ordinance, we'll announce the election roadmap," he told reporters.

Under the new framework, all regular students can vote and contest, with no age limit. The central students' union executive body will have 21 members. There will be hall unions too.

Begum Rokeya University, Islamic University, Comilla University, and Maulana Bhashani Science and Technology University lack provisions for unions. Students there are demanding amendments to their universities' acts.

At Rangpur's Begum Rokeya University, students launched a hunger strike on August 17. Nine fell sick within three days, with several hospitalised.

VC Prof Showkat Ali said the university will hold elections once the act is updated. "We forwarded letters to the authorities concerned on May 14 urging inclusion of student union polls in our act... If [the University Grants Commission] approved by September, we'll hold elections between October 26 and 31."

At Maulana Bhashani University, a

hunger strike began on August 12 and soon drew wider support. Protesters say repeated memorandums and meetings were ignored.

VC Prof Anwarul Azim Akhund said, "As there is no provision, we cannot arrange anything now. But we held a meeting with deans, chairmen, the proctor, and student welfare bodies, and decided to place the issue in the regent board meeting [on August 27]."

After two rounds of discussions, students at Islamic University in Kushtia formed a platform named "Movement for IUCSU" and demanded inclusive representation, justice for the killing of a student, transparent teacher recruitment, protection for protesters, and minority participation.

Leaders from Chhatra Dal, Chhatra Shibir, Chhatra Union, and Students Against Discrimination joined. "This is a demand rooted in student rights. If the administration stalls, students will launch a tougher movement," said Shahid Ahmed of Chhatra Dal.

VC Prof M Yeaqub Ali said he supports the demand but added, "Since there is no provision, we must follow due process. If general students apply in writing, we will initiate discussions and approach the ministry, UGC, and the chancellor."

At Barishal University, a July 22 referendum saw 86 percent of 1,145 participants support union polls. VC Prof Mohammad Taufiq Alam said the administration is "positive" but added, "Not all students are demanding it. If general students jointly demand it, we will proceed."

Chittagong University is among those that has legal provision for a central students' union. Though an election commission was formed, no schedule was announced.

While authorities cited an incomplete voter list, with 11 of 54 departments yet to submit names, members of the Chhatra Odhikar Parishad locked the university's main gate on August 12, demanding a polls schedule.

CU Pro VC Prof Kamal Uddin said, "Preparations are almost complete. We are ready to announce the poll schedule by Thursday." CU has held only six central elections, the last in 1990, since it was founded in 1966.

Shahjalal University of Science and Technology last held polls in 1997. To revive them, authorities formed a seven-member committee on July 15 to re-draft the ordinance.

VC Prof AM Sarwaruddin Chowdhury said, "We are hopeful of holding the central union election.

But as the last was 27 years ago, it would take time. Besides, under the current circumstances, hall polls may not be possible."

Asked for a tentative date, he said, "We're working to hold the election within December."

Bangladesh Agricultural University last held polls in 1998. On August 26 this year, students submitted a memorandum with nine demands, including a full election schedule.

VC Prof AK Fazlul Haque Bhuiyan said, "The union election is a necessary component for students' rights. So far, only a handful submitted a memorandum. If we get the demand from a majority of student bodies, we will work on it."

Bangladesh University of Engineering Technology's central union was established in 1962 and had 21 committees. The last election was in 2001. Prof AKM Masud, director of Buet's Directorate of Students' Welfare, said, "So far, there have been no demands for polls from the students' side. Hence, the authorities have nothing in process."

Meanwhile, DU will hold DUCSU polls on September 9 (last held in 2019), JU's JUCSU polls on September 11 after 34 years, and RU's RUCSU polls on September 25 after 36 years.

## Qader vows to end seat crisis

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neglected and oppressed. I feel a lot needs to be done regarding student rights, which is why I'm running in the DUCSU race."

Qader said he has always spoken out against injustice, even at the cost of being evicted from his hall and sent to jail. "But I didn't stop. Students have seen me protesting injustice publicly, and they will continue to see me doing so."

Saying Dhaka University could lead the change in the "New Bangladesh", Qader said, "There will be no discrimination here. The campus will be student friendly. Together with the students, I will build their dream campus."

If elected, his topmost priority would be student welfare, including addressing the seat shortage and improving food quality in residential halls.

"We'll also take steps to ensure that the 'gono room' culture can never return. Also, the distance between students and teachers must be bridged, and teacher appointments must be free of political preference."

Saying that the number of female halls is inadequate, he pointed out

## Rucsu polls day revised to Sept 25

RU CORRESPONDENT

In the face of student backlash, the election commission of the Rajshahi University Central Students' Union (Rucsu) last night backtracked from the polling date announced earlier in the day.

The Rucsu polls will now be held on September 25, three days earlier than the previously set date of September 28.

Voting will take place at the academic buildings, with results to be declared the same day.

Confirming the matter, Prof F Nazrul Islam, chief election commissioner, told The Daily Star that other dates in the revised schedule will also be adjusted accordingly.

"Since the 28th is the holy Maha Shashti [the beginning of Durga Puja], we are pushing the election date forward out of respect. The complete schedule will be announced later tonight [Wednesday]."

He further said, "After hearing that the election was scheduled for the 28th, students started protesting. Considering the matter, we have decided to change the date."

Earlier in the day, students protested, saying the timing would disenfranchise thousands of students.

RU student Sourav Karmakar said, "We strongly protest this decision. Not just Hindu students, most of the campus will remain empty that day. Who will cast their votes then? We demand that the administration ensures no one is deprived of their voting rights."

Fuad Ratul, convener of the Socialist Students' Front, added, "Because of Durga Puja festivities and university holidays, many students will be unable to vote. This exclusion will give fundamentalist groups an undue advantage."

Rajshahi University Chhatra Dal president Sultan Ahmed Rahi posted on social media, "Fixing the Rucsu polls on the eve of Durga Puja is no coincidence—it is a deliberate conspiracy."

Mujahid Faisal, general secretary of the Shibir unit, said, "We believe the commission made this unilateral decision under pressure from a particular group as part of a plan to sabotage the election. Other organisations and candidates are dissatisfied. We hope the commission will withdraw this announcement and hold the election at the originally scheduled time."

Kaiser Ahmed, treasurer of the Chhatra Union, added, "The extension of the election timeline and the new polling date are the result of influence from two partisan organisations. This move will exclude a large portion of students and make a fair, participatory election impossible."

## Police charge truncheons on students marching to Jamuna

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Fouzul Kabir Khan to examine the demands of both engineering graduates and diploma engineers, who have also been demonstrating.

The BSc engineering students' original demands included recruitment for 9th grade engineers only through competitive exams with a BSc minimum and scrapping the 100 percent quota for diploma holders in 10th grade posts, while allowing diploma, BSc and MSc holders to apply. They also demanded banning quota-based promotions or creation of equivalent posts under different titles; and taking legal action against misuse of the title "engineer".

Fouzul and Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan also sat with the students at the Railay Bhaban in the evening.

Fouzul said consultation with all stakeholders was required. "A decision will be made tomorrow [today] after discussions," he told reporters after the meeting.

"Students will continue raising demands while discussions will also go on. But repeated blockades at Shahbagh or attempts to march to Jamuna cannot be acceptable. Our doors remain open to the students," he added.

According to a Cabinet Division notification, the government committee will assess the justification of the demands raised by both BSc and diploma engineers and submit recommendations within a month.

Alongside the energy adviser and environment adviser, it includes

Public Works Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan, Education Adviser Chowdhury Rafiqul Abrar, Institution of Engineers President Mohammad Rezaul Islam, Institution of Diploma Engineers President Kabir Hossain, and Board of Accreditation for Engineering and Technical Education Chairman Tanvir Manzur. Cabinet Division Additional Secretary Kazi Muhammad Mozammel Haque will serve as member secretary. The committee may co-opt other members if required.

After a meeting with the advisers, Sakibul Haque Lipu, general secretary of the Prokousholi Odhikar Andolon, declared the "complete shutdown" of engineering universities. "All classes and examinations will remain suspended tomorrow [today]," he told reporters.

He added that the next course of action will be announced at a press conference at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, this afternoon.

Lipu said they would avoid programmes that cause public suffering, such as blockades at Shahbagh. "None of our three demands have been met. Policymakers do not even know what our movement is about," he said, adding that a student-nominated representative would be in the committee formed with four advisers and engineers.

**POLICE ACTION**

Students gathered at Shahbagh intersection around 11:30am as part of their "Long March to Dhaka" programme, halting traffic at the key intersection and causing gridlocks on adjacent streets.

In Chattogram, students under the banner "Engineers' Rights Movement" blocked the busy Gate No. 2 intersection for nearly two hours in the afternoon in protest against the police action in Dhaka.

Around 5:00pm, students from

CUET, IIUC, Premier University, and Chittagong University marched from GEC intersection and gathered in front of Biplob Udayan at Gate No. 2.

In Rajshahi, students of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) blocked the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway at Talaimari intersection in the afternoon.

In a separate incident, police charged truncheons to disperse protesters under the banner of Bangladesh Diploma Engineering Students-Teachers-Professionals (SDSP) at Kakrail yesterday afternoon.

The demonstrators began a procession from the Institution of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh, to submit a seven-point demand to the chief adviser. An 11-member delegation was later allowed to hand over the memorandum to his office.

On their way back, participants staged a brief sit-in at Kakrail, causing traffic congestion. They later moved towards Kakrail intersection. When they reached Willes Little Flower School and College around 2:30pm, police suddenly chased the protesters and charged truncheons.

Their demands include defining the roles of BSc and diploma engineers at workplace, reserving the sub-assistant engineer post for diploma engineers, fixing a 1:5 BSc-diploma engineers ratio in staffing structures, and raising the quota for promotion from sub-assistant to assistant engineer from 33 percent to 50 percent.

However, Hamim conceded that the DUCSU charter has limitations and the student body cannot bring about sweeping changes at Dhaka University, even if it wants to.

"What we can do is to fulfil some basic needs of students," he said, referring to accommodation and quality food crises.

## Hamim for DUCSU charter

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a student representative as the president. The honourable vice-chancellor will remain as the chief adviser on the DUCSU advisory council," he said.

Hamim further said, "To ensure gender equality, DUCSU may have two VPs -- one female and one male. Also, to ensure DUCSU elections are held regularly, we will include this in the university's annual academic calendar."

He expressed confidence that students will choose him for his student-friendly work.

"Even before the July movement, I was on the streets for students and against fascism. Through volunteer organisations, I arranged medical camps for female students in the women's halls. To keep students' minds and bodies healthy, I organised various sports competitions. I also organised cultural programmes -- just as we arranged Quran recitation competitions, we similarly held talent hunt contests in dance, music, and acting."

Hamim conceded that the DUCSU charter has limitations and the student body cannot bring about sweeping changes at Dhaka University, even if it wants to.

"What we can do is to fulfil some basic needs of students," he said, referring to accommodation and quality food crises.

Hamim said the JCD panel is inclusive, with representation from women, minorities, hill students, and July martyrs' families.

"I believe our students will vote for the JCD-nominated panel as they like inclusivity."

Hamim pledged to end the practice of master's students occupying hall seats after exams by introducing an automated system that cancels seats once results are published, freeing space for first-year students.

"If implemented, this might, by and large, solve the accommodation problem of first-year students."

He also promised to ensure computer literacy for students from marginalised areas, form advisory teams of meritorious students to help others achieve good results, and set up small medical centres in women's halls through public-private initiatives.

To address female students' safety, he plans to launch a helpline for immediate response to harassment complaints.</p

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## Preserving memories of the disappeared

Photo exhibition honours enforced disappearance victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A year after the July uprising that ousted the Awami League government, the families of enforced disappearance victims in Bangladesh are still searching for the truth, said Sanjida Islam, one of the organisers of Mayer Daak, a platform of victims' families.

She made the remarks at an open-air photography exhibition yesterday. The event, held in remembrance of the victims of the enforced disappearance and in honour of their families, is underway in front of the Jatiya Sangsad in Dhaka.

Titled, "Memories of Disappearance", the exhibition began on August 22 and will continue until August 31, featuring more than 130 photographs of victims and their families.

The photographs were taken by documentary photographer Mosifqur Rahman Johan.

Sanjida Islam said a similar exhibition was held last year, but this year some photographs of "Aynagar", or

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## Pursue justice for Rohingya genocide

Fortify Rights, 57 other groups urge UN member states



UNB, Dhaka

Fortify Rights and 57 other groups in a joint statement yesterday said the United Nations member states must pursue accountability for genocide and other atrocities committed against ethnic Rohingya civilians in Myanmar's Rakhine State.

"Eight years on from the start of the Myanmar military's genocidal attacks against Rohingya, not a single person has been held criminally responsible. This is a deep stain on the world's conscience," said Patrick Phongsathorn, senior advocate at Fortify Rights.

"It's not too late to address this injustice. The UN Security Council should immediately refer the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court, and all UN member states should explore every possible avenue to pursue justice for the Rohingya," he added.

August 25 is observed as Rohingya Genocide Remembrance Day, marking the Myanmar military's

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Experts urge halt to draft DAP amendment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recently proposed amendments to the Detailed Area Plan (DAP), which aim to increase the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in most areas of Dhaka by 20 to 80 percent, could fuel the construction of more high-rises in an already overcrowded city, urban planners warned yesterday.

At a press conference at the Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), its leaders demanded that the government immediately halt the amendment process of the DAP and building regulations, saying the revisions mainly serve business interests.

They urged the authorities to instead review previously submitted proposals on FAR and incorporate recommendations from social, environmental, professional, and civic groups to improve Dhaka's liveability.

Dhaka's population density is already far higher than global planning standards, and the city suffers from severe traffic congestion, chronic waterlogging, and shortages in civic services, the planners said.

Increasing FAR would worsen



### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review previously submitted proposals on FAR
- Introduce maximum building height limits
- Ban high-rise construction on narrow streets
- Ensure mandatory fire safety measures for buildings above 6 stories
- Drop the plan of allocating FAR along proposed roads
- Formulate strategies under the National Spatial Plan

these problems, putting more pressure on utilities while reducing access to natural light and

ventilation, they added.

Presenting the keynote, BIP President Adil Mohammed Khan said the draft amendment proposes raising FAR in Khilkhet from 2 to 4.4; Mirpur DOHS from 2.5 to 4.8; Badda from 2 to 3.3; Faridabad from 2 to 3.1; Rampura from 2.8 to 3.5; Mirpur from 2.8 to 3.4; and Basabo-Khilgaon from 2 to 3.3.

In contrast, FAR in affluent areas like Gulshan-Banani and Dhanmondi has been slightly reduced, from 5.7 to 5.5 and 5.1 to 5.0, respectively, despite planners' calls for bigger cuts.

This inequality, Adil said, would give plot owners in those neighbourhoods unearned financial benefits.

He, however, welcomed the proposal to ban development on agricultural land, wetlands, and flood-flow zones – something BIP and other environmental groups have long demanded.

He also noted adjustments in FAR for rural density blocks, including Dasherkandi, Kachpur, Moynatek, Alipur, Ruhitpur, Birulia, and Bongram.

FAR is the ratio of the total

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TK 4CR GRAFT  
Kalimullah placed on  
5-day remand  
COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Prof Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah, former vice-chancellor of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) on a five day remand in a case filed on charges of embezzling Tk 4 crore from a development project.

Judge (in charge) Mohammad Ibrahim Miah of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order after ACC Assistant Director Minhaj Bin Islam, who is the investigation officer, produced him before it.

Kalimullah told the court that he had acted as former direction from the former education minister Dr Dipu Moni.

No lawyers stood at the court to defend him, ACC Public Prosecutor Tariqul Islam confirmed it to The Daily Star.

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## CALL-READY once the sound of history, now silent

DIPAN NANDY

Remember whenever you saw someone speaking through a microphone – be it at a rally, a meeting, or a grand procession – there was one thing in common. In front of the mic, a small sign read: "Call-Ready".

From Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's historic March 7, 1971 speech to countless assemblies that shaped the nation, those words became inseparable from Bangladesh's political journey. Every photograph of that moment shows the microphones bearing this name, silent witnesses to history.

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This used to be the store of Call-Ready in Old Dhaka, which now has no proper display and the shutters had stayed down for over a year. The authorities said they are closing the store due to a lack of business.

PHOTO: COLLECTED, RAKIB MADBER

Dhaka to bring all buses under unified system  
CA announces on his verified Facebook page



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has announced that all buses in Dhaka will now operate under a single, unified system to bring order to the capital's chaotic transport network.

"All buses will now be regulated under a single, unified system. Companies will be required to operate only on prescribed routes and make stops at designated points," the chief adviser said on his verified Facebook page yesterday.

"The unregulated bus system has long plagued the city with traffic congestion, frequent accidents, fare manipulation, and unsafe travel conditions. Commuters, especially women, children, and the elderly, have struggled in this disorder, while the city reportedly loses around Tk 370 billion

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Specially built engine-driven boats remove water hyacinth from canals in Dumuria upazila of Khulna. Locals said restoring water flow will ease navigation and benefit agriculture and fishing. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

SADA PATHOR LOOTING  
'We're focusing on identifying those involved'  
Committee ends field visit, holds public hearing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The high-level ministerial probe committee formed by the Cabinet Division has completed its field-level investigation into the large-scale looting of stones from Sada Pathor, a major tourist site in Sylhet's Companiganj upazila.

After visiting the affected areas on Tuesday, the five-member inter-ministerial body held a public hearing at Sylhet Circuit House yesterday, where people from different walks of life gave their statements.

Zaheda Parveen, convener of the probe body and secretary (coordination and reforms) of the Cabinet Division, told reporters, "We are focusing on two key aspects – identifying those involved and determining their responsibilities, and formulating recommendations to prevent such incidents in the future."

She said the team spent two days in Sylhet, gathering evidence and views from stakeholders, and would prepare



SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



## 36 killed in India as heavy rains hit Himalayas

### Pakistan issues flood alerts as India opens dams

REUTERS, Srinagar

Heavy rain swept across the Himalayas, killing at least 36 people in India over the past 24 hours and forcing authorities to open major dams, in turn triggering flood alerts on three rivers in neighbouring Pakistan.

In the deadliest single disaster, a landslide killed 33 people near the Hindu mountain shrine of Vaishno Devi on a pilgrim route in India's federal territory of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday afternoon, officials said.

Three more people died as floodwaters burst the banks of rivers in the district of Doda and swamped low-lying areas, authorities added.



About 200 children were stranded yesterday after flood water engulfed a school building in the northern state of Punjab, local media said.

Vehicles tumbled off the Madhopur barrage over the Tawi river when parts of it collapsed after being lashed by heavy rain overnight into yesterday morning, video images showed. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

Some highways linking Jammu to the rest of India were also damaged.

Officials were battling to restore "almost non-existent" telecommunications services, Omar Abdullah, the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, said.

"We had 612 mm rainfall in Jammu region since August 23 till today. This is 726% above normal rainfall in the region during this time of the year. It is the highest rainfall in the region since 1950," Mukhtar Ahmad, Director at the India Meteorological Department in Srinagar, told Reuters.



Israeli troops take position during a raid in the city of Nablus, in the occupied West Bank, yesterday. Local sources said clashes broke out at the eastern entrance to the old city. The Palestinian Red Crescent reported several injuries as a result, but none from gunfire.

PHOTO: AFP

## Russia hits Ukrainian energy facilities

3 killed; 100,000 left without power; Kremlin views possible European troops in Ukraine 'negatively'

REUTERS, Kyiv

Russia launched a massive drone attack on energy and gas transport infrastructure across six Ukrainian regions overnight, killing three people and leaving more than 100,000 people without power, Ukrainian officials said yesterday.

Russian forces significantly damaged gas transport infrastructure in Poltava region and struck equipment at one of the key substations in the Sumy region, the energy ministry said on the Telegram messaging service.

The attacks left more than 100,000 people without power in the Poltava, Sumy and Chernihiv regions, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said.

Ukraine's main gas production facilities are located in Poltava and Kharkiv regions. Kharkiv region was also hit overnight, as were the regions of Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk, the energy ministry said.

In recent weeks, Russia has stepped up attacks on Ukrainian gas production and import infrastructure despite efforts by

US President Donald Trump to end the war in Ukraine, reports Reuters.

"We regard the Russian attacks as a continuation of the Russian Federation's deliberate policy of destroying Ukraine's civilian infrastructure ahead of the heating

② Ukrainian Air Force said it had downed 74 drones out of 95 launched by Russia

② Kremlin praises efforts by the US to achieve peace in Ukraine

season," the energy ministry said.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin yesterday praised efforts by the United States to achieve peace in Ukraine, saying this month's US-Russia summit in Alaska had been "meaningful and necessary."

But Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that Moscow

took a negative view of European proposals regarding security guarantees for Kyiv. He reiterated Russia's longstanding position that no troops from Nato countries should be deployed to Ukraine.

Meanwhile, the Ukrainian Air Force said it had downed 74 drones out of 95 launched by Russia overnight, and that 21 drones had struck nine locations around the country.

Ukraine had faced a serious gas shortage since Russian missile strikes earlier this year prompted a 40 percent drop in production.

Ukraine's energy ministry said last week that energy facilities had been attacked 2,900 times since March 2025. The attack on Poltava region temporarily cut power to consumers, which has since been restored, Governor Volodymyr Kohut said in a statement on the Telegram messaging app.

Ukraine criticised Russia for setting out plans to withdraw from the Council of Europe's treaty for the prevention of torture, saying the proposal was a tacit admission of guilt by Moscow.

## Iran forces kill 13 militants in southeast

AFP, Tehran

Iranian forces have killed 13 militants in a raid in the restive southeast, state media reported yesterday, adding they were members of a group suspected of a recent deadly attack on police.

"So far, 13 terrorists have been killed and a number of others arrested" in Sistan-Baluchistan province, the Revolutionary Guards said in a statement.

It said operations were carried out in the cities of Iranshahr, Khash and Saravan. The broadcaster said that some of those killed were suspected of being behind an ambush reported on Friday that killed five policemen in Iranshahr.

Sistan-Baluchistan, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, has long been a flashpoint for clashes between security forces and armed groups, including drug traffickers and separatists. Home to a large Sunni Muslim Baluch community, the province is one of the poorest regions of Shia-majority Iran.

the 13th amendment.

Another lawyer for BNP, Ruhul Quddus, added that the system does not contradict the basic structure of the constitution, citing its role in holding free and fair polls.

Jamaat's lawyer Shishir Manir argued that the Appellate Division committed an error by altering the short order delivered in an open court and adding new concepts to the full judgment delivered 16 months later.

He mentioned that the caretaker system strengthened democracy and did not violate the doctrine of the basic structure.

The first petition, filed by Badiul Alam and four others

on August 27 last year, argued that the caretaker system was introduced through a political consensus and had become a basic structure of the constitution.

The petitioners said the 2011 Appellate Division verdict was self-contradictory, as the short verdict allowed the next two national elections under a caretaker government system, but it was omitted in the full judgment.

Four other petitioners are Toftail Ahmed, Malfizuddin Khan, Md Jobirul Hoque Bhuiyan, and Zahrah Rahman.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and Jamaat Secretary General Miah Golam Parwar filed review petitions on October 16 and 23 last year.

All the petitioners said elections in 2014, 2018, and 2024 proved that free and fair polls were not possible under political governments.

## Digital monitoring system for medical equipment by Dec

FROM PAGE 1  
Hospital to know whether we can get the service there as it would be convenient for us. But we were told that the radiotherapy machine there also remains non-functional," he added.

Like Sakina, Parvin Begum, a 50-year-old cancer patient from Narayanganj, had to wait for around 25 days for radiotherapy.

A staff member of the radiotherapy department said one machine has been out of service for seven to eight years and another for five to six years. The only machine in operation now was also repaired a few months ago.

Not only DMCH, but scores of other government hospitals across the country have been struggling to diagnose and treat patients as hundreds of medical devices remain non-functional, forcing many to seek costly services at private clinics, said health officials.

The National Electro-Medical Equipment Maintenance Workshop and Training Center (NEMEMW & TC), a government agency, is responsible for repair and maintenance of medical equipment in around 700 government hospitals.

Several officials at the agency said around 500 repair requisitions for medical devices, including high-tech equipment, are currently pending.

However, the actual number of non-functional devices is likely to be much higher, as many hospitals delay submitting requisitions.

Contacted, Jayanta Kumar Mukhopadhyay, chief technical manager of NEMEMW & TC, said they have floated a tender to repair 415 medical devices while inspections are

going on to determine the problems with the rest.

The process is taking more time than usual due to insufficient manpower, he said.

At least 58 of the 95 posts at the agency remain vacant, Jayanta said, adding that the process of recruiting 55 staffers, including 19 assistant engineers, is underway and likely to be completed this year.

**SYSTEM TO BE LAUNCHED BY DEC**  
The Health Services Division on August 18 wrote to NEMEMW & TC, directing it to develop a system to monitor medical equipment in public hospitals.

② System to give real-time alerts on breakdowns

② System to store repair history for accountability

② Devices like MRI, CT scan, X-ray machines targeted in first phase

② 114 hospitals to come under the system's purview

Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the chief adviser for the health ministry, said that once put in place, the system would enhance the authorities' capacity to ensure uninterrupted services of high-tech equipment at public hospitals.

"It will give us real-time updates... We will be able to intervene promptly as the system will continue to send alerts until the device is repaired," he

told The Daily Star on August 23.

Jayanta Kumar said that in the first phase, the agency will monitor high-tech and costly medical devices in 114 government hospitals, including all district and specialised hospitals.

Around Tk 30 crore may be required for the project that will cover equipment worth approximately Tk 2,000 crore.

He said that once they get administrative and financial approval from the ministry, a tender will be floated to hire a vendor. The system is expected to be launched by December.

### HOW WILL THE SYSTEM WORK?

Two officials of NEMEMW & TC said they will install monitoring devices on medical equipment to track electricity consumption levels for each machine.

Explaining the mechanism, they said a piece of equipment consumes a certain amount of electricity under normal conditions, and the level of consumption increases when it is in use. However, electricity usage drops to nearly zero when the equipment becomes non-functional.

Once a machine becomes non-functional, the installed monitoring device will send a signal to the monitoring systems at the hospital, NEMEMW & TC, the Directorate General of Health Services, and the health ministry.

They further said the agency will also collect data on the equipment's installation date, maintenance history, and other relevant details, enabling higher authorities to ensure accountability of the hospital concerned.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department  
Office of the Upazila Engineer  
Upazila: Shariatpur Sadar, District: Shariatpur  
[www.lged.gov.bd](http://www.lged.gov.bd)

Memo No. 46.02.8669.000.14.398.25-384

Date: 27-08-2025

### e-Tender Notice-01/2025-2026 (OTM)

This is to notify for all concern that e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of below works. Interested persons/firms can see details by visiting the website [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

SI No.	Tender ID No.	Name & Package No.	Tender last selling (date & time)	Tender closing (date & time)	Tender opening (date & time)
01	1143142	Construction of Head Teacher's room with attached toilet of 56 Palong Gps under PEDP4. Construction of Head Teacher's room with attached toilet of Dhanuka Gps under PEDP4. Construction of Head Teacher's room with attached toilet of Palong Tulasar Model Gps under PEDP4. e-Tender/PEDP4/SRT/SAD/2024-25/W15A.01548	21/09/2025 16:00pm	22/09/2025 14:00pm	22/09/2025 14:00pm

There is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches within abovementioned date & time. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)) and also e-mail: [ue.shariatpur-s@lged.gov.bd](mailto:ue.shariatpur-s@lged.gov.bd)

*Md. Jalal Uddin Khan*

Upazila Engineer

LGED, Shariatpur Sadar, Shariatpur

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GD-1885

## NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT China says talks with US, Russia 'unreasonable'

AFP, Beijing

China said yesterday that it would not participate in denuclearisation talks with the United States and Russia, after President Donald Trump said he hoped to include Beijing in negotiations.

Trump on Monday said the United States was trying to pursue denuclearisation with both countries. "I think the denuclearisation is a very -- it's a big aim. But Russia's willing to do it and I think China is going to be willing to do it too," Trump told reporters at the White House.

"We can't let nuclear weapons proliferate. We have to stop nuclear weapons," he added.

Russia and the United States -- former Cold War rivals -- possess almost 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons between them, but Moscow pulled out of the last remaining arms control agreement with Washington in 2023.

## Restore faith in the tax system

Govt must simplify the system, fight corruption, and stop wasting funds

The findings of the Centre for Policy Dialogue's recent survey—that nearly three-quarters of businesses identify corruption among tax officials as their greatest barrier to growth—lay bare the weakness of our tax system. Instead of being the bedrock of state capacity and economic progress, this system has become quite predatory.

The problem, however, goes beyond poor administration. According to the survey, 82 percent of firms opined that tax rates are unfair, while 65 percent are entangled in disputes with tax authorities. Company executives complained that arbitrary levies imposed without explanation added to "invisible costs," eroding trust and discouraging compliance. Furthermore, the VAT regime is so convoluted that its rules have become an obstacle in their own right. Unsurprisingly, evasion is thriving, reaching an estimated Tk 226,236 crore in 2023.

This failure comes at the worst possible moment. As Bangladesh approaches graduation from LDC status, it will lose concessional loans and preferential trade benefits. National resilience will depend on strong domestic resource mobilisation. Yet the tax-to-GDP ratio, already among the lowest in the world, is inexplicably declining, falling to a perilous 6.6 percent. The state is failing to collect the revenue it needs most, just when the imperative to do so has never been greater. Even the National Board of Revenue chairman has acknowledged the system's flaws. His description of the minimum corporate tax, a provision that forces even loss-making companies to pay, as a "black law" is a stunning admission of inequity. It reflects a climate defined by low trust, low compliance, and low revenue.

The way forward demands more than cosmetic fixes. Bangladesh needs a radical simplification of tax codes, sweeping digitisation to limit discretionary human contact, and genuine accountability for corrupt officials. VAT rules must be stripped of their labyrinthine complexity and replaced with a simple, transparent, digital system. Automating audits would reduce compliance costs for companies, close off avenues for corruption among officials, and create a system designed to serve the taxpayer, not the tax collector.

But reform cannot stop at the administration. Public trust must be rebuilt, and that requires fiscal discipline. Citizens must see that tax revenues are not squandered on vanity projects but rather invested in essentials such as education and healthcare. Similarly, the culture of blanket exemptions must end; tax holidays should be temporary, targeted, and time-bound incentives. Above all, profitable enterprises must contribute their fair share to state coffers. Anything less will perpetuate unfairness and starve the state of resources it desperately needs. Finally, no reforms will restore faith in the system unless tax officials face consequences for corruption and are made accountable for their actions. Only through trust, transparency, and fairness can Bangladesh build a tax regime capable of funding its future.

## Don't compromise public service rules

Proper revisions crucial to make the ordinance watertight

We are quite concerned to learn about the errors and inconsistencies that remain in the Public Service Ordinance, 2025 despite two rounds of revisions. Following administrative unrest after the July 2024 uprising, the interim government amended the Government Service Act, 2018, to address issues related to discipline, accountability, and efficiency in public administration. As the amendment issued on May 22 sparked protests among civil servants, the authorities revised the ordinance again and published a second amendment on July 23. Yet, quite a few inconsistencies have still remained, drawing criticism from both service holders and experts who warned that the ordinance will remain ineffective unless its flaws are addressed.

Take for example Section 37(Ka-9), which empowers either the "appointing authority" or "the individual framing the charges" to impose penalties on an official found guilty of breaching service rules. But allowing the individuals framing charges to impose penalties contradicts Article 135(l) of the constitution, which states that only the appointing authority may dismiss or penalise a civil servant. Besides, there is ambiguity regarding the scope for a public servant to seek a review of disciplinary punishment. While Subsections 10 and 11 outline punishments for misconduct, Section 37(Ka) is not referenced in Sections 34 and 36, which grant employees the right to appeal and request reviews. This raises concerns that those punished under Section 37(Ka) may be excluded from these protections.

Moreover, the recently amended ordinance allows only one show-cause notice to the accused employee before punishment is imposed. But imposing a different penalty than stated in the notice, after the accused's reply, would violate Article 135(2) of the constitution, which guarantees a fair chance to respond to the specific proposed punishment. Furthermore, Section 37(Ka-1)(a) of the ordinance defines disobedience or violation of official directives as "misconduct," which is already covered under Rule 2(b) of the Government Servants (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 2018. This overlap creates a risk of dual punishment under two separate legal frameworks.

It is baffling how such glaring inconsistencies could persist in the ordinance despite being reviewed by a high-level government committee. This clearly reflects the inefficiency and lack of sincerity of the team responsible for the amendments. Rules or laws of this nature should not be rushed; rather, adequate time and care must be taken to ensure they are comprehensive. We, therefore, urge the government to revise the ordinance once more and eliminate the existing flaws and inconsistencies. In doing so, it should also seek input from relevant experts.

# EDITORIAL

## Amid rising poverty, what we can learn from China's experience



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ABU AFSARUL HAIDER

Since independence, poverty alleviation has remained a consistent priority for every government in Bangladesh. Despite notable economic growth in recent decades and various initiatives aimed at tackling poverty, a significant portion of the population still lives in hardship. Many people continue to suffer from malnutrition, poor healthcare, inadequate housing, lack of sanitation, and limited access to education. According to UNDP's Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2024, around 41.7 million people in Bangladesh are currently living in extreme poverty. In April, the World Bank estimated that this number could rise by a further three million this year, pushing the national poverty rate to 22.9 percent. A recent study by the Power and Participation Research Centre put the poverty rate at 27.9 percent, a nine-percentage point increase from the 2022 poverty rate. In this context, Bangladesh can draw valuable lessons from China's remarkable success in lifting 800 million people out of poverty over the past four decades through strategic planning, proper investment in infrastructure, education and healthcare, and strong leadership.

Over the years, China invested substantially in infrastructure, particularly in building high-quality roads that link industrial hubs. During its 8-7 National Poverty Reduction Programme (1994-2000), around 42,000 kilometres of new rural roads were constructed each year. By the end of 2024, China's total rural road network had reached 4.64 million kilometres, according to the Chinese Minister of Transport Liu Wei. China also invested heavily in railways, electricity, ports, and airports, thus improving connectivity in rural areas, linking people to markets, services, and opportunities, which helped lift millions out of poverty. According to the World Bank, in 1980, China's per capita GDP was around \$195, and by 2024, it reached \$13,303.

Another effective tool used by the country was the Targeted Poverty Alleviation (TPA) programme that identified the poorest households through village-level data collection and mapped each family's needs, strengths, and challenges. Since poverty often stems from various causes, such as illness, lack of education, or unemployment, tailored solutions were designed to suit each household. These included job

training, micro-loans, relocation to more developed areas, or improved access to healthcare and education. Progress was closely monitored, and accountability was ensured. TPA has been described as China's "magic weapon" in the battle against poverty and is considered a major innovation in poverty alleviation theory and practice, offering valuable lessons for the rest of the world.

China's long-term investment in human capital through a robust education system was another important tool in poverty reduction. Since 2012, government spending on

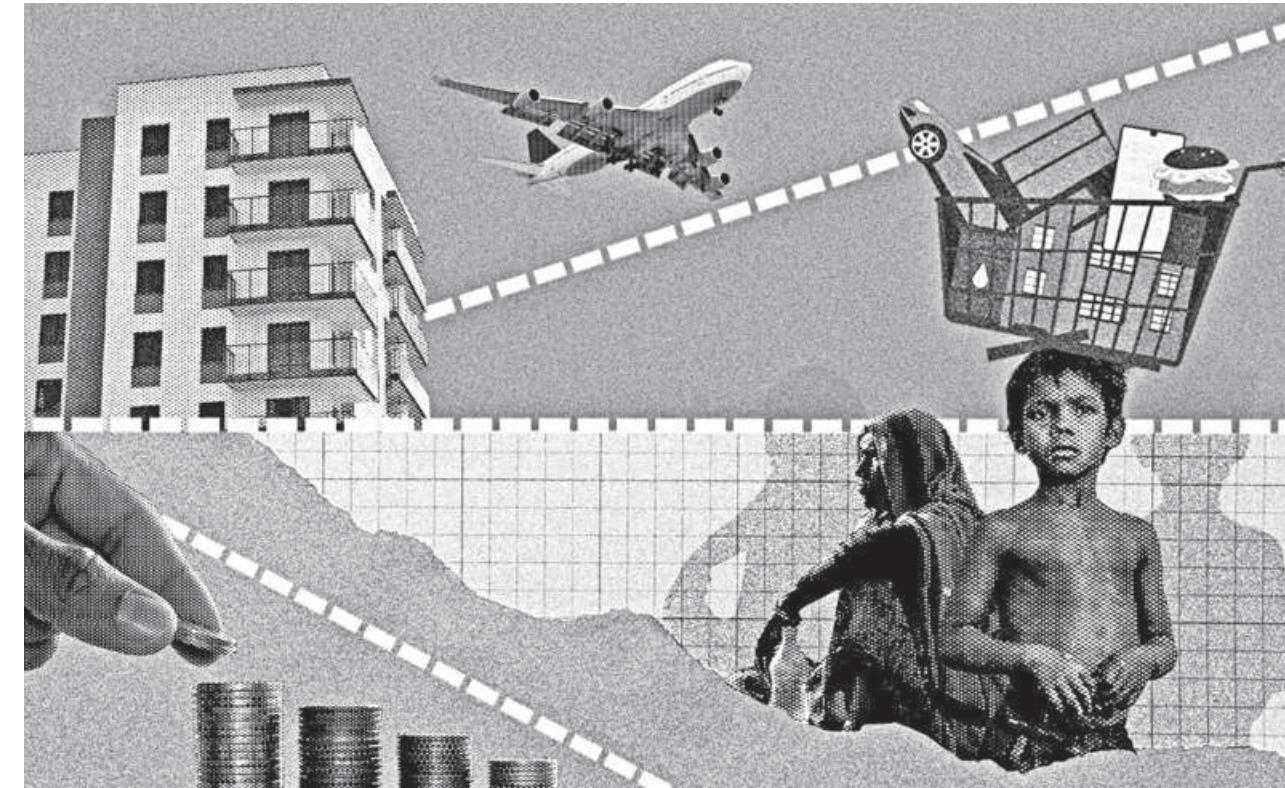
system was established, offering financial assistance to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, from pre-school through to postgraduate education. Since 2011, the Chinese government has invested 47.2 billion yuan (approximately \$7.7 billion) in its rural nutrition programme, which has benefited 32.2 million children.

China's education system also includes a built-in mechanism to guide students into academic, technical, or vocational streams based on their aptitude. After completing nine years of compulsory education, students are directed to senior secondary or vocational schools, where they acquire specialised skills to prepare for the job market. This skilled technical workforce has been critical to China's rapid industrialisation, which in turn has helped eradicate poverty. According to China's Ministry of Education, the number of students dropping out during compulsory education fell from over 600,000 in 2019 to just 831 in 2020, a testament to the country's focus on educational inclusiveness and

the National Institutes of Health (NIH) found that nearly 20 million people in China had fallen into or returned to poverty due to healthcare costs. In response, the Chinese government launched the Health Poverty Alleviation Project (HPAP) in 2016 to shield vulnerable families from the financial burden of illness. This project focused on improving access to affordable healthcare and reducing the risk of medical expenses pushing people back into poverty.

Perhaps the most decisive factor in China's success in reducing poverty has been its leadership. The Communist Party of China (CPC) played a central role by mobilising its 90 million members and assigning over three million officials to work directly on poverty alleviation. Party leaders at all levels were made responsible for meeting poverty reduction targets. They led by example and ensured that resources were effectively allocated to the task.

While some may criticise various aspects of China's approach, its



FILE VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

education has consistently exceeded four percent of GDP. While only a quarter of primary and secondary schools had internet access in 2012, today all of them are connected, of which 95.3 percent are equipped with multimedia classrooms. Recognising that poverty alleviation would only be sustainable through long-term investment in education and human development, the Chinese government introduced policies to promote compulsory education and reduce the education gap between urban and rural areas. It ensured that no child is denied schooling due to financial hardship. A comprehensive financial support

skill-building.

Another important factor behind China's success in reducing poverty has been its substantial investment in healthcare. Since 1978, China has worked to improve access to medical services, cut down out-of-pocket expenses, and prevent illness from driving families into poverty. To close the gap in healthcare access between urban and rural regions, China introduced the Rural Cooperative Medical Scheme (RCMS) in 2003, funded mainly through government subsidies. By the end of 2012, the scheme covered 805 million rural residents, 98 percent of the rural population. However, a 2015 study by

experience offers valuable lessons for developing countries like Bangladesh. First, poverty reduction is not just about boosting economic growth, it also requires inclusive policies, good governance, and investment in public services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Second, each country must chart its own course, based on its unique reality. And most importantly, strong and responsible leadership, with the courage to face challenges, is vital. With political will, a clear strategy, and practical steps, any country can make real progress in overcoming poverty and building a more equitable society.

## The hidden struggles of single mothers



Sayra Khan  
is senior broadcast journalist at Independent Television Limited.

SAYRA KHAN

Beneath the surface of the city's fast-paced life, single mothers in Dhaka fight a quiet battle as they try to raise their children alone while confronting social stigma. A recent academic study has shed light on their untold stories, revealing how cultural and patriarchal norms, along with societal misconceptions, continue to define and often minimise the experiences of this marginalised group.

The study, conducted by University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) researchers, explored the lived experiences of nine middle-class single mothers—who were divorced, separated, and widowed—through in-depth interviews. Despite diverse scenarios, each respondent described experiencing prejudice, rebuke, and social exclusion due to deeply rooted beliefs that motherhood outside of marriage is morally flawed or socially shameful.

"People assume that because I've been divorced twice and have a child, I must be a bad woman. But no one questions a man for the same," said one respondent.

The same experience was echoed by others who shared accounts of character assassination, harassment at work, and being unfairly blamed

for failed marriages. The study found that many of the women were openly accused of being responsible for their circumstances. Widows, typically viewed with sympathy, were often labelled "unfortunate."

Single mothers often face social shame for daring to survive and sometimes thrive on their own. Women with stable jobs in media, finance, and business reported being targeted when they achieved success. Despite earning a handsome income per month, the stigma persisted. One respondent said that "even now, my relatives talk about my earnings and how I make a living. They still feel I haven't been able to raise my child properly."

In the study, single mothers reported being labelled as "bad mothers" and "reckless or irresponsible," mostly because of societal beliefs that they were unable to raise their children well or spend enough time with them.

The stigma also affects their children. One mother explained how neighbours stopped allowing their children to play with hers once her relationship status became known. "No one came to my child's birthday party," she said quietly. Another expressed concern that as her daughter grows older, she might face harsh questions

about her family situation.

The impact of the stigma on mental health is profound. Several women reported suffering from anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion. Two admitted having attempted suicide due to the overwhelming pressure and judgment. Most of them began to withdraw from social life, avoiding family gatherings, limiting interactions, and remaining silent in the face of criticism.

The study emphasised that financial independence alone does not shield single mothers. In fact, at times, higher income tends to make them more visible in the society and subsequently, subject to criticism.

To survive, single mothers have developed a range of coping strategies. Some choose to conceal their marital status to avoid judgment, while others draw strength from religious faith, meditation, or supportive friends.

Several women reported that their in-laws or neighbours strictly monitored their behaviour, dictating what they wore, who they met, and how they conducted themselves in public. One mother explained how wearing a hijab helped her avoid public scrutiny, while another said she avoided discussing her separation, fearing backlash from co-workers or acquaintances.

"This society doesn't feed me, teach me, or help me. So why should I care what they say?" one woman said defiantly.

The study categorised these responses as "survival tactics," deliberate efforts to maintain dignity, reduce exposure to stigma, and protect their children from harm. These included drawing on inner

courage, maintaining a limited group of trustworthy people and staying silent in the face of allegations.

Most single mothers who participated in the study expressed gratitude for the limited support they received, often from close friends and family. Although they also made it clear that there is a significant lack in institutional and societal support. None of them were aware of any government or NGO programmes specifically supporting single mothers in Dhaka. Several suggested the establishment of counselling centres where women could safely talk about their experiences. Others called for legal reforms, such as allowing children to name their mother as their sole legal guardian on official documents.

"The government should give us recognition. If I am raising my child alone, I should be acknowledged as the child's legal guardian," said one respondent.

The study concludes that the real burden faced by single mothers is not personal failings but rather cultural views. The women who were interviewed were survivors of divorce, husbands' demise, abuse, and abandonment. They are not victims by choice.

The researchers concluded the study by urging for greater social awareness, educational initiatives, and inclusive policies to counteract the discrimination faced by single mothers and ensure equal rights and dignity for them.

# Rising child sexual abuse: What are we missing?



Shaheen Anam  
is executive director at  
Manusher Jonno Foundation.

SHAHEEN ANAM

Does depravity have a limit? I ask this question in the context of child sexual abuse in Bangladesh, which has been setting new standards of frequency, barbarity, and cruelty.

As per data compiled by Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), child rape cases have increased by 75 percent in the first seven months of 2025 compared to the same period last year. What does this say about our society? Even more horrific is that out of the 306 girls raped this year, 40 were mere toddlers up to six years old, 94 were between 7-12, and 103 were teens, meaning below 18. Although largely unreported, experts claim that child sexual abuse within families is common, as is the rape of boys in madrasas and such residential settings. Most recently, a teenage girl with intellectual disability was raped by a 27-year-old man in Bandarban's Lama Upazila. The chilling reality is that families, educational institutions, and the state have completely failed to protect our children.

According to ASK, cases for only 251 out of the 306 incidents were registered, leaving the rest out of the justice system. However, there is no guarantee of justice even if cases are filed or perpetrators arrested. Most get out on bail either using money, political clout or some lacunae in the system.

It is important to note some of the horrific incidents of child abuse in recent past to remind ourselves that our children are in grave danger, requiring urgent action.

The rape and murder of an eight-year-old in Magura, by the father-in-law of her elder sister (a child bride herself), and abetted by her mother-in-law and husband, shook the nation to the core. The students all over Bangladesh rose to protest. The rapist was handed death sentence. Following this gruesome murder, in July, the body of a nine-year-old was found in a mosque where she was a student studying the Holy Quran. She was raped before being murdered; the alleged perpetrators were the imam and muazzin of the mosque in



FILE VISUAL: STAR

question. Boys also fall victim to sexual abuse, but due to the social stigma attached to the rape of boys, cases mostly go unreported. ASK reports 30 such cases between the ages of 7-12 during the first seven months of this year. What is more concerning is that these numbers do not tell the entire story, and there are probably as many such cases not being reported.

parents about it unless a serious injury takes place. Add to that the social stigma the child has to endure. Often, they cannot go back to their school or play with their friends. Parents have reported having to move from their neighbourhood to avoid the social humiliation.

For those of us who have invested decades working to address gender-based violence,

the situation is increasingly frustrating and demoralising. We are frustrated with the system that does not work, the laws that do not get implemented, and the general attitude towards women and girls that does not change. We are now wondering if we have missed a plot. Is our strategy at fault? Is there a need to look at this issue differently? Most importantly, are we only talking among ourselves?

This brings us to the issue of justice. The entire process of seeking justice is so time consuming, financially crippling, and humiliating that most parents give up halfway, while many don't bother to file a case. The so-called "sensational" cases get attention, and quick justice or "zero tolerance for child sexual abuse" is promised. However, except in a few cases, as the dust settles, all promises are forgotten, and the justice system goes back to its usual pace. In the Magura rape and murder case, the offender was sentenced in three weeks. But what about the thousands of other cases, some waiting for years to be resolved? Unless justice is delivered equally for everyone, faith in the justice system will not return.

**It is important to note some of the horrific incidents of child abuse in recent past to remind ourselves that our children are in grave danger, requiring urgent action. The rape and murder of an eight-year-old in Magura, by the father-in-law of her elder sister (a child bride herself), and abetted by her mother-in-law and husband, shook the nation to the core.**

The conclusion is: it cannot be "business as usual." Some drastic changes have to take place at the institutional, societal, and family levels. One of the actions we have missed out on is engaging with offenders. Perhaps it is time to get into their minds to find out the root cause of their perverted behaviour that has destroyed the lives of so many children.

Whatever strategy we take up henceforth, there is no doubt that prevention and protection must go hand in hand to stop this rot that is causing such harm to our children, robbing them of their childhood, and preventing their healthy, happy growth.

# Will Bangla speakers ever be culturally united?



Dr Eshita Dastidar  
is an independent researcher.

ESHITA DASTIDAR

We usually understand language as a means of communication between people. But language is not limited to communication alone; it also affects or shapes power structures and sociocultural identity. In the age of neoliberalism, language is caught in a complex web where politics, commercialisation, globalisation, cultural exchange, and language rights are all intertwined. Their collective influence determines which languages gain influence and which lose importance or face extinction. Language can also be a source of ethnic tensions and even hatred.

The reason for this little introduction is to draw attention to the recent activities of India's ruling bloc in relation to the Bangla language and its speakers, and the divisions that have emerged in response. One such instance saw a letter from Delhi Police, dated July 24, referring to Bangla used by suspected illegal immigrants as a "Bangladeshi

Bangladesh," he said.

Around the same time, there have been a number of incidents across India reflecting a broader pattern of linguistic profiling and harassment. For instance, on August 20, Hindi-speaking businessmen and shopkeepers beat up a dozen Calcutta University students in Sealdah, calling them "Bangladeshi" and "Rohingya" for refusing to speak Hindi. Beyond West Bengal, similar incidents have unfolded in Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and other BJP-ruled states, where Bangla-speaking migrant workers have been harassed, assaulted, or even detained on suspicion of being "illegal Bangladeshi." In several cases, those with valid documents were still picked up or pushed across the border in so-called "push-back" operations, showing how language is being used as a proxy for exclusion and expulsion.

But isn't Bangla the mother tongue of both Indian and Bangladeshi Bengalis?

**Contemporary developments in both India and Bangladesh may make it easy to forget, but the wider region once known as the Indian subcontinent has a long history of struggles for the Bangla language. One of the earliest took place in the erstwhile Manbhum district (then in Bihar, now mostly Purulia in West Bengal), which was historically inhabited by Bangla speakers.**

According to the Constitution of India, there is no national language as such. Hindi is just one of the two official languages of the Union, alongside English, while 22 languages, including Bangla, are recognised in the Eighth Schedule. Why, then, are Bangla speakers being targeted?

The project that the BJP-RSS bloc is trying to impose through language politics aims to strengthen the North Indian power structure by projecting the inevitability of their Hindutva vision (Hindi-Hindustani). Although this agenda has faced strong resistance in South India, and from progressive Indians elsewhere, in West Bengal it is playing out as *Bangla against Bangla*.

Regional dialects and preferences, both spoken and written, are being manipulated to support a "Bangladeshi" "foreigner" narrative and sow divisions.

It is well known that many people from West Bengal migrate to other Indian states or countries in search of work. Many do not speak the standard, urban Bangla of Kolkata, and are thus branded as "Bangladeshi" and sometimes pushed across the Bangladeshi

even religious divides.

Contemporary developments in both India and Bangladesh may make it easy to forget, but the wider region once known as the Indian subcontinent has a long history of struggles for the Bangla language. One of the earliest took place in the erstwhile Manbhum district (then in Bihar, now mostly Purulia in West Bengal), which was historically inhabited by Bangla speakers. Their long



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

again, they have been divided—by colonial tendencies, by radical nationalist politics, sometimes on religious grounds, sometimes regionally, and sometimes across borders. Some sow division from within the country, others from abroad. That is why it remains doubtful whether Bangla speakers scattered across Karachi, North India, Assam, Tripura, and Bangladesh will ever reach some unity, even within their respective borders, based on

language." This caused an outrage in West Bengal, where the Trinamool Congress (TMC) accused BJP of insulting Bengali identity through such mischaracterisation. The BJP, however, alleged that TMC was defending illegal Bangladeshi settlers, asking whether "a heavily Urdu-influenced dialect" could qualify as the "real" Bangla language.

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By contrast, rural people still follow the Bengali calendar in all their work—whether in farming, festivals, or lunar schedules. In many cases, this calendar is their primary guide. Here, language and culture are still largely tied to their everyday existence, transcending

their common linguistic heritage.

This is not a call for establishing linguistic dominance, but for preserving the history and culture of the language through united efforts—something that could serve as a source of strength for the speakers of other languages struggling against similar politico-cultural marginalisation. Such unity could also create shared opportunities in the cultural marketplace. Books, songs, films and other products of culture could together form a vibrant market for the 30 crore Bangla speakers, however loosely connected, thus strengthening their collective confidence and offering a shield against all humiliation.

But who will create such unity?



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSVED

## NAVEEN ISLAM TORRE

Channel i is set to air a nearly three-hour tribute programme titled *Jui Phool: Sabina Yasmin* on September 5 at 2:40pm, celebrating the 55-year journey of one of Bangladesh's most iconic voices. The programme takes its name from the singer herself: Sabina means "Jui". The special feature, which runs for 2 hours and 48 minutes, consists of performances from well-known singers and candid reflections of Sabina Yasmin's life and music.

Filmed across three locations — Thikana Resort, Channel i's studio, and the singer's own residence — the production added together two parts: a music showcase featuring her most beloved songs, and a personal interview where Yasmin revisited the milestones of her career.

During an event announcing the programme last Tuesday, Director Shykh Seraj talked about her dedication. "Sabina apa was physically unwell. Yet, the second the camera was on, her face lit up with a smile. Without her excitement and co-operation, I wouldn't have been able to make

this show whole."

The programme also screened an old interview with late actress Kabori Sarwar, alongside noted artistes Farida Akhtar Babita, Sujata, and Rozina, who shared their memories of Yasmin. Sujata recalled first seeing her as a child. "She was only wearing a frock; I was surprised to find out that she

songs, *She Je Keno Elona*. The singer also talked about her international encounters, including her meeting with Lata Mangeshkar and the moment Raj Kapoor famously described her as "Awaz ki Devi" (Goddess of Vocals).

**For Sabina Yasmin, the experience was equally rewarding. "I am speechless at how the show turned out. There is not a single moment where it is boring."**

was going to sing."

Yasmin also revealed little-known anecdotes. Her birth certificate had the name Dilshad Yasmin, but the world came to know her as Sabina only after her breakout song *Shudhu Gaan Gye Porichoy*. At that time, Kabori admitted she initially disliked one of Yasmin's

Beyond nostalgia, the singer did not shy away from addressing industry issues. She raised the issue of Bangladeshi singers not getting royalties for their music. "Because of it, many suffer financially. If this existed, a lot of

talented singers would not have to suffer in their later years," she said, urging reforms on behalf of her fellow musicians.

The musical segment was carried by seven contemporary singers — Dilshad Nahar Kona, Somnur Monir Konal, Imran

*Eki Shonar Aloy, Ei Prithibir Pore, Shoto Jonomer Shopno, Cherona Cherona Haat, Ei Mon Tomake Dilam* paid homage to the singer's rich musical footprint.

The evening closed with all seven singers uniting for *Shundor Shuborno Labonno*.

Shykh Seraj described both the motivation and challenges behind the project. "Many artistes of earlier generations are slipping out of public view. Their work carries immense archival value, and it is our responsibility to preserve it. That is why I continue such efforts," he said.

For Sabina Yasmin, the experience was equally rewarding. "I am speechless at how the show turned out. There is not a single moment where it is boring."

**Jui Phool: Sabina Yasmin** is not just a tribute; it is an ode to the legendary life of Sabina Yasmin. It captures the voice of a woman who began as Dilshad, grew into Sabina, and became the nightingale of Bengali music. Fifty-five years on, her songs remain just as evergreen as she is.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF CHANNEL I

Mahmudul, Atiya Anisha, Rakiba Oyshi, Sania Sultana Liza, and Zanita Ahmed Zhiilk — who performed 12 of Yasmin's personal favourites. Their renditions of classics like *Shudhu Gaan Gye Porichoy*,

## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO: COURTESY OF CHANNEL I

## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

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## Bangladeshi short wins at Rhode Island Int'l Film Festival

Bangladeshi filmmaker Biju Imtiaz's short film *A Thing about Kashem* has won the Grand Prize in the Alternative Spirit (Short) category at the Oscar-qualifying Rhode Island International Film Festival. This win makes the film eligible for Academy Award submission.

The 17-minute film stars Intekhab Dinar alongside Moutushi Biswas, and Hashnat Ripon among others. Notably the story was written by Nuhash Humayun, with Biju contributing.

Produced by Arifur Rahman, Nuhash Humayun and others under Goopy Bagha, Long Story and Screencope, the film explores identity and inner conflict.

The film has already been screened in Spain, New York and Los Angeles.

## Hollywood stars back Gaza-set drama

Hollywood stars Brad Pitt, Joaquin Phoenix, and Rooney Mara have joined Tunisian director Kaothuer Ben Hania's Gaza-set drama *The Voice of Hind Rajab* as executive producers.

With support from Alfonso Cuarón, Jonathan Glazer, and producers Nadim Cheikhrouha, Odessa Rae, and James Wilson, the actors' involvement boosts the film ahead of its world premiere at the 82nd Venice Film Festival on September 3.

The drama, featuring Saja Kilani, Motaz Malhees, Clara Khoury, and Amer Hlehel, recounts the tragic story of six-year-old Hind Rajab, killed in January 2024 while fleeing Gaza City with family. Her final moments were recorded by Red Crescent volunteers struggling to dispatch an ambulance.

The Venice Film Festival officially opened yesterday.



## NEWS

## New demands a plot to derail polls

FROM PAGE 12

The BNP leader said his party had fully cooperated with the interim government since its inception and had neither created obstacles nor raised demands on the streets to embarrass it.

"But, unfortunately, some political quarters are trying to foil and disrupt the polls by raising new demands," he said.

Saying reforms are difficult for the masses to grasp, Fakhrul said the proportional representation (PR) system in voting is even more difficult to explain to them.

"Moreover, voters would not know who they are voting for [in the PR system]. Yet, many are speaking about implementing these measures and issuing threats," he added.

Expressing regret, Fakhrul said the anticipated change in mindset after last year's uprising had not materialised.

"I have never felt depressed in politics; I was never frustrated. I have

always given courage to everyone. But, recently, a shadow of despair has crept into me. You may ask why? ... Most people have become spoilt."

He said corruption has worsened and bemoaned the complicity of political leaders in it.

"An industrialist told me that before he had to pay one lakh taka, now he has to pay five lakh. What this means is, the change that was supposed to come in people's mindset has not come."

Alleging that those who seek to derail the polls are exploiting the situation, Fakhrul demanded that the government must hold polls without delay.

"Finish the July charter and reforms quickly, without adding more complications. Make arrangements for the polls quickly. Make the political parties election-oriented," he said.

"There is no alternative to elections."

He also criticised the attack on Adviser Mahfuj Alam, which he blamed on Awami League activists.

Referring to recent reports, Fakhrul said, "A Bangladeshi, known for bank looting, has given Tk 2,500 crore to Sheikh Hasina in Delhi. They are now planning how to use that money to stop Bangladesh's election and bring Hasina back."

He also highlighted the ongoing liquidity crisis in banks.

"Today, my wife called the bank to withdraw some money. The bank officials said, 'sorry madam, we cannot give more than Tk 5,000'."

"These problems could have been avoided if the polls were held within three months," he said, adding that he had faced criticism for making that demand soon after the uprising.

He also recalled that the 1/II military-backed caretaker government had stayed in power for two years and "handed over power to the fascist Awami League."

Samsuddoza Nabab said, "This is visible discrimination against independent candidates. No action has been taken against the politically-backed ones. Only independent candidates are show-caused."

According to section 7(a) of the electoral code, campaigners are permitted only to print and distribute black-and-white posters, leaflets, or handbills. The use of PVC or any type of banner, festoon, or board is strictly prohibited.

Oikyabodh Shikkharthi Jote's general secretary candidate SM Farhad said, "We did not violate the code of conduct. The rules only mentioned that posters cannot be pasted on trees or walls. We followed that and instead created frames to hang our posters. Before doing so, we asked the commission and they said there was no problem.... Now a new circular has been issued, instructing us to remove those."

Meanwhile, on the second day of campaigning, most panels focused on reaching non-residential students. They campaigned at Mall Chattar, Curzon Hall, TSC, and campus bus stations used by commuters, and also visited academic buildings after classes to distribute leaflets. Many

The evidence brought against them is not only credible but also irrefutable and strong, the chief prosecutor said, adding that it includes eyewitness accounts, video-audio records, government documents, forensic and ballistic reports.

BRUR student Sayed was shot dead on July 16 last year. His defiance in the face of state violence turned students' demonstrations into a mass uprising that toppled Sheikh Hasina's regime on August 5.

Of the accused, 24 remain fugitives, but the trial continues in their absence.

The tribunal also set today for cross examining the witnesses.

## Authorities pull down campaign posters, banners

FROM PAGE 1

spokesperson of Students Against Discrimination; Pratirodh Parshad, backed by some left-leaning parties; Oikyabodh Shikkharthi Jote, supported by Islami Chhatra Shibir; along with independent candidates.

The same day, Ducus Chief Returning Officer Prof Mohammad Zashim Uddin issued an urgent notice instructing all candidates to take them down immediately.

Professor Golam Rabbani, convener of the taskforce on the electoral code of conduct, told The Daily Star, "Many put those up without knowing the rules. That's why we have served show-cause notices. Today [yesterday] we cleared them, and if anyone puts them up again, punitive action will be taken."

Some independent candidates, however, alleged bias in enforcement.

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panels planned to visit dormitories at night.

Boishommo Birodh Shikkharthi Oikya, backed by Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangshad, launched its campaign by paying tribute to poet Kazi Nazrul Islam at his grave.

The panel's vice-president candidate Abdul Qader said, "Almost every panel is violating the code of conduct, even though the Ducus election commission has clearly provided the rules. It seems they are competing over who can breach more rules."

From the first day of campaigning, Chhatra Dal backed candidates began distributing leaflets from Ekator Hall. The panel also submitted a written complaint to the election commission, demanding action against code violations, more polling centres, and shutting down Dhaka University related social media groups.

JCD GS candidate Shaikh Tanvir Barai Hamim said, "Due to complaints over the lack of a level playing field, a lot of time is being wasted instead of reaching out to students. Yet, we're seeing no remedy."

## PRINTING DELAY STALLS CAMPAIGNING

With orders for campaign leaflets piling up, printing presses in Katabon and Nilkhel are struggling to keep pace, slowing down the campaign process for many panels.

Some panels, including Swantantra Shikkharthi Oikya and Pratirodh Parshad, could not distribute leaflets on the first day of campaigning. A candidate from Umama's panel said they received their printed materials in the evening.

Pratirodh Parshad's assistant general secretary candidate Jabir Ahmed Jubel said they had to photocopy a small number of leaflets during the day and later went to dormitories to reach voters.

Several candidates from Boishommo Birodh Shikkharthi Oikya also struggled to campaign effectively due to a shortage of leaflets.

## Japanese climber

FROM PAGE 12

As well as an avid hiker, the retired livestock farmer from the central Guna region volunteers at an elderly care centre and teaches painting.

The preparation for the climb up Mount Fuji — which is also an active volcano — came after he tripped while walking up a mountain near his home in January and then fell ill with shingles and was hospitalised with heart failure.

His physical condition worried his family, but Akuzawa was determined to climb, his daughter Yukiko, 75, told AFP. "The recovery was so fast that his doctors could not believe it," Yukiko said.

To get back into shape, Akuzawa woke up early every morning and set off on an hour-long walk, and also hiked up a mountain almost every week.

## Israeli tanks

FROM PAGE 12

deaths "due to famine and malnutrition" over the past 24 hours, including two children, bringing the total number of hunger-related deaths to 313, 119 of whom were children, reports Al Jazeera online.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military yesterday launched an operation involving dozens of soldiers and armoured vehicles in the old city of Nablus, in the northern occupied West Bank, witnesses and Palestinian officials said.

The military said in a statement that its forces were operating in Jabalia and the outskirts of Gaza City to "dismantle terror infrastructure sites and eliminate terrorists".

## Trump's doubling

FROM PAGE 12

India's junior Foreign Minister Kirti Vardhan Singh told reporters: "We are taking appropriate steps so that it does not harm our economy, and let me assure you that the strength of our economy will carry us through these times."

"Our concern is our energy security, and we will continue to purchase energy sources from whichever country benefits us."

There was no domestic market reaction to the move yesterday as bourses were closed for a Hindu festival but equity benchmarks logged their worst session in three months on Tuesday after a Washington notification confirmed the additional tariff.

## Man to die for rape, murder of madrasa girl in Barguna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A Barguna court yesterday sentenced a man to death and another to five years in jail over the rape and murder of a madrasa student in Barguna's Amtoli. The convicts are Hridoy Khan, 20, and his accomplice Zahidul Islam, 19.

Barguna Women and Children's Repression Prevention Tribunal Judge Lailatul Ferdous delivered the verdict in their presence, said Special Public Prosecutor Ranjuara Sipu.

The father of the victim filed a complaint with the Amtoli Police Station against the two on February 8, 2022.

According to the case statement, the 12-year-old student went out of her house on February 5, 2022. When she did not return home, her parents started looking for her.

The next day, the complainant filed a GD with the Amtoli Police Station. His son, Imran, told him that a text message was sent to his phone from an unknown number saying that the girl had been abducted and demanded a ransom of Tk 15 lakh. The father then reported the matter to the police.

Police arrested a suspect, Hridoy, on February 7, and during interrogation, they learned that the victim had been abducted for ransom. When he failed to extort the ransom, he took her to the Hoglata forest and raped her. Fearing that she might reveal the matter, Hridoy killed her, according to the case statement.

Police later recovered her body based on the information.



Bamboos transported from Faridpur being soaked in a ditch in Barishal before being processed into sticks used to fence betel leaf plantations. A worker engaged in this work from morning till evening earns Tk 20,000-25,000 a month, while traders sell 160 sticks for Tk 675. The photo was taken in the Baichkhola area of Gournadi upazila, Barishal recently.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## KALAPARA IN PATUAKHALI

# River dam leaves arable land submerged

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali



An embankment built across the Boritala River at Gabbaria in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila has blocked the natural water flow, leaving vast areas waterlogged.

Hundreds of farmers in at least 40 villages under five unions are facing distress as nearly 50,000 acres of arable land remain inundated, they said.

At least 19 sluice gates in the area have become inoperative, while branch canals are silting up, worsening the crisis.

Residents said the Boritala once flowed through Dalbuganj and Mohipur unions. In 2015, the Water Development Board built a cross dam at Gabbaria point, cutting off tidal water flow. Since then, three connected canals have become nearly dead, while heavy silt has turned many

branch canals into farmland. "Due to the blockage in the Boritala River, people have built small dams at the Okkachora point of Bablatala canal to make ponds for fish farming," said Siddiq Mia, a farmer from Monsatia village. "The river is gone. People can now walk across it. But once, fishermen made their living here," said Altaf, a farmer from Mirpur village. "If a sluice gate is built on the dam, we can get relief from this suffering."

Contacted, Kalapara UNO (acting) Yasin Sadek said, "We will look into the matter and take sustainable measures to ease the suffering of farmers and locals."

Kalapara WDB sub-assistant engineer Badsha Alam said, "This is an old project. I have little knowledge about it. However, I will inform higher authorities to take necessary steps."

## Preserving memories EC likely

FROM PAGE 3  
secret detention centres, have been added.

According to complaints filed with the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, formed by the interim government, about 1,850 people were victims of enforced disappearance between 2009 and 2024 during the Awami League government. The whereabouts of around 350 of them remain unknown.

To mark International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances on August 30, Mayer Daak will also organise a seminar at the Bangla Academy auditorium on August 29, Sanjida added.

Curator Tanzim Wahab noted in a message displayed at the exhibition that the issue of enforced disappearances became clearer after the July uprising, when people released from Aynagar recounted being picked up and subjected to horrific torture.

"However, these photographs stand as protest, preserving the memory of those who never returned," the message read.

Md Romeo, a student who visited the exhibition yesterday, said it sends a strong message to the government to ensure justice for victims and their families.

## FROM PAGE 4

We will share the action plan with you once we have prepared it."

Asked why the roadmap -- which was supposed to be released last week -- was delayed, he said, "It is my own shortcoming. Since I was outside Dhaka, I might have fallen a bit behind."

"It is already done, probably sitting on my desk now. Holding it back for just one more day won't make much difference. As I've said, tomorrow I'll have the chance to share much more," he said.

PRAYER TIMING					
AUGUST 28					
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrub	Esha	
AZAN 4-30	12-45	4-45	6-33	8-00	
JAMAAT 5-05	1-15	5-00	6-36	8-30	

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

to introduce electric trains.

At the event, BIDA Executive Chairman Ashik Chowdhury said the authority has set up the

Power Policy will allow producers to sell electricity directly to customers using the national grid on a wheeling-charge basis, he added.

He also said the National Rooftop Solar Program will start with government offices, then expand to schools and hospitals, with systems installed under public-private and OPEC models.

BIDA's priorities for the rest of the year include completing 32 reform initiatives and converting high-priority investment leads generated from recent visits, he added.

BIDA, in coordination with the home ministry, is also working to digitise security clearance processes for foreign professionals, with the reform set to go live in September, he said.

The government is also

preparing for the transition

to electric mobility, having

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## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

মহিলা ও শিশু বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়

মহিলা বিষয়ক অধিদপ্তর

"নারী ও শিশু নির্যাতন প্রতিকার ও প্রতিরোধে সমর্পিত সেবা জোরদারকণ এবং কুইক রেসপন্স টিমের কার্যক্রম" শীর্ষক প্রকল্প

আউটসোর্সিং পক্ষত্বে অন্বন্তর সরবরাহের সংশোধিত প্রকল্প বিজ্ঞপ্তি

স্মারক নং- মশিবিম/মবিঅ/নাশিনিপ্রসসেজোকুরেটিকা/০২/২০২৫-০৮

তারিখ: ২৭/০৮/২০২৫

"নারী ও শিশু নির্যাতন প্রতিকার ও প্রতিরোধে সমর্পিত সেবা জোরদারকণ এবং কুইক রেসপন্স টিমের কার্যক্রম"

শীর্ষক প্রকল্প আউটসোর্সিং পক্ষত্বে অন্বন্তর সরবরাহের নিমিত্ত গত ১২/০৮/২০২৫ তারিখে দৈনিক আমার দেশ ও ডেইলি স্টার পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত হয়। কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তের আলোকে বর্ণিত দরপত্রে

Standard Tender Document সেকশন- ২ এর ITT 11.1(b)-তে কিছু সংশোধনী আনা হয়েছে এবং

দরপত্র সিডিউলে অন্যান্য বিষয়সমূহ অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।

  
Md. Sharmin  
প্রকাশ কান্তি চৌধুরী

প্রকল্প পরিচালক (অতিরিক্ত দায়িত্ব)

নারী ও শিশু নির্যাতন প্রতিকার ও প্রতিরোধে সমর্পিত

সেবা জোরদারকণ এবং কুইক রেসপন্স টিমের কার্যক্রম

GD-1886

## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

নির্বাচী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ

সড়ক বিভাগ, কুষ্টিয়া

ফোন নং-০২৪৭৭৮১৫৩৫, ই-মেইলঃ eekus.rhd@gmail.com

## সেতুর ইজারা কোটেশন আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নির্বাচী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়, সওজ

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ফোন নং-০২৪৭৭৮১৫৩৫, ই-মেইলঃ eekus.rhd@gmail.com

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## National Academy for Computer Training & Research (NACTAR)

Technical and Madrasah Education Division

Ministry of Education

Bogura, Bangladesh

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Memo No: 57.21.0000.010.02.005.25-1232

Date: 27/08/2025

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## BOOK REVIEW: FICTION

# The bard of love and rebellion in prose

Review of Kazi Nazrul Islam's 'Mrityukshudha: Love and Death in Krishnanagar' (Nymphaea Publication, 2015) translated by Niaz Zaman

**Interestingly, Ansar does not appear in the novel until chapter 15. After his dramatic entrance, Mejo Bou's new identity as an educated Christian woman named Helen is revealed. This subtle division within the plot symbolically showcases that change and revolution become inevitable when exploitation reaches its zenith.**

MOUMITA HAQUE SHENJUTEE

Being a musician who grew up singing and listening to Kazi Nazrul Islam's songs, I was quite familiar with his writing, particularly his diction, figures of speech, and sundry themes. His musical oeuvre includes a vast array of music genres, including ghazal, thumri, khayal, qawwali, kirtan, and many more, which likewise address diverse subject matters. He created mellifluous lyrical songs that delineate passionate love while composing robust protest songs reflecting his rebellious zeal, side by side. He indeed had a "war bugle" in one hand and a "tender flute" in another, as he famously said in his poem "The Rebel" (1922).

One might wonder why I began with his songs and poems while writing a review of his novel. One reason to start with this discussion is to emphasise how skillfully Nazrul weaves together all these diverse themes, ideas, and beliefs into this short novel *Mrityukshudha*, which his songs and poems, across different genres, present separately. He depicts a rebel imbued with Marxist zeal who seeks to raise national consciousness among the poor to fight for their rights and a woman who embarks on a challenging journey to create her identity and change her fate through education and religious conversion, all while narrating a love story that challenges the prevailing societal rules and regulations. He concisely intertwines the themes of nationalism, plight of the subalterns—especially the women and their different mechanisms of survival and small-scale resistance, divisions within people of different religious views and how religion can be used as an oppressive apparatus to manipulate and exploit the sufferers even more and not to mention, love and how societal restrictions may intervene in such a powerful affect.

Another reason I began with this comparative discussion is to highlight how wonderfully poetic the language of *Mrityukshudha* appeared to me, ornamented with his signature literary



ILLUSTRATION: MAISHA SYEDA

devices and phraseologies. This brings to mind renowned Romantic poet William Wordsworth's argument in "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads 1800" where he postulates that one cannot differentiate between the language of a good poem and good prose. This idea constantly flashed through my mind while reading the novel. Particularly, Nazrul's preoccupation with similes and metaphors involving natural elements, a common feature in his songs and poems, recurs in his depiction of various characters, settings, and incidents throughout the novel. Furthermore, his incorporation of songs from time to time adds another layer of poetic essence to this novel.

Although the novel is simply structured with 28 chapters, it contains a subtle, intriguing division. The story begins with a family in Krishnanagar, struggling with extreme poverty as they literally die of hunger. Three

unnamed daughters-in-law live with their children, the mother-in-law, and Paykale, the only surviving son of the mother-in-law. The first half of the novel highlights the intensity of their poverty and suffering. The second half introduces another family: Latifa and her fugitive brother, Ansar. Ruby, a widow and Ansar's love interest, is also introduced in this part. This section focuses on Ansar's revolutionary activities and Mejo Bou's efforts to change her destiny. She converts to Christianity after being shunned by her community for receiving education from Christian missionaries. Later, she reconverts to Islam as her son dies, and she needs to feed the children in the 40-day rite. Meanwhile, Ansar is imprisoned. The novel ends with Mejo Bou's vision of educating the village children and Ansar's final days of amorous love with Ruby, who comes to look after him breaking all the social

boundaries and prejudices.

Interestingly, Ansar does not appear in the novel until chapter 15. After his dramatic entrance, Mejo Bou's new identity as an educated Christian woman named Helen is revealed. This subtle division within the plot symbolically showcases that change and revolution become inevitable when exploitation reaches its zenith. Ansar emerges as a messiah of humanity, under whose influence, voiceless people dare to speak. Ansar's emergence and his death, hence, appear as a deft structural design in the novel.

Published in 1930, a turbulent time in world history, Nazrul's narrative captures the zeitgeist of that period. He includes direct and indirect references to significant events of that time, such as the Russian Bolshevik Revolution, the national resistance movement against the British in India, and Gandhi's non-cooperation movement. However, what

struck me most is how predominantly it is about Muslim people and their culture. This is remarkable because when he was writing, Muslim representation, especially of the lower social strata, was rare in the Bengali literary canon. Nevertheless, he does not do so to elevate any religion over others; rather, he seems to criticise any religious venture that exploits people. The incidents of Maulana pushing the impoverished family of Mejo Bou to further poverty by suggesting they sell all their goats and contribute 15 rupees as penance for Mejo Bou's conversion, or Mejo Bou's feeling of being shackled by new ties despite adopting an educated identity as Helen after conversion, reflect Nazrul's stance against manipulative religious manoeuvres. After all, Nazrul is known as a writer of humanity who believes in the emancipation of people from all forms of restriction and exploitation by those in power, whether social, religious, or political.

One cannot finish reading this translated novel without feeling profound gratitude towards the translator, Dr Niaz Zaman; there is no doubt that Nazrul's writing is complex. Moreover, he uses local people's dialects so authentically that sometimes the general people of Bengal might miss the overt and covert meanings. Zaman translates those difficult words, phrases, and even slang with lucidity. Additionally, she includes footnotes to help readers understand the cultural and historical context of Bengal at that time. She has definitely made a significant contribution, not only to the Bangladeshi literary canon but also to world literature. Although Nazrul is a powerful revolutionary writer who seamlessly blends love and revolution in his work, he remains largely unknown worldwide. It is now an intellectual responsibility to celebrate his writing both locally and globally as much as possible.

**Moymita Haque Shenjutee is Lecturer, Department of English, University of Dhaka.**

## BOOK REVIEW: NONFICTION

# I'm with the band (vicariously)

A look into Lizzy Goodman's 'Meet Me in the Bathroom' (Faber & Faber, 2017) and the confessional power of oral history

ARSHI IBSAN RADIFAH

I was born too late for CBGB's, too offline for MySpace and too far away from dive bars. I came to all of it two entire decades late so The Strokes wasn't exactly the soundtrack to my reckless twenties but a band I happened to stumble into during a mid-pandemic spiral.

I wasn't in New York in 2001, stumbling out of Mercury Lounge or sweating through some chaotic Lit Lounge afterparty. I was just disgustingly stuck home in 2020, headphones pressed so tight to my ears it felt like they were holding me together. And as I watched my world shrink to four walls, The Strokes' 2001 album *Is This It* felt like a door.

There's a particular kind of ache that curls itself into the pages of *Meet Me in the Bathroom*. Not nostalgia exactly, because you can't really be nostalgic for something you never lived through. It's

edit practically thousands of hours from about 200 interviews into a concise book that is, well, a little more than 600 pages. Goodman made the creative decision to pen it down as oral history instead of a memoir, so the entire book is a transcription of these conversations, an endless stream-of-consciousness narrative of Name-colonial dialogue. She admits the project nearly killed her.

I scoured every nook and cranny of the internet for a pdf version of this book almost immediately after my required binge of every video of The Strokes I could physically find on the internet, and I came up empty, satiating myself with every little chunk and peek I could find on reddit threads and magazine reviews as I messaged every single book page I knew on Instagram.

So when I finally picked up *Meet Me in the Bathroom*, I wasn't looking for accuracy.

**Especially in a post-internet era, where personal memory is endlessly fragmented and curated by feeds, 'explore' pages and disappearing stories, it is now that the idea of a shared memory, of a communal version of the past, feels more valuable than ever. It is that itch of wanting to desperately hold on to an experience before it slips away. In the book, Steward Lupton of Jonathan Fire\*Eater described it perfectly**



ILLUSTRATION: SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM

gossip straight from the horse's mouth was perhaps the best part.

Goodman knew this instinctively. Her own insider status mattered because it gave her emotional skin in the game (along with the backstage passes). She grew up alongside a lot of these people, getting handed flyers for their gig on a random Tuesday night. She knew Nick Valensi as a kid, "mothered" him through early demos—and even then, she couldn't predict that The Strokes would become the voice of a generation. That proximity is what makes her recount stand out. She's not assuming things from across the hotel bar, nor is she peering in through a window. She's right there, bleary-eyed at 3 AM, trying to make sense of the noise like everyone else.

For me, that's the hook of anecdotal literature: its authenticity is not tied to dates or precision, but to the people who are trying to remember said dates. It is extremely fractured and unreliable but that unreliability is what makes it stand out. Memory bends

and betrays and it's not supposed to be clean. But it feeds the part of us that wants to live vicariously through other people's lives, real people's lives. Handing out access codes into worlds I wasn't cool enough, old enough, or lucky enough to belong to. Goodman says in the introduction for the book, "We were all—every kid in the crowd and every person on stage—chasing the same thing: a feeling of rebellion, of possibility, of promise, of chaos," and it resonates, even if I was never sweating it out in the Mercury Lounge. It's still just as electric.

Especially in a post-internet era, where personal memory is endlessly fragmented and curated by feeds, 'explore' pages and disappearing stories, it is now that the idea of a shared memory, of a communal version of the past, feels more valuable than ever. It is that itch of wanting to desperately hold on to an experience before it slips away. In the book, Steward Lupton of Jonathan Fire\*Eater described it perfectly when he said it felt like having, "nostalgia for an hour ago."

Perhaps that is why we crave oral histories the way we do, that's why we are drawn to the Kim Gordons and Legs McNeils of the world. We lean in when a rock star admits to being broke, scared, or petty, lingering even as they describe the age-old story of how heartbreak made them write better.

In a 2018 interview published in *The Stony Brooke Press*, Lizzy Goodman explains why she chose to do an oral history, "It's supposed to feel like a time capsule... It's not reported fact. [...] The hope, then, is that the truth exists for the reader in being able to internalize the sensory, absolute value truth of what happened." Goodman herself described her role not as historian but as translator: she wasn't chasing objective fact, but "emotional fidelity." It's like being handed a stack of scribbled in diaries and being told, "go on, figure out what happened." It's like trying to make sense of a chorus of unreliable narrators and in doing so I felt oddly tethered to a time I was never actually a part of, when New York was gritty and golden.

I think that's why we keep returning to memoirs and autofiction like these. Not for the facts, but for the permission to treat our own lives like folklore. Memoirs and oral histories hold that promise.

There's something romantic about visiting a time just out of reach. To believe that one day, someone will stitch together our fragments, our anecdotes, our best and worst nights, and call it history. It does not have to be the official story, just the echo of what it felt like to live it.

And *Meet Me in the Bathroom* lets us believe that—for almost 700 pages, at least. **Arshi Ibsan Radifah** is a literature major who loves unreliable narrators and Wes Anderson movie sets. If she had it her way she would have liked to play bass for a girl band in the '90s, but for now she'll suffice by rewatching Empire Records.

more of a juvenile, secondhand yearning for a time long gone. Lizzy Goodman's oral history of New York's early 2000s rock revival reads more like a scrapbook: dog-eared and contradictory, a chorus of half-truths and cigarette-stained memories, and mythologies being constructed in real time.

The book is a labour of love; it ended up taking six whole years to write because Lizzy Goodman was personally sitting down and interviewing all these musicians separately, and then trying her hardest to



## PRITY STARS, TEAMPLAY SHINES

Bangladesh forward Sauravi Akanda Prity leaves her marker floored during their 4-1 win over Nepal in the SAFF Women's U-17 Championship in Thimphu yesterday, keeping title aspirations alive. While Prity grabbed the spotlight with a hattrick, it was teamplay that set the tone, as patience in possession carved the first opening. In the 38th minute, Umme Kulsum and Mamoni Chakma twisted and turned to take 16 touches down the left midfield, destabilising Nepal's shape, before Thuinuye Marma calmly slotted home in a move that lasted around 33 seconds. "I could score the hattrick because of my teammates," said Prity, dedicating the feat to the fans.

PHOTO: SAFF

## WC QUALIFIERS France overlook Ekitike

AFP, Paris

Hugo Ekitike was left out of France's squad announced Wednesday for the start of their 2026 World Cup qualifying campaign, though coach Didier Deschamps handed a first senior call-up to Monaco winger Maghnes Akliouche.

Ekitike, 23, has impressed since joining Liverpool from Eintracht Frankfurt this summer, scoring three goals in as many competitive games. He also netted five times in five appearances for France's Under 21s last season, but faces stiff competition for a senior spot.

France, World Cup winners in 2018 and runners-up in 2022, begin their qualifying bid against Ukraine in Poland on September 5, before hosting Iceland in Paris on September 9. Azerbaijan complete Group D, with further fixtures in October and November. Group winners qualify automatically for the finals in North America.

Akliouche, also 23, has long been on the fringes of the squad thanks to his form with Monaco, which has attracted interest from top European clubs. He was part of Thierry Henry's Olympic silver-medal team in Paris last year.

Rayan Cherké, who debuted for France in June's Nations League finals before moving from Lyon to Manchester City, is also included.



Bangladesh top-order batter Sharmin Akther Supta had a fantastic run in the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifiers in Pakistan where she finished as the second highest scorer with 266 runs. In a conversation with The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan, the 29-year-old said that Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) decision to include the Under-15 men's team in the Women's Challenge Cup was a good move and expressed her desire to make winning contributions in the upcoming World Cup. The excerpts are as follows:

**DS:** How are you preparing for the World Cup?

**Sharmin Akther Supta (SAS):** Cricket is just like life, you make mistakes and learn from them daily. Preparation-wise, the BCB tried their best to arrange international matches. But we had a gap in our FTP [Future Tours Programme] and that's why they failed to organise competitive matches. All the big teams were already engaged. I think the BCB's decision to arrange the Women's Challenge Cup with the U-15 boys team was a very good move. They played brilliantly in the competition. We got the opportunity to play few competitive matches here. We also played with the Sylhet division's U-17 team before the series. Apart from that, the coaching staff are regularly working with us in the nets.

**DS:** There are questions over the team's batting strength and depth. As a top-order batter, does it add extra pressure?

**SAS:** If top-order batters don't score big, it becomes difficult for the middle or lower-order. When we play well at the top, the middle-order batters can play with a

relaxed frame of mind. But I don't believe that we lack in batting depth. Our No. 5, 6 batters and even our lower-order has done really well in the qualifiers.

**DS:** Recently power-hitting coach Julian Wood worked with the women's team for five days. What was the experience like?

**SAS:** He worked on how we can generate power and develop the correct mindset for T20s. He told us that 50-over cricket and T20 cricket is different. He told us how we can maintain a positive intent. But before that, we have to know how to play power shots and develop the belief that we can play the shots. It was a good session for us.

**DS:** In the 2022 World Cup, Bangladesh finished seventh out of eight teams. Can we do better this time?

**SAS:** Last time, we went through a similar crisis. As the World Cup was held during Covid, we didn't get enough matches prior to it. Wanting to outdo one's previous performance is part of human nature. Last time, we won one game, and of course, this time we will try to win more games. We qualified as the last team in the tournament so we have to compete with the best seven teams in the World Cup. Definitely it will be really difficult but we won't go there only to participate.

**DS:** Are you eyeing any personal milestone in the World Cup?

**SAS:** I feel better scoring 30 runs in a winning cause than scoring a century in a losing cause. If I can help the team win matches in the World Cup, everyone will remember me and it will give me the utmost satisfaction. That's my goal.

## What to WATCH

Star Sports 1 and 2  
US Open  
Live from 9:00 pm

Star Sports Select HD2  
CPL  
St Lucia Kings vs St Kitts and Nevis Patriots  
Live from 5:00 am (Friday)

## SHORT CORNER

**Ashwin ends IPL career**  
Spinner Ravichandran Ashwin ended his Indian Premier League (IPL) career on Wednesday but hinted he may be available to play other competitions of franchise cricket. "My time as an IPL cricketer comes to a close today, but my time as an explorer of the game around various leagues begins today," the 38-year-old posted on X.

**India faces FIFA ban again**  
India could be banned from world football for the second time in three years after FIFA and the Asian governing body demanded it implement a new constitution by October 30 or risk suspension. FIFA previously suspended India in August 2022 for third-party influence. The ban was lifted a few days later, paving the way for the AIFF to elect Chaubey.

**Ahmedabad 'ideal city' for Commonwealth Games**  
India said on Wednesday that the city of Ahmedabad is an "ideal" location for the 2030 Commonwealth Games, with its bid viewed as part of a wider push by the cricket-mad nation to host the 2036 Olympics. "Ahmedabad is an ideal host city offering world-class stadiums, cutting-edge training facilities, and a passionate sporting culture," a statement from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cabinet read.

Read full stories on [The Daily Star's website](#).



## Sinner 'very happy to be healthy again'

AGENCIES

World number one Jannik Sinner began his bid for back-to-back US Open titles with an emphatic victory on Tuesday, returning to action after doctored over his fitness surfaced ahead of the tournament.

Italian star Sinner waltzed to a 6-1, 6-1, 6-2 win over Czech world number 89 Vit Kopriva, needing just 1hr 38min to advance to the next round.

"Very happy that I'm healthy again," said Sinner, who was forced to retire in first set of his Cincinnati Open final against Carlos Alcaraz earlier this month.

"It feels great to be back here. Obviously, it's a very special tournament," added Sinner, who is attempting to become the first man to repeat as US Open champion since Roger Federer won five in a row from 2004-2008.

Sinner entered Flushing Meadows a year ago in a cloud of controversy over doping allegations but the crowd was firmly on his side this time as he clinched victory with a beautiful backhand winner. He faces Alexei Popyrin in the third round today.

## BPL outlook clouded by stalled fixing probe

ANISUR RAHMAN

The new season starts in under three weeks with the one-off Challenge Cup in mid September, but the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is yet to finish its probe into allegations of betting, spot-fixing and match manipulation against three top-tier clubs.

Fakirpool Young Men's Club, Dhaka Wanderers Club and Chittagong Abahani were flagged by FIFA's Fraud Detection System in January for suspicious activity during last season's Bangladesh Premier League (BPL). While Wanderers and Abahani were relegated to the Championship League, Fakirpool remain in the top flight, despite the allegations being unresolved.

The BFF had previously demoted clubs such as Arambagh, Uttar Baridhara and Karwan Bazar Pragati Sangha for similar offences. The question now is whether it will act decisively against Fakirpool – their management has changed since the political transition in August last year – even if that reduces the



» BFF probe into betting, spot-fixing and match manipulation involving Dhaka Wanderers, Ctg Abahani and Fakirpool still incomplete ahead of new season, with time running out.

» FIFA flagged irregularities last January via its Fraud Detection System.

» Wanderers and Ctg Abahani relegated, but Fakirpool's top-flight status under scrutiny.

» BFF committee admits evidence was harder to secure this time.

number of BPL outfits this season.

It has been an open secret within the football fraternity that a couple of clubs had been involved

in gambling and match fixing last season, allegedly profiting in crores of taka. Yet the BFF only moved after FIFA's intervention, as it did in the past.

"We have already circulated the draft reports among committee members and are waiting for directives from the BFF. We will review them again before submission," said Humayun Khalid, who has been the chairman of the Fixed Match Detection Committee for more than a decade.

"We interviewed players and officials from at least eight matches, but this time there were no clear media reports to guide us. Still, based on monitoring and intelligence, we are certain malpractice occurred," he added.

The detection committee submits only its recommendations, while sanctions are imposed by the BFF's disciplinary committee. However, the latter has yet to deliver a verdict on Azampur FC Utara, accused of malpractice during the 2022-23 season, even though the investigation concluded more than a year ago.



Former Bangladesh fielding coach and current head coach of the Netherlands, Ryan Cook, and bowling all-rounder Aryan Dutt make their way out of the Osmani International Airport in Sylhet, after arriving in the country on Wednesday. The Dutch will play a three-match T20I series against Bangladesh at Sylhet International Cricket Stadium, set to run from August 30 to September 3.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR



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## Caretaker govt system must be made sustainable: CJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed yesterday said the Supreme Court wants issues regarding the caretaker government system to be resolved in a manner that ensures a workable and sustainable framework for democracy, so that no future political crisis arises.

He asked if the caretaker government system is revived, when would it become effective.

The chief justice was presiding over a seven-member bench of the Appellate Division of the SC during the hearing on the review petitions against the apex court verdict that scrapped the non-party caretaker government system.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6

## ABU SAYED MURDER Father watches son's final moments as trial begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seventy-six-year-old Mokbul Hossain walked slowly into the International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday, his eyes heavy with grief. He went there to witness the trial of those accused of killing his son, Abu Sayed, during last year's July uprising.

The tribunal was set to hear the prosecution's opening statement and begin cross-examination of witnesses in the case filed over the killing of Rangpur Begum Rokeya University (BRUR) student Sayed.

As Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Following pressure from the district administration, stone thieves return the stones by truckloads and employ people to load them on boats so that those could be properly deposited. The photo was taken at Bholaganj Zero Point in Sylhet yesterday. Related story on page 3.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

## Israeli tanks close in on Gaza City

32 more Palestinians killed in strikes; Trump to chair meeting on post-war Gaza

AGENCIES

Israeli tanks pushed into a new area on the edge of Gaza City, destroying houses and prompting residents to flee, witnesses said, ahead of an expected meeting on the offensive chaired by US President Donald Trump yesterday.

Tanks late on Tuesday entered into the Ebad-Alrahman neighbourhood on the northern edge of Gaza City and shelled houses, wounding several people and forcing many others, who had been taken by surprise, to move deeper into Gaza's largest city, residents said.

"All of a sudden, we heard that the tanks pushed into Ebad-Alrahman, the sounds of explosions became louder, and louder, and we saw people escaping towards our area," said Saad Abed, 60, a former construction worker.

10 more Palestinian deaths reported due to famine

IDF launches ops in West Bank's Nablus

Church leaders in Gaza City refuse to evacuate

"If no truce is reached, we will see the tanks outside our homes," he told Reuters via a chat app from his house in Jala Street in Gaza City, around one kilometre (0.6 mile) from the Ebad-Alrahman neighbourhood.

Israel has said it is preparing to launch a new offensive in Gaza City, which it

describes as Hamas' last bastion. Around half of the enclave's two million people are currently living there and Israel has said they will be told to evacuate.

Thousands have already left, but church leaders in the city said yesterday they were staying put, as leaving Gaza City and "trying to flee to the south would be nothing less than a death sentence".

Israeli tanks retreated from the edge of Gaza City later yesterday to the Jabalia area, where they have been operating for months, although bombardments on three of the city's eastern suburbs - Shejaija, Zeitoun and Sabra - continued.

Gaza health authorities said Israeli fire had killed at least 32 people, including a four-year-old girl, across the enclave since dawn yesterday.

The health ministry has recorded 10

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6



Palestinian women and children wait to receive food from a charity kitchen in Khan Yunis, southern Gaza Strip, yesterday. The UN officially declared a famine in Gaza on August 22, citing the "systematic obstruction" of humanitarian aid by Israel during more than 22 months of military operations. The IPC reported that famine conditions were affecting over 500,000 people in the Gaza Governorate.

PHOTO: AFP

## Trump's doubling of tariffs hits India

Damages ties; Delhi plans to cushion blow

REUTERS, Washington

US President Donald Trump's doubling of tariffs on imports from India to as much as 50 percent took effect as scheduled yesterday, dealing a serious blow to ties between the two countries that became strategic partners after the turn of this century.

A punitive 25 percent tariff imposed due to India's purchases of Russian oil adds to Trump's prior 25 percent tariff on many imports from the South Asian nation and is expected to hurt growth in the world's fastest growing major economy.

India's trade ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. But an Indian government source said New Delhi hoped the US would review the extra 25 percent tariff, adding that the government plans steps to help cushion its impact.

The US move takes total duties to as high as 50 percent for goods such as garments, gems and jewellery, footwear, sporting goods, furniture and

chemicals - among the highest imposed by the US and on par with Brazil.

The new tariffs also threaten thousands of small exporters and jobs, including in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat.

The Indian government source said the government is holding talks with exporters to increase shipments of textiles, leather, gems and jewellery to other countries, and is likely to provide financial assistance to affected businesses.

India's existing trade agreements with the UK, Australia, the United Arab Emirates and other European countries offer opportunities to boost Indian exports, particularly textiles, the source added.

Washington says India's purchase of Russian oil helps fund Moscow's war in Ukraine and that New Delhi also profits from it. India has rejected the accusation as double standards, pointing at US and European trade links with Russia.

Commenting on the punishing levy,

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

## Maldives revokes shark fishing ban after decades

AFP, Malé

The Maldives, a luxury holiday destination and top diving spot in the Indian Ocean, will lift a decades-old ban on shark fishing, the president's office said yesterday.

Sharks were once the second most important catch for the Maldives after tuna -- which remains the main export earner for the nation of about half a million people.

However, authorities banned shark fishing after revenue from divers visiting the archipelago proved greater than earnings from shark oil, according to media reports at the time.

The Maldives imposed a total ban on shark fishing in March 2010, following severe restrictions that had been in place since 1998.



## শিক্ষা ও মেধাবী বৃত্তি প্রদান কার্যক্রম, অর্থ বছর ২০২৫-২০২৬

ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন  
প্লট ২৩-২৬, রোড ৪৬, গুলশান-২, ঢাকা।  
www.dncc.gov.bd

ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশনের আওতাভুক্ত এলাকায় বসবাসরত দান্তি ও মেধাবী ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের (১ম হতে ১২তম শ্রেণী  
পর্যন্ত) মধ্যে ডিএনসিসি কর্তৃক অর্থ বছর ২০২৫-২০২৬ মেয়াদে শিক্ষা ও মেধাবী বৃত্তি প্রদান করা হবে। ডিএনসিসি'র  
নগর ভবন ও সকল আঞ্চলিক কার্যালয় এবং কর্পোরেশনের ওয়েবসাইটে বৃত্তির জন্য নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম পাওয়া  
যাবে। অগ্রহী শিক্ষার্থীর নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরম প্রাণপূর্বক সদ্য তোলা ০১ (এক) কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের রঞ্জিন ছবি,  
পুরুষের প্রোলির মার্কশিট/একাডেমিক ট্রালক্রিপ্ট/ টেবুলেশন শিট এবং সত্যাগ্রহ কপি, একাদশ শ্রেণীর ক্ষেত্রে  
এস.এস.সি পরীক্ষার মার্কশিট/একাডেমিক ট্রালক্রিপ্ট। টেবুলেশন শিট এবং সত্যাগ্রহ কপি এবং দাদাশ শ্রেণীর ক্ষেত্রে  
কলেজের বর্ষ পরিবর্তন (Year Change) পরীক্ষার মার্কশিট/একাডেমিক ট্রালক্রিপ্ট/ টেবুলেশন শিট এবং সত্যাগ্রহ কপি, শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রধান কর্তৃক মেধা ও আচরণ সম্পর্কে প্রদত্ত সনদ এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর/ সংশ্লিষ্ট  
কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক পিতা/মাতা/আইনগত অভিভাবক এবং পেশা এবং আয়ের প্রত্যয়নপত্র সংযুক্ত করে আগামী  
৩০/০৯/২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে সংশ্লিষ্ট আঞ্চলিক কার্যালয়ে অথবা প্রধান সমাজকল্যাণ ও বন্ড উন্নয়ন বিভাগ, নগর  
ভবন, ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন এ জমা দেয়া যাবে।

১০০.০৮.২৫

প্রধান সমাজকল্যাণ ও বন্ড উন্নয়ন কর্মকর্তা ঢাকা উত্তর সিটি কর্পোরেশন  
ও সদস্য-সচিব শিক্ষা ও মেধাবী বৃত্তি ব্যবস্থাপনা কমিটি

## New demands a plot to derail polls: Fakhrul

Warns about efforts to erase 1971

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that a certain political quarter is deliberately trying to prevent pro-democracy forces from assuming power.

He said these forces were raising new demands only to disrupt the electoral process.

"We fought a war in 1971. We have not forgotten it -- and it is not possible to forget. Yet, efforts are being made to erase it from people's memory," he said, adding that those who collaborated with the occupying forces back then have once again become vocal.

"We must remain alert and careful. If we think we have won and everything is fine, then it will be a big mistake."

Fakhrul made the remarks at a programme at the Jatiya Press Club, marking the 10th death anniversary of veteran politician Kazi Zafar Ahmed.

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## Japanese climber, 102, sets Mount Fuji record

AFP, Tokyo

A 102-year-old Japanese man with a serious heart condition has been certified as the oldest person to climb Mount Fuji -- but still shrugged off thefeat as nothing special.

Kokichi Akuzawa, who was born in 1923, summitted Japan's highest peak after climbing a mountain on an almost weekly basis as part of his training. His achievement in early August was recognised by Guinness World Records.

"I am six years older than the last time I climbed," Akuzawa told AFP, referring to his hike up the 3,776 metre (12,388 feet) peak at the age of 96.

"I have been there and seen the view many times, it wasn't anything special," he said. "I reached the summit last time too."

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## বিজিএমইএ

বাংলাদেশে তৈরি  
"Made in Bangladesh with Pride"  
বিজিএমইএ কমপ্লেক্স: বাড়ী # ৭/৭এ, ব্লক # এইচ১, সেক্টর # ১৭, উত্তরা, ঢাকা-১২৩০।

## ৪২তম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা

বিজিএমইএ'র ৪২তম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা আগামী ২০ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫ (শনিবার)  
বিকাল ০৩:০০ ঘটকায় নুরুল কাদের অডিটোরিয়াম, বিজিএমইএ কমপ্লেক্স,  
বাড়ী # ৭/৭এ, ব্লক # এইচ-১, সেক্টর # ১৭, উত্তরা, ঢাকা-১২৩০ তে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।  
বিজিএমইএ'র সম্মানিত সদস্যগণ'কে উক্ত বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভায় উপস্থিত থাকার  
জন্য বিনীতভাবে অনুরোধ করা হলো।

ভারপ্রাপ্ত সচিব