



Participants at a roundtable titled "Climate-smart Entrepreneurship: Pathways for Youth-led Change", organised by ActionAid Bangladesh and The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

It's a national CRISIS

Rights groups express alarm over surge in child rape cases; urge urgent govt action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Calling the sharp rise in child sexual abuse across Bangladesh a "national crisis", rights groups have urged the government to take urgent and coordinated action.

They expressed deep concern over the situation following new data from rights body Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), which shows that cases of child rape increased by nearly 75 percent in the first seven months of 2025 compared to the same period last year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strengthen law enforcement, ensure accountability.

Complete investigations within 15 days, trials within 90

Establish child-friendly courts, legal procedures

Formulate national child protection strategy

Strengthen services like Helpline 1098 and Child Protection Units

Launch awareness campaigns to fight stigma, promote abuse reporting

Alarmed by the surge, three child rights organisations -- Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), Save the Children in Bangladesh, and Plan International Bangladesh -- made the call in a joint statement yesterday.

They made several recommendations, which include strengthening law enforcement and accountability, creating a child sensitive justice system, promoting prevention and protection in communities, ensuring

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Dhaka getting semi-automatic traffic signals

Pilot programme covering 7 out of 22 intersections starts tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After missing previous deadlines, the government is finally preparing to launch seven semi-automatic traffic signals on a pilot basis to help habituate commuters with traffic signal systems.

A two week-long pilot programme will begin tomorrow, covering 7 out of 22 intersections between Shikhab Bhaban and the Airport, according to an official at the Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA).

The intersections are Jahangir Gate, Bijoy Sarani, Farmgate, Saarc Foara (SAARC Fountain), Banglomotor, Hotel Intercontinental and the Chief Advisers office.

A preparatory meeting on the project was held at the DTCA conference room yesterday, chaired by the Special Assistant to Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus.

The broader project involves



traffic signals at 22 intersections -- stretching from the High Court to the Airport -- coordinated by DTCA, funded by Dhaka North and South City Corporations, and technically implemented by Buet. The pilot phase will be managed by Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

The system will cost between Tk 10 crore and Tk 12 crore, according to officials at Dhaka North City Corporation.

The move follows a two decade-long struggle to implement an efficient system of traffic management. Over the years, the authorities spent over Tk 119 crore on modernising the equipment, but Dhaka traffic is mostly managed manually.

Under the new initiative, DNCC will oversee 14 intersections, while Dhaka South City Corporation will oversee 8.

Prof Md Hadizuzzaman, Department of Civil Engineering at Buet, earlier said

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Crocodiles rest atop one another at one of the country's largest breeding centres in Naikhongchari, Bandarban. Commercial breeding began here in 2000 on a 15-acre farm. In addition to exporting crocodile skin, the centre has become a popular tourist destination, contributing to the national economy and forest conservation.

Service barriers, financing gaps stifle young entrepreneurs

Say speakers during roundtable organised by ActionAid Bangladesh, Star

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tangles in government services remain a major challenge for turning ideas into reality and becoming successful entrepreneurs, said young innovators at a roundtable yesterday.

They also pointed out other barriers, including the absence of suitable platforms to promote products, consumers' reluctance to accept new items, a busy academic calendar, and safety concerns raised by families.

The roundtable, titled "Climate-smart Entrepreneurship: Pathways for Youth-led Change", was jointly organised by ActionAid Bangladesh and The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

The event was part of the recently concluded "Climate Justice Idea Competition 2025", an initiative of ActionAid and The

Daily Star.

The discussion was attended by the winners of the competition, as well as the winners of ActionAid's "Youth-led Action Research on Green and Digital Transformation" competition,

They pointed out other barriers, including the absence of suitable platforms to promote products, consumers' reluctance to accept new items, a busy academic calendar, and safety concerns by families.

young entrepreneurs, and development practitioners.

The young innovators won the competitions for generating ideas and solutions to different problems.

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KARNAPHULI TUNNEL ACC sues Obaidul Quader for graft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti Corruption Commission yesterday filed a case against former road transport and bridges minister and Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, along with three former top officials of the Bangladesh Bridge Authority, over alleged corruption and irregularities in the Karnaphuli Tunnel project.

ACC Director General Akhter Hossain confirmed the filing, saying that the case was lodged under Section 19(1) of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, 2004, and Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947.

The other accused are former secretary and executive director of the Bridge Authority Khandaker Anwarul Islam, former chief engineer Kabir Ahmed, and former director and permanent

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PURBACHAL PLOT SCAM 3 witnesses testify in three cases against Hasina, Tulip

STAR REPORT

Three prosecution witnesses yesterday testified in three graft cases against 23 people, including deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana and niece British MP Tulip Siddiqi.

The witnesses are Rajuk officials Mahbubar Rahman, Ashim Shil and Ullas Chowdhury.

Judge Md Rabiu Alam of the Special Judge's Court 4 in Dhaka recorded their statements from 11:30am to 11:35am, said ACC Public Prosecutor Mir Ahmed Ali Salam.

Hasina and Tulip have been made the common accused in the three cases.

After recording statements, the court also set September 4 for next hearings in three cases.

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