



Cable makers hit by slowdown in construction

B1



Russian forces attack power station in Kyiv

P5



This award is truly exceptional for me: Pori Moni

P8



Asia Cup T20 kicks off today in UAE

P10, 11

Hopes run high as DU goes to vote today

ASIFUR RAHMAN and MAHATHIR MOHAMMAD

The much-anticipated Ducusu and hall union elections are set to be held today after a six-year pause, bringing renewed hope for campus democracy.

With nearly 40,000 registered voters and 471 candidates vying for 28 central posts, the stakes are high – not just for student leadership, but for the future of participatory politics at Dhaka University.

The DU campus, which had long been dominated by ruling party-backed student wings, has come alive in recent weeks with vibrant campaigning, creative leaflets, and intense debates among candidates pledging academic reforms and a safer, more inclusive environment.

Security has been tightened, with over 2,000 law enforcers deployed to ensure peaceful polling.

Voting will take place across eight centres on the campus – all outside dormitories for the first time.

A total of 39,775 voters are registered to cast their ballots in 810 booths. Among them, 20,873 are male and 18,902 female.

Each student will vote for 41 positions – 28 in Ducusu and 13 in hall unions. Besides 471 candidates for Ducusu, 1,035 are contesting 234 posts in 18 hall unions.

The last Ducusu polls were held on March 11, 2019,



PHOTO: AFP

An aerial view shows demonstrators gathered outside Nepal's Parliament during a protest in Kathmandu yesterday.

'Open fire or lose jobs'

SI tells ICT-1 about superior command on Aug 5 last year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A police sub-inspector told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday that he and his colleagues were threatened with dismissal if they refused to open fire on protesters during the "March to Dhaka" programme at Chankharpul on August 5 last year.

Testifying as a prosecution witness in a case against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and two of her senior aides, SI Ashrafur Islam alleged that Shah Alam Mohammad Akhtarul Islam, then additional deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Ramna Zone, personally ordered police to shoot the demonstrators and verbally abused officers who hesitated.

Former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and ex-IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, who has already pleaded guilty and turned an approver, are the other accused.

"ADC Akhtar told us, 'You take government salaries and rations – why won't you fire? If you don't, you'll lose your jobs,'" Ashrafur said. He said he refrained

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AT A GLANCE

DUCSU ELECTIONS

Total candidates in 28 posts **471**

VP candidate **45**

GS candidate **19**

AGS candidate **25**



Number of Polling Centres **8**

Total posts in 18 hall unions **234**

Contesting for hall unions **1,035**

Total Voters **39,775**

Male **20,873**

Female **18,902**

POLLING TIME 8:00AM TO 4:00PM

Why is 'Gen Z' of Nepal 'protesting'?

REUTERS

At least 19 people died in Nepal yesterday and dozens more were injured as police fired tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse protesters who tried to break into parliament.

Thousands of young Nepali people, many in their 20s or even younger, got together to protest in the capital Kathmandu and other cities in the Himalayan country. Many of the protesters were students and joined the demonstrations in their school or college uniforms. The organisers called the protests "demonstrations by Gen Z".

Last week, Nepal's government blocked access to several social media platforms after the companies missed the deadline to register under new regulations, aimed at cracking down on misuse.

Nepal's government has said social media users

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

19 killed as Nepal's youth demand change

Police crackdown on protesters also injures 400 as they try to storm parliament complex

AGENCIES

Police clashed with young protesters yesterday in Kathmandu, killing at least 19 people as the unrest in the Himalayan country over the social media ban turned into a wider protest against endemic corruption.

Some protesters tried to storm the parliament complex by breaking through a barricade, a local official said, setting fire to an ambulance, and hurling objects at riot police.

Police responded with rubber bullets, tear gas, water cannon and baton charges.

Nepal's Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak resigned yesterday on "moral grounds". He tendered his resignation to Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli during a Cabinet meeting at the prime minister's residence in Baluwatar yesterday evening.

According to The Kathmandu Post, at least 400 people were injured in the clashes.

"The police have been firing indiscriminately," one protester told the ANI news agency. "(They) fired bullets which missed me but hit a friend who was standing behind me. He was hit in the hand."

Nepali media reported police used live fire against the protesters, a claim AFP could not immediately verify.

JULY CHARTER Commission to meet parties on implementation

Meetings likely on Thursday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Consensus Commission is likely to hold a series of meetings with political parties on Thursday to discuss how to implement the July National Charter.

This will mark the commission's fourth round of consultations with political parties. In the first two phases, discussions focused on identifying key issues and building consensus. The third round was held after the draft of the July Charter was prepared.

Following a commission meeting yesterday, Vice President Professor Ali Riaz told The Daily Star that, as the charter has now been finalised, the commission will hold a series of meetings with political parties to discuss methods of implementation.

"The parties are not formally aware of what the experts have proposed or what each party has suggested. So the meetings are needed," he said.

He added, "Proposals made by the parties and the experts will be presented during the meetings. Based on these, the commission will advise on the most suitable method of implementing the July Charter."

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Sometimes army gets called in too late

Says army HQ about mob situation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The army yesterday said delays in its response are often unavoidable, as troops are called in only when police and other agencies struggle to contain law-and-order situations, by which time crucial minutes may already have been lost.

Col Shafiqul Islam, colonel staff at the Military Operations Directorate of Army Headquarters, made the remark when a reporter asked about the force's handling of mob violence.

Briefing journalists at the Officers' Mess in Dhaka Cantonment, he stressed that the army always responds once requested.

"The army is requested if police or other agencies fail to control a situation. By the time the request comes through and approval is obtained from headquarters, the

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PHOTO: STAR

Members of the DMP's K-9 Unit conduct security sweeps on the Dhaka University campus yesterday ahead of the Ducusu elections.

Star INTERVIEW

GRADUATION FROM LDC

'We have 2.5 options to seek deferral'

Debapriya says decision must rest on solid evidence, strong backing from dev partners

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh should view its LDC exit not as a burden but as a milestone, an opportunity to advance long-delayed reforms for structural transformation of the economy, economist Debapriya Bhattacharya has said.

Asked what options Bangladesh has if it wants more time, Debapriya told The Daily Star in a recent interview that there are "two and a half" routes.

Debapriya, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), is an independent expert serving on the UN CDP. He is also the country rapporteur for Lao PDR.

This newspaper spoke to him amid local entrepreneurs' fear that their businesses will be severely affected as Bangladesh prepares to graduate from the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) group in November 2026.

A group of businessmen is preparing to send letters to the chief adviser and the UN secretary-general, requesting

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LIGHTING UP DHAKA

Exploring Paltan's light and lamp market

MINHAZUR RAHMAN ALVEE

In the capital's Purana Paltan bus stop area, near Paltan Jame Mashjid, there is a wholesale and retail lighting market that will most certainly catch your eye, making you wonder what corner of your home could use such elegant artwork.

Here, you will find almost everything to take care of your lighting needs: chandeliers, table lamps, bedside lamps, wall lamps, hanging lights, fluorescent lamps, entrance bracket lights, gate lights, garden stand lights, street lamps, and what not.

Whether you want fairy lights for your balcony, a warm light for your bathroom, or a simple dim light for your bedroom, this market has you covered. Whatever lighting and decor idea you may have in mind, hold that thought and visit this market. Because here, you will find not only what you are looking for, but something even better that exceeds your imagination and expectations. You can even find shops that customise



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

according to your design for lighting needs, bringing your vision to reality.

Depending on the size, its complexity, and of course your bargaining skills, you will find everything here, from mid-range to high-end prices. For something as simple as a bedside lamp, prices may start from Tk 2,000 and may climb to

Tk 30,000 and even higher. But if you have set your eyes on a royal-looking crystal glass chandelier, the options here can range from Tk 20,000 to a grand Tk 3,00,000.

Whether it be star lights or floral ceiling hangings, each shop here strives to set itself apart and stand out by adding uniqueness to their collection and designs.

One of the first, and arguably the

oldest shops you will find here, is Shwash Crystal Lighting, which started in 1963, offering a range of lighting and design items for both households and luxury hotels. Shwash is one of the oldest in this business and was among the first to lay the brick for this hub, which later turned out to be the largest wholesale and retail lighting market of Dhaka.

Meanwhile, several other lighting shops are leaving customers in awe with their uniquely designed star lights. Many shops, including Power Plus Lighting, are offering tailor-made lighting brackets and lamps customised to each customer's taste and choice. Whereas, Imo Lighting offers a range of underwater lighting instruments that can enhance the charm of your aquariums and indoor or outdoor fountains.

The market has become a hub for local entrepreneurs in the lighting and lamp business, each featuring their own niche and design themes.

The kind of competition you see among the shops is usually good for the customers, as vendors work hard to make their designs and looks more unique and aesthetic, while also giving you more leverage to haggle over price.

Stay vigilant to foil conspiracies

Tarique tells BNP leaders, activists

UNB, Dhaka

BNP acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday asked his party members to stay vigilant until the restoration of democracy, saying the most important task now is to establish democracy by foiling conspiracies against Bangladesh at any cost.

Tarique made the remarks while addressing the biennial council of Thakurgaon district BNP unit at Thakurgaon Boys High School ground through a virtual platform.

He said BNP's movement would continue until the democratic rights of people are restored and Bangladesh returns to the track of democracy.

As the country's largest political party, Tarique said BNP has a "sacred responsibility" to rebuild Bangladesh.

"We have already outlined the framework for this through the 31-point framework we unveiled two and a half years ago," he added.

He urged party leaders and activists to make two pledges from the council: to remain vigilant like sentinels until democracy is restored and to dedicate themselves to fulfilling public aspirations and the party's 31-point reform agenda if BNP assumes office through the people's mandate, even at the cost of their lives.

"As the largest political party in Bangladesh, it is our responsibility to confront any threat to democracy," he said.

Tarique, however, said the movement must refrain from any course of action that disrupts peace and discipline.

Talking about state reforms, the BNP leader said his party unveiled the 31-point reform agenda two and a half years ago and the interim government formed reform commissions where almost all democratic political parties provided their opinions over various issues.

He said it is natural that different political parties and different people will have differences in opinion.

"If you truly have trust and confidence in the people, then leave it to them. Present your policies, ideology and objectives before the people and let people decide."

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir also spoke at the district council held after eight years.



Sometimes

FROM PAGE 1
situation may already have deteriorated," he said.

"Wherever there was a delay on our part, it was because we received information late. Sometimes our nearest camp can be 20 kilometres away. We cannot set up camps at every kilometre. We try our utmost, but it is not possible to be at every doorstep," he added.

Col Shafiqul said maintaining law and order was not solely the army's duty. While the force has magistracy powers to arrest, detain and hand suspects to police, it cannot impose judicial punishment.

Referring to a mob attack outside a freedom fighter's home, he said troops were dispatched as soon as the message was received. "No mob or disorder can diminish the dignity of our freedom fighters," he added.

The colonel reaffirmed that the army maintains "zero tolerance" towards mob violence and expressed hope that the number of such incidents will come down in the days ahead.

About misinformation, he said groups with vested interests were spreading "disinformation, falsehoods and propaganda" on social media against the army, which he described as "undesirable and embarrassing".

He urged the media to ensure accurate reporting and resist efforts to undermine public trust in the army.

In reply to a query on the Ducsu election, he reiterated: "The army has no role in this election. Still, some quarters are attempting to spread propaganda linking us with it, but this will not succeed."

Regarding the national polls, he said that although the army has not yet received any formal directive from the Election Commission, preparations are underway. "We will carry out whatever duties we are assigned with the highest professionalism."

Col Shafiqul also dismissed claims that the army was not cooperating with the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances. "Those [officers] who were called have already spoken to the commission and extended full cooperation. If further help is needed, the Bangladesh Army will continue to provide it. Any claim to the contrary is simply rumour," he said.

Why is 'Gen Z'?

FROM PAGE 1
create fake IDs and use them to spread hate speech and fake news, commit fraud and other crimes on these platforms.

A government notice directed the regulator, Nepal Telecommunications Authority, to deactivate unregistered social media but gave no details of which platforms faced action. The services will be restored once the platforms comply with its order, the government said.

Local media reported that the banned platforms include Meta's Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, Alphabet's YouTube, China's Tencent and Snapchat, Pinterest and X.

Many people in Nepal think corruption is rampant, and the government of Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli has been criticised by opponents for failing to deliver on its promises to tackle graft or make progress in addressing longstanding economic issues.

Hopes run high as DU goes to vote today

FROM PAGE 1
As the epicentre of the uprising, it was where students declared protest programmes, and most of the coordinators of the Students Against Discrimination platform – which led the uprising – were from this campus.

Many of them are now contesting from rival panels for top Ducsu posts.

A record 45 candidates, including five women, are running for vice president. Close contests are expected among Abdul Qader, Umama Fatema, Md Abidul Islam Khan, Md Abu Shadiq Kayem and Shameem Hossen.

Nineteen candidates are vying for general secretary. Among them, Abu Baker Mojumder, Sheikh Tanvir Barea Hamim, Meghmalla Bosu and SM Farhad are frontrunners.

For assistant general secretary, 25 contenders are in the race. Names most mentioned by residential students include Ashrefa Khatun, Jahed Ahmed, Tanbir Al Hadi Mayed, Tahmid Al Muddassir Chowdhury and Mohiuddin Khan.

However, non-resident students, who make up about 40 percent of the electorate, will play a decisive role.

The fiercest competition is for the 13 member posts in Ducsu, with 217 candidates. Each of the 12 secretary posts has 11 to 19 contenders.

'Open fire or lose jobs'

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from using his pistol despite repeated threats.

This is the first testimony from a field-level officer, who described police shootings during last year's July uprising.

Ashraf, who led a team of 20 police personnel, said he reached Shahbagh Police Station from Mirpur Police Lines in the early morning on August 5. Four other teams also reached there. He learnt that around 5:00am, then DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman and around 6:00am, then joint commissioner Sudip Kumar Chakraborty instructed senior officers to suppress the day's protests with force.

At 9:00am, ADC Akhtarul, AC Imrul of Ramna Zone, and Inspector Arshad Hossain of Shahbagh Police Station briefed around 100 police personnel. Sixty to 65 policemen were later deployed in the Central Shaheed Minar area, where AC Imrul threw several sound grenades, dispersed the protesters, and detained several on Akhtarul's orders.

Ashraf said he, along with 25-35 officers including AC Imrul and constable Nasirul Islam, was later sent to Chankharpul. There, as students and residents from Bangshal and Chawkbazar attempted to march towards Shahbagh, ADC Akhtarul ordered the use of sound grenades, gas guns, and shotguns.

He said, at one point, he also ordered, "Those of you with pistols and Chinese rifles, fire at the protesters and kill them." When Ashraf and several others refused, the ADC verbally abused and threatened them.

SI Ashraf added that constable Nasirul opened fire with a Chinese rifle, with additional bullets supplied by ADC Akhtarul. The ADC also snatched a rifle from a constable who refused to

Ducsu ballots will have five pages, while hall union ballots will be one page. Voters will use Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) sheets. The election commission said if each voter takes 10 minutes, all ballots can be cast within the allotted time from 8:00am to 4:00pm.

Jagannath Hall has the highest number of male voters with 2,222, while Rokeya Hall accounts for the largest female electorate with 5,641.

For male students, the designated centres are Curzon Hall (for Dr Muhammad Shahidullah Hall, Amar Ekushey Hall, Fazlul Huq Muslim Hall); Physical Education Centre (for Jagannath Hall, Shahid Sergeant Zahurul Haque Hall, Salimullah Muslim Hall); Senate Building (for Sir AF Rahman Hall, Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall, Bijoy Ekattor Hall); and Udayan School and College (for Surja Sen Hall, Muktiyoddha Ziaur Rahman Hall, Kabi Jasimuddin Hall, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall).

For female students, four centres have been set up: TSC (for Rokeya Hall); Dhaka University Club (for Bangladesh-Kuwait Maitree Hall, Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall); Geology Department (for Kabi Sufia Kamal Hall); and University

Laboratory School and College (for Shamsunnahar Hall).

The DU VC yesterday attended meetings with government high-ups and law enforcers at the secretariat. Later, he said there is nothing to suggest law and order will spiral out of control.

"Those who'll win and those who won't – all have roles in reviving the institution that fosters leadership and democratic practices."

Ducsu, he added, will be a platform that speaks against all forms of injustice.

Chief Returning Officer Prof Mohammad Zashim Uddin said vote counting will be broadcast live on LED screens outside polling stations to ensure transparency. Bags, mobile phones, smartwatches and other electronic devices will not be allowed. A special shuttle service will facilitate voter movement.

DMP Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali said stringent measures are in place, including check-posts at campus gates, regular patrols, CCTV surveillance, SWAT teams, bomb disposal squads, intelligence units, and the presence of RAB and BGB.

"We expect security to be strong tomorrow [today]," he told reporters.

was killed in the attack, Wasim Akram was hacked to death, and a carpenter named Faruk was shot dead.

Two days later, Hasan himself was injured during a protest in the New bridge area when police and AL men opened fire. "I was hit by 11 shotgun pellets in my back. Doctors removed eight," he told the tribunal, showing his wounds.

He alleged that police, hospital authorities, and AL activists obstructed his treatment at Chattogram Medical College Hospital, forcing him to take treatment at a private hospital. Hasan held Hasan, ex-home minister Kamal, former IGP Mamun, and AL leaders responsible for the killings.

Another witness, Mohammad Sohel Mahmud, testified that on August 5 last year he saw policemen, including then Konabari Police Station officer-in-charge Ashraf and Detective Branch AC, detained a young man from a rickshaw garage on Kashimpur road in Gazipur's Konabari.

From his cousin's rooftop, Sohel said, he saw police take the man to a graveyard wall and shoot him dead on the spot. "Later, I learnt his name was Hridoy, and that the constable who pulled the trigger was Akram," he told the tribunal.

State defence counsel for Hasan and Kamal cross-examined the two witnesses, saying the accused he represented were not involved in the incidents.

Meanwhile, the ICT-1 sent Sultan Ahmed, an accused of crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War, to custody after he surrendered before the tribunal. His counsel sought bail on grounds of old age and illness. The tribunal ordered that Sultan remain in custody until September 18, when the bail petition will be heard.

19 killed in Nepal

FROM PAGE 1
and had been driven out by police.

Some of the demonstrators had climbed over the wall into the parliament premises, and its gate was vandalised.

Dr Dipendra Pandey of the National Trauma Centre said that protesters were brought in with critical condition, some with gunshot wounds to the head and chest, reports The Kathmandu Post.

Meanwhile, UN rights office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani yesterday demanded a swift and transparent investigation into the killings.

"We are shocked by the killings and injury of protesters in Nepal today and urge a prompt and transparent investigation," Ravina Shamdasani said in a statement.

Organisers of the protests, which spread to other cities in the Himalayan country, have called them "demonstrations by Gen Z". They say the protests reflect young people's widespread frustration with the government and anger over its policies.

"We were triggered by the social media ban, but that is not the only reason we are gathered here," said student Yujan Rajbhandari, 24.

"We are protesting against corruption that has been institutionalised in Nepal." Another student, Ikshama Tumrok, 20, said she was protesting against the "authoritarian attitude" of the government.

"We want to see change. Others have endured this, but it has to end with our generation," she told AFP.

A government decision to block access to several social media platforms, including Facebook, last week has fuelled anger among the young. About 90 percent of Nepal's 30 million people use internet.

Officials said they imposed the ban because platforms had failed to register with authorities in a crackdown on misuse, including fake social media accounts used to spread hate speech

Commission to meet parties

FROM PAGE 1
Without specifying a date, Professor Riaz indicated that the meetings could take place by the end of this week.

The commission's decision comes at a time of sharp differences among political parties regarding how the July Charter should be implemented.

The BNP favours enacting constitutional proposals, requiring amendments to the charter, within two years of forming the next national parliament. Jamaat-e-Islami supports implementation through a presidential proclamation or referendum, while the National Citizen Party proposes forming a Constituent Assembly to carry out reforms.

At yesterday's meeting, a commission member cautioned that recommending the president to implement constitutional issues through a special order, without consulting political parties, could spark controversy.

Commission sources said the upcoming meetings will brief parties on the experts' recommendations and the reasoning behind them. All proposed methods – both from political parties and experts – will be presented to build consensus on the implementation approach, they added.

There are also plans to include experts in the meetings so they can

and fake news, and commit fraud.

Police had orders to use water cannons, batons and rubber bullets to control the crowd and the army has been deployed in the area of the protests to bolster law enforcement officers, Muktiram Rijal, a spokesperson for the Kathmandu district office, told Reuters.

He said the curfew will remain in force until 10:00pm local time (1615 GMT).

Police said similar protests were also organised in Biratnagar and Bharatpur in the southern plains and in Pokhara in western Nepal.

Thousands of young people, including students, many in their school or college uniforms, joined the protest earlier yesterday.

Many carried the national flag and placards with slogans such as "Shut down corruption and not social media", "Unban social media", and "Youths against corruption", as they marched through Kathmandu.

There have been several corruption cases reported in the last few years involving ministers, former ministers and high-profile officials.

Since the ban, videos contrasting the struggles of ordinary Nepalis with the children of politicians flaunting luxury goods and expensive vacations have gone viral on Tik Tok, which is still operating.

"There have been movements abroad against corruption, and they (the government) are afraid that might happen here as well," said protester Bhumika Bharati.

Nepal's social media shutdown comes as governments worldwide, including the US, EU, Brazil, India, China and Australia, take steps to tighten oversight of social media and Big Tech due to growing concern about issues such as misinformation, data privacy, online harm and national security.

Critics say many of these measures risk stifling free expression, but regulators say stricter controls are needed to protect users and preserve social order.

provide explanations if required.

"Even if consensus is not reached, the commission will recommend an implementation method based on expert opinion," said one commission source.

Of the 84 reform proposals agreed upon through consensus, some will require changes to existing laws and regulations, while others can be implemented through government orders. However, a significant portion of the proposals is constitution-related.

Political experts have opined that many non-constitutional reforms could be implemented through ordinances or executive orders.

The commission had earlier explored the possibility of holding a referendum and suggested seeking an advisory opinion from the Supreme Court under Article 106 to resolve key constitutional questions related to the July Charter. However, that was later set aside due to concerns over timing and the prevailing political climate, commission members said.

The July Charter implementation plan will not include a specific timeframe, but the commission will seek a pledge from political parties to carry it out, The Daily Star has learnt from people with knowledge of the meeting.

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Badruddin Umar laid to rest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent public intellectual, historian and political activist Badruddin Umar was laid to rest yesterday at Jurain graveyard beside the graves of his parents.

His namaz-e-janaza was held at the Dhaka University Central Mosque after Zohr prayers.

Umar, a leading progressive voice in the country, passed away on Sunday at Bangladesh Specialised Hospital in Shyamoli due to old-age complications. He was 94.

His body was taken to the Central Shaheed Minar at 10:00am yesterday and kept there until 12:45pm for people from all walks of life to pay their last tributes.

Leaders from political parties, cultural organisations, student and labour bodies, and others gathered to honour him.

Emeritus Professor Serajul Islam Choudhury said, "Badruddin Umar was

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Noted economist Anu Muhammad paying tribute to eminent intellectual, historian and political activist Badruddin Umar at the Central Shaheed Minar. Umar was laid to rest at Jurain graveyard yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

App launched to monitor Durga Puja security

Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new app has been developed for reporting incidents that may threaten the security of mandaps during the upcoming Durga Puja, said Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday.

Speaking to journalists at the Secretariat after a preparatory meeting on the festival, he said any incident reported through the app will be verified, and arrangements will be made for immediate remedial action.

The adviser said Durga Puja may be held at 31,576 mandaps across the country. Alongside volunteers, police and ansar members will be deployed round the clock at each mandap.

"The BGB has been given the main responsibility for security in border areas. Besides, all law enforcement agencies, including police, Rab, ansar, and the armed forces, will be on constant alert for puja security. About three lakh ansar members will be deployed," he added.

The adviser also announced restrictions on fairs during the festival. "Ganja and alcohol sessions are very common at the fairs organised in the vicinity of the mandaps. These will not be allowed under any circumstances this time," he said.



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Bangladesh used as ketamine transit hub to Europe

Say DNC officials after arresting two with 6.49kg of banned substance

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

A transnational narcotics syndicate has been using Bangladesh as a transit point to smuggle ketamine from Delhi to Europe.

The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) made a breakthrough after seizing 6.49kg of ketamine worth Tk 60 crore, hidden inside white towels, from the Tongi area on Saturday. The consignment was scheduled to be sent to Italy and Spain via a courier service.

The ketamine was soaked into white towels and then carefully folded and packed to appear ordinary, making them difficult to detect by standard scanning machines.

"These traffickers exploit gaps in detection technology and use everyday items like towels to disguise large quantities of

drugs," said a senior DNC official. The consignment raised suspicion when DNC officers noticed that seven towels in a courier package weighed over eight kilogrammes, far exceeding

DNC seizes Ketamine worth Tk 60cr hidden in towels
Route traced: Delhi-Dhaka-Europe
Consignments bound for Italy, Spain

Officials say traffickers exploit courier services
Ketamine banned in Bangladesh since 2014

the standard maximum of 400 grams per towel. Upon opening the package, officers discovered the concealed ketamine, the official added.

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Committee formed to expedite trials of July killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has formed a seven-member committee to expedite proceedings in cases filed over killings during the July mass uprising. The committee is headed by the additional secretary of the Law and Justice Division.

However, cases currently under trial at the International Crimes Tribunal will remain outside the committee's jurisdiction.

The decision was announced in a press release issued by the Ministry of Law yesterday.

The committee's mandate includes preparing a comprehensive list of cases with updated information on their current status, identifying the reasons behind obstacles in certain cases, and making recommendations for their resolution. It will also regularly inform the victims' families and the public about its progress, and make recommendations to the government to ensure the security of victims and witnesses.

Other members of the committee include a representative from the Ministry of Home Affairs (not below the rank of joint secretary), a representative

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INFORMAL WORKERS

Ensure legal recognition, protection for them

Speakers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an event yesterday urged the government to amend the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 to recognise domestic, home-based, transport, waste and other informal workers, who make up 85 percent of the country's workforce.

They also called on political parties to prioritise the rights and welfare of informal sector workers in the upcoming national elections.

The demands were made at a consultation titled "National Consultation: Study Findings on Dynamic Mapping of Informal Sector Workers in Bangladesh", organised by Karmojibi Nari at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Speaking as chief guest, Syed Sultan Uddin Ahmed, executive director of the Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS), stressed the

need to build a comprehensive database of informal sector workers, ensure job security, provide skill development opportunities, and allow

He emphasised promoting organisation and unionisation and urged political parties to include informal workers' agendas in their election manifestos.

Hafiza Begum, a researcher at Adhuna Bangladesh Limited, presented the study "Mapping of Informal Sector Workers in Bangladesh: Challenges, Opportunities and Policy Implications" at the event.

The study found that informal work dominates the labour market, accounting for 85 percent of the workforce across nearly 450 occupations.

Workers face insecure jobs, long hours, low and unstable incomes, limited social protection and hazardous conditions, with women and children especially vulnerable.

Despite policy recognition and initiatives such as the National Social Security

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- PLIGHT OF INFORMAL WORKERS**
- Insecure jobs with little or no contracts
 - Over 70% earn less than Tk 20,000 per month
 - Long working hours without proper benefits
 - Limited or no social protection
 - Weak access to healthcare
 - Hazardous working conditions



A man clammers over a police barricade placed in the middle of the road to prevent jaywalking and unsafe crossings. Many others around him also disregard the barrier and walk past it, despite a foot-over bridge being only a short distance away. Such reckless actions often lead to accidents. The photo was taken recently from underneath the Kawran Bazar Metro Rail Station yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Dialogue, respect key to peace

Say inter-faith leaders and academics

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Inter-faith leaders and academics have called for deeper understanding and respect among different religions to build a pluralistic society free from violence.

They said a society plagued by violence rooted in ethnic, religious or political divisions cannot prosper, while individuals are unable to flourish in their human creativity.

The observations came at an international seminar on inter-religious dialogue and harmony organised by the Episcopal Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Dialogue at the capital's Krishibid Institution Bangladesh yesterday.

The event was held to mark the visit of a Vatican delegation led by Cardinal George Jacob Koovakad, prefect of the Dicastery of Inter-religious Dialogue. Foreign diplomats, teachers and students from different faiths were present.

"Interreligious dialogue is not about changing someone's religion. It is about listening, understanding, respecting, and building trust. It is about mutual enrichment," said Cardinal Koovakad.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

One held over murders of university student, her mother in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Members of Rapid Action Battalion have arrested a man in connection with the killing of a Comilla University (CoU) student and her mother at their residence in the city on Sunday night.

Major Shadman Ibne Alam, commander of Rab-II, confirmed the development to The Daily Star yesterday afternoon. He said that the suspect, Abdur Rab, 73, was arrested after analysing call records of the victims.

Around 11:00pm, police recovered the bodies of Sumaiya Afrin, a student of the 2021-2022 academic session of CoU's public administration department, and her mother, Tahmina Begum, from their house in the Kaliajuri area. They were strangled to death, the law enforcers said on Sunday night.

A murder case was filed by Sumaiya's elder brother, Tajul Islam Faisal, yesterday afternoon, said Kotwali Model Police Station's Officer-in-Charge Mohinul Islam.

Meanwhile, CoU students formed a human chain around 1:45pm yesterday, demanding the immediate arrest and trial of those responsible for the double murder.

They also brought out a procession and staged a sit-in in front of the office of the superintendent of police.

Protesters finally withdrew their demonstration after Cumilla district SP Nazir Ahmed Khan met them around 3:00pm and assured them they were investigating the incident with urgency.



Boatmen from Narail, Khulna and Gopalganj districts are busy competing in a traditional boat race in Khulna. Thousands of spectators from nearby districts gathered on both banks of the river to watch the competition. The race started from Baraipara ferry ghat and finished at Kanchanpur.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh used as ketamine transit hub

FROM PAGE 3
Investigators said the smuggling operation in Bangladesh is structured in three segments. Drugs are first transported from Delhi to Bangladesh, where a team communicates with counterparts in Delhi and receives the shipment, keeping a portion for local distribution.

The rest is sent abroad via courier companies, coordinated by a separate group responsible for communication and payment for consignments destined for Italy and Spain. Each courier shipment reportedly earns the operatives around Tk 60,000 for transport.

The syndicate allegedly takes advantage of the relative lack of detection technology in Bangladesh compared to India, where ketamine is more common and local authorities are better equipped to

identify such shipments. Investigators suspect five to six consignments have already been smuggled this way.

During the initial investigation, DNC officials arrested two members of the syndicate, Masudur Rahman Zilani, 28, and Arifur Rahman, 43. The two had been supplying ketamine to Dhaka's affluent neighbourhoods, including Gulshan and Banani. Two Android phones and a basic mobile phone used for coordinating shipments were also recovered.

Mehedi Hasan, deputy director of the DNC, said, "We are investigating the case with priority. We have the names of three to four other syndicate members and are conducting drives to arrest them."

Regarding the transnational operation, he said, "The syndicate

definitely has someone to receive the narcotics consignments. We are investigating to get the details."

According to DNC officials, traffickers rely heavily on courier services for international shipments, with packages booked and paid for in advance, while an additional group manages communication with overseas recipients.

DNC Director General Hasan Maruf highlighted the dangers of ketamine abuse. "Ketamine is a dissociative anaesthetic, historically used to induce unconsciousness in medical procedures," he said.

"It is increasingly misused recreationally, especially at parties. Short-term effects include confusion, hallucinations, and physical complications. Long-term abuse can

severely damage kidneys and the bladder, and affect mental health. Increasing tolerance often leads users to consume higher doses, which is life-threatening."

"Continuous monitoring and intelligence-led operations are crucial to intercept these consignments and prevent abuse among young people," he added.

Ketamine has been banned in Bangladesh since March 2014, but addicts in European countries use it as an alternative to heroin and cocaine.

On October 24, 2017, Rapid Action Battalion seized 34 white towels, also destined for Spain via a courier service, and arrested three people who admitted they received Tk 2 lakh for each towel once the delivery was successful.

Badrudin Umar laid

FROM PAGE 3
extraordinary in many ways. He never compromised, not even with extremists in his political life. He authored numerous books, which otherwise would have remained unknown. Despite financial needs, he never accepted gifts from anyone. He believed in struggle and continued it until the very end."

Writer and columnist Farhad Mazhar said, "There is much to learn from the footprints he left behind. Many believed the Marxist and revolutionary tradition had ended, but that is not true. In Bangladesh's recent political developments, especially on August 5, we saw clear signs of its revival."

Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul Islam described Umar as a lifelong fighter. "He always resisted injustice. There is much to learn from his life. In particular, the way he documented the history of the Language Movement will remain exemplary forever. His evaluation of the 2024 mass uprising will also be remembered by freedom-loving people," he said.

Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs Adviser Sharmin S Murshid said, "With his departure, an important chapter of the nation's

history has closed. The ideals and philosophy he stood for will remain invaluable. He was principled, idealistic, and uncompromising. His writings will guide future generations."

Among those who paid tribute were Education Adviser CR Abrar, Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, Chief Adviser's Special Assistant Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb, and Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Farida Akhter.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) General Secretary Ruhin Hossain Prince said, "He went against the tide. With small organisations, he dreamt of ensuring people's rights and spoke for them. Unlike many who only talk, he both spoke and wrote. If the youth embrace his philosophy, the society he envisioned will be realised."

BNP leader Habibun Nabi Khan said, "As an intellectual, he always stood for justice and the oppressed. We have seen many intellectuals mortgage their conscience, but he never did."

Chief Coordinator of Ganosamhati Andolon Zonayed Saki added, "By standing against greed, he became a source of inspiration. Those who dream of change embody his ideals."

Dialogue

FROM PAGE 3
Prof Dr Muhammad Elius of the Department of World Religion and Culture at Dhaka University said diversity is a common phenomenon worldwide, and unity in diversity is therefore very important.

Prof Milton Kumar Dev of the Department of History at DU said all religions teach love, peace, and human brotherhood, yet the world today is stormed by conflicts, enmity, and religious hatred.

He said a lasting peaceful society is impossible unless people understand one another better and appreciate different faiths in their proper perspective.

Father Tapan D Rozario moderated the event, which was also addressed by Cardinal Patrick D Rozario, Vatican Ambassador to Bangladesh Archbishop Kevin Randall, Archbishop Bejoy D' Cruz of Dhaka, Archbishop Lawrence Subrato Howlader of Chattogram, Father Victor Edwin, Father Patrick Gomes and Dr Shantu Barua of DU.

RUCSU POLLS Chhatra Odhikar Parishad, Chhatra Federation jointly announce panel

RU CORRESPONDENT

Chhatra Odhikar Parishad and Bangladesh Chhatra Federation yesterday announced a panel jointly under the banner of "Rucusu for Radical Change" to contest the upcoming Rajshahi University Central Students' Union (Rucusu) election, scheduled for September 25.

The announcement was made at a press conference in front of the Rucusu building yesterday afternoon. Aman Ullah Aman, member secretary of Andolon Moncho, declared the panel on behalf of the alliance. Andolon Moncho is an organisation that has long been advocating for the Rucusu polls.

The top three nominations include Mehedi Hasan Maruf (2020-21 session) for vice president (VP), Afrin Jahjan (2018-19 session) for general secretary (GS), and Al Shahriar Shuvo (2021-22 session) for assistant general secretary (AGS).

Currently, Maruf serves as president of the university unit of Chhatra Odhikar Parishad, while Shuvo is the general secretary of the same unit of Chhatra Odhikar Parishad and Afrin, a women's rights activist, is the former president of Utoron Pathok O Lekhok Sutikagar.

Other nominated candidates include Mehedi Hasan Masum as sports secretary, Riduanul Haque Imon as assistant sports secretary, Ratul Mahmud as cultural secretary, Mubtasin Fuad Dhruvo as assistant cultural secretary, Abida Akter Laboni as women's secretary, Gazi Farhan Labib as assistant information and research secretary, Mahmudul Hasan as assistant media and publications secretary, Juhaimy Tamim as science and technology secretary, Zubair Hasan as assistant secretary and technology secretary, Ramzanul Mobarak as debate and literature secretary, Nazmul Islam as assistant debate and literature secretary, and Akhtar Hossain as assistant environment and social services secretary.

STATUTORY NOTICE
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
Company Matter No. 1427 of 2025
IN THE MATTER OF: An application under Section 81(2) and 85(3) read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994.
AND IN THE MATTER OF: Mohammed Iftakharul Hoque Ifty, Member and Director of Francis Skytech Co. Limited having its corporate office at House No. 77 (2nd Floor), Road No. 13, sector no. 10, Uttara, Dhaka. -----Petitioner.
-VERSUS-
1. Francis Skytech Co. Limited of House no. 77(2nd Floor), Road No. 13, sector-10, Uttara, Dhaka.
2. The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms (RJSC), TCB Bhaban (6th Floor), 1 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka. -----Respondents.
Notice is hereby given in the effect that, an application under Section 81(2) and 85(3) read with Section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 has been moved in the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the petitioner for condoning the delay of holding of the Annual General Meeting of the Company name & style as "Francis Skytech Co. Limited". The Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division comprising of his Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel upon hearing the matter vide order dated 21.08.2025 was pleased to admit the said application and fixed for affidavit-in-compliance within 22nd October, 2025. Any person interested in the said application may appear before the Hon'ble Court. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned on payment of charges.
Abdul Malek Khan, Advocate
Hall Room No. 1, Supreme Court Bar Association, Dhaka. Mobile No. 01535-235138

LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1644 OF 2025
Md. Omar Faruque Petitioner.
-VERSUS-
Sunbird Sanitation Limited and another. Respondent.
Notice is hereby given that an application under sections 81 (2) read with sections 85 (3) and 396 of the Companies Act 1994 has been filed for condonation of the delay in holding the Annual General Meetings (AGM) of Sunbird Sanitation Limited and to relieve the Directors of the Companies from the liabilities of the fine before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the petitioner and upon preliminary hearing on 01.09.2025, Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel was pleased to admit the said application. Anyone desirous of opposing the matter may appear before the Hon'ble court either personally or through his advocate on the date fixed. A copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary costs.
(Feroz Uddin Ahmed), Advocate
Supreme Court of Bangladesh
Room No: 503, Annex Extension, Bar Association Building, Supreme Court.

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Dhaka-1207
Tel: 880-0222218331-33, 02222218335-39; Fax: 880-0222218341, 02222218343
e-mail: pksf@pksf.org.bd; Website: www.pksf.org.bd

Ref. No: 53.23.0000.001.03.057.25-5399 Date: 08 September 2025

Request for Expression of Interest (REOI)

(Selection of Consulting Firm: National)

A. Basic Information (Procuring Entity, Assignment, Procurement Method, Source of Fund, etc) for the Consulting Firm:	
1 Name of the Organization	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)
2 Procuring Entity Name & Designation	Dr. Mohammad Jashim Uddin, Additional Managing Director
3 Expression of Interest for Selection of	A Consulting Firm for Producing 'Video Documentaries' of Rural Microenterprise Transformation Project (RMTP) of PKSF.
4 EOI Ref No	53.23.0000.001.03.057.25-5399
5 Package No.	PKSF/RMTP/2025-26/SD-16
6 REOI Publishing Date	09 September 2025
7 Procurement Method	Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)
8 Source of Fund	PKSF & IFAD
9 Development Partner	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
10 Project Name	Rural Microenterprise Transformation Project (RMTP)
11 EOI submission closing date, time, and place	Date: 22 September 2025; Time: 2:30 PM PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
B. Key Information for the Consulting Firm:	
12 Brief description of the assignment	The detailed REOI document including Terms of Reference (TOR) are obtainable from the office of the undersigned during office hours: 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM at free of cost. It will be also available at PKSF website https://pksf.org.bd/tender/ . Interested eligible Consulting Firms are requested to submit their proposals along with all necessary documents in sealed envelope to the office of the undersigned directly or by courier/mail by 2:30 PM on or before 22 September 2025
13 Experience, resource, and delivery capacity required of the Consulting Firm	
14 Other Details	
C. Procurement Entity Details:	
15 Name of the Official Inviting EOI	Dr. Mohammad Jashim Uddin
16 Designation of Official Inviting EOI	Additional Managing Director
17 Address of the Official Inviting EOI	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) PKSF Bhaban, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207.
18 Contact Details of Official Inviting EOI	Telephone: 880-0222218331-33, 02222218335-39 Fax: 880-0222218341, 02222218343 e-mail: jashim@pksf.org.bd

The Procurement Entity reserves all the rights to accept or reject all applications.

(Dr. Mohammad Jashim Uddin)
Additional Managing Director & PE

PRAYER TIMING
SEPTEMBER 9

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-35	12-45	4-30	6-20	7-45
JAMAAT 5-10	1-15	4-45	6-25	8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders hereby invited by Prime Bank PLC. from reputed companies in the relevant field for providing below items:

SL	Name of Items	Period of Sale		Last Date of Submission
		From	To	
1	Supply, Installation and Implementation of Hardware and Software Subscription for Prime Bank PLC.	09.09.2025	22.09.2025	22.09.2025
2	Digital Lending Solution for Prime Bank PLC.	09.09.2025	24.09.2025	24.09.2025

Details are given on the Prime Bank website.
<https://www.primebank.com.bd/tenders>

Head of Facility Management Division

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

আলহাজ্ব নূর মিয়া কলেজ, (EIN: 105508) ডাকঘর ৪ কনকটপট, উপজেলা ৪ চৌদ্দাম, জেলা ৪ কুমিল্লা- এর জন্য জাতীয় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের অধিভুক্ত বেসরকারি কলেজ শিক্ষকদের চাকুরীর শর্তাবলী রেজুলেশন (সংশোধিত)-২০১৯ ও বেসরকারি শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের জনবল কাঠামো ও এমপিও নীতিমালা-২০২২ অনুযায়ী নিম্নলিখিত পদে নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

ক্র. নং	শূন্য পদের নাম, গ্রেড ও সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাপদ বোধ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা ও চাকুরীতে প্রবেশের সময়সীমা
১	অধ্যক্ষ-০১ জন (গ্রেড-৪৫০০০০-৭১২০০)	বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে স্নাতকোত্তর ডিগ্রি/সমমান অথবা বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে ০৪ (চার) বছর মেয়াদি স্নাতক (সম্মান) ডিগ্রি/সমমান, সম্মান শিক্ষাজীবনে ০১ (এক) টির বেশি ৩য় বিভাগ/শ্রেণি/সমমান গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।	ডিগ্রি কলেজে এমপিওভুক্ত অধ্যক্ষ অথবা এমপিওভুক্ত হিসেবে ডিগ্রি কলেজের উপাধ্যক্ষ/উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক কলেজের অধ্যক্ষ পদে ০৩ (তিন) বছরের অথবা উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়ে অধ্যক্ষ পদে ০৫ (পনের) বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ মোট ১৫ (পনের) বছরের শিক্ষকতার অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে।
২	পরিচালনা কক্ষী-০১ জন (গ্রেড-২০৮২৫০-২০০১০)	জেএসসি/জেডিসি/সমমান পাস	অনুর্ধ্ব ৩৫ বছর

আবেদন দাখিলের নিয়মঃ

- প্রার্থীর জীবন বৃত্তান্ত আবেদনপত্র আগামী ২৫ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখ বিকাল ৪টার মধ্যে সভাপতি, আলহাজ্ব নূর মিয়া কলেজ, ফ্রেজ জিলা, বাড়ি নং-১৫, রোড নং-৩৪, জলশান-১, ঢাকা-১২১২ বারবার পাঠাতে হবে। আবেদনপত্রের সাথে শিক্ষাপদ বোধ্যতার সকল সনদপত্র ও জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের কপি একে সন্ধ্যা হোলা ০২ (দুই) কপি পাশপোর্ট সাইজের ছবিসহ আনুষ্ঠানিক কাগজপত্র ও কলেজের অনুমোদিত অধ্যক্ষ পদে ১০০০/- টাকা এবং পরিচালনা কক্ষী পদে ৫০০/- টাকার ব্যাংক ড্রাকট/সে-অর্ডার জমা দিতে হবে।
- আবেদনপত্রের বামের উপরে যে পদের জন্য আবেদন সে পদের নাম লিখতে হবে। অসম্পূর্ণ ও ত্রুটিপূর্ণ আবেদন বাতিলযোগ্য। পরীক্ষার জন্য কোন প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না।
- কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন পর্যায়ে নিয়োগ কার্যক্রম বাতিল/ছটিত করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

সভাপতি
আলহাজ্ব নূর মিয়া কলেজ

UNREST IN NEPAL

Celebrities back Gen Z protesters

THE KATHMANDU POST ONLINE

Members of Nepal's Generation Z have taken to the streets yesterday morning to protest against corruption and government restrictions on social media. Their demonstration has drawn support from prominent artists and entertainers.

Actors Madan Krishna Shrestha and Hari Bansha Acharya publicly voiced their support on Facebook, backing the youth-led movement.

Acharya drew attention to the fragility of a recently paved road, questioning why public infrastructure funded by taxpayers fails so quickly. He wrote, "I wondered daily how this road could deteriorate so fast. I walked it daily but only thought about it. Today's youth, however, do more than just think—they ask questions. Why did it collapse? How? Who is accountable? This is just one example of the issues this generation raises. The voice we hear today is not against the system itself, but against the actions of leaders and officials responsible for it."

He urged leaders to improve their performance and pass responsibilities to the younger generation, noting that today's youth expect more accountability. Shrestha echoed the sentiment. Singer and actor Prakash Saput encouraged his two brothers, Sunil and Sachin, to join the protests. He advised them to distribute money for food and water for the protesters.



Riot police personnel fire tear gas to disperse demonstrators during a protest outside the parliament in Kathmandu yesterday; protesters carrying Nepal's national flag try to storm the parliament; and protesters carry an injured victim during the protest.

PHOTO: AFP



Indonesia replaces minister after protests

AFP, Jakarta

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto yesterday removed Finance Minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati in a cabinet reshuffle following deadly anti-government protests across the country.

Sri Mulyani is an influential figure who once served as managing director of the World Bank and was finance minister under three different presidents. Her house was ransacked during the recent protests over lavish perks for lawmakers.

Purbaya Yudhi Sadewa, an economist who previously served as the chief commissioner of the Indonesia Deposit Insurance Corporation, was appointed as her successor, according to a presidential decree.

Nearly 600 people are still in detention following the protests, police said.

Prabowo did not give any reason for Sri Mulyani's removal from the cabinet.

End protectionism, tariff 'blackmail'

Says BRICS, calls for upholding of multilateral trading system

AFP, Brasilia

Leaders of the 11-member BRICS bloc railed against economic protectionism and "tariff blackmail" during a virtual meeting yesterday held amid a damaging trade war with US President Donald Trump.

The group of emerging economies met via videoconference at the initiative of Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, whose office said it was necessary to address the "intensification of unilateral measures."

The BRICS represents nearly 40 percent of global GDP and almost half of the world's population.

Its members are among those hardest hit by what Lula referred to Monday as "tariff blackmail" and "unjustified and illegal" trade practices.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, for his part, called for the upholding of "the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core" and for rejection of "all forms of protectionism."



Tensions between the United States and China, the world's two biggest economies, resulted in tit-for-tat duties that reached triple digits earlier this year before being lowered again.

In Brazil's case, Trump slapped his highest level of trade tariff — 50 percent — on a range of goods from Latin America's biggest economy.

Trump is punishing Brazil for what he calls a "witch hunt" against his right-wing ally, former president Jair Bolsonaro who is on trial for allegedly plotting a coup

to take power back from Lula after losing 2022 elections.

A verdict in the trial is expected this week.

"Tariff blackmail is being normalized as an instrument to conquer markets and interfere in domestic affairs," Lula said Monday.

Washington also imposed tariffs of up to 50 percent on Indian imports, accusing New Delhi of fueling Moscow's deadly attacks on Ukraine by purchasing Russian oil.

Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar told the BRICS summit the world needed sustainable trade, adding that "increasing barriers and complicating transactions will not help."

Russian President Vladimir Putin also took part in the virtual meeting days after gathering with Xi, North Korea's Kim Jong Un and India's Narendra Modi in China, where regional leaders slammed America's "bullying behaviour."

Trump hit South Africa, engaged in a spat with Washington over a range of domestic and

US sanctions won't shift Russia's path

Says Kremlin

REUTERS, Moscow

The Kremlin said yesterday that no sanctions would ever force Russia to change course in the Ukraine war, hours after the United States and the European Union indicated they were considering additional economic restrictions.

The West has imposed tens of thousands of sanctions on Russia over its 3-1/2 year-old war in Ukraine and its 2014 annexation of Crimea in a bid to hobble Russia's \$2.2 trillion economy and undermine support for President Vladimir Putin.

Putin says the Russian economy, which has grown faster than those of G7 countries and defied Western predictions of a crash, not least thanks to spending on the war effort, has endured well. He has ordered businesses and officials to defy the sanctions in every way they can.

"No sanctions will be able to force the Russian Federation to change the consistent position that our president has repeatedly spoken about," Peskov told Kremlin reporter Alexander Yunashev.

French PM ousted in parliament confidence vote

AFP, Paris

France's parliament yesterday ousted the government of Prime Minister Francois Bayrou after just nine months in office, leaving President Emmanuel Macron scrambling to find a successor and plunging the country into a new political crisis.

Bayrou, who has been in the job for just nine months, had blindsided even his allies by calling a confidence vote to end a lengthy standoff over his austerity budget, which foresees almost 44 billion euros (\$52 billion) of cost savings to reduce France's debt pile.

Bayrou, the first premier in the history of modern France to be ousted in a confidence vote rather than a no-confidence vote, will submit his resignation on Tuesday morning, according to a person close to him who asked not to be named.

In the vote in the National Assembly, 364 deputies voted that they had no confidence in the government while just 194 gave it their confidence. "In line with article 50 of the constitution, the prime minister must submit the resignation of his government," said speaker Yael Braun-Pivet.

Bayrou is the sixth prime minister under Macron since his 2017 election but the fifth since 2022. Bayrou's ousting leaves the French head of state with a new domestic headache at a time when he is leading diplomatic efforts on the Ukraine war.



'We have 2.5 options to seek deferral'

FROM PAGE 1

a deferral of five to six years.

Bangladesh has already demonstrated its strength by meeting all three required criteria — per capita income, human asset index, and economic vulnerability index — twice since 2018, under two triennial reviews by the UN Committee for Development Policy (UN CDP), which decides on LDC graduation. The country also received a two-year extension due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Business leaders argue that Bangladesh's economic vulnerabilities differ from Lao PDR and Nepal, who are also set to graduate alongside Bangladesh.

TRADITIONAL CHOICES. Of the two and a half options Bangladesh has to seek the deferral, the first is

for the head of government to write to the UN CDP, citing "unforeseen" and "beyond control" circumstances that require more time beyond 2026, Debapriya said.

The CDP would then form a sub-committee to examine the situation based on relevant data and information, and make recommendations to the full body.

This is how the Solomon Islands secured a three-year deferral in 2023, endorsed by the UN General Assembly (UNGA), with strong backing from Australia. The country is now set to graduate in 2027.

The second option is to write directly to the UN secretary-general, after which the request would go to the General Assembly for decision.

In December 2023, the

UNGA indefinitely deferred Angola's graduation after oil price shocks pulled its indicators below thresholds. Angola's

Debapriya points out that the process to seek deferral will require rescinding the March 13, 2025 decision by the cabinet of advisers confirming Bangladesh's graduation in November 2026.

graduation process will restart only once it again meets the criteria.

Debapriya noted that navigating the General Assembly requires influential patrons, as illustrated in Angola's case, where Portugal played a key

role.

NEW ENTRY POINT The "half option", Debapriya explained, lies in the Enhanced Monitoring Mechanism (EMM), which tracks graduating and recently graduated countries. He currently leads this process in the CDP.

On August 25, 2025, the CDP chair wrote to the Bangladesh government, along with other graduating countries, seeking reports on progress in implementing Smooth Transition Strategies (STS).

A consultation between the CDP and Bangladesh may take place on November 25, 2025, where the country's EMM report will be discussed.

How Bangladesh presents its case in that report will influence any subsequent request for deferral. The EMM

assesses not only the three main criteria but also a wide range of Supplementary Graduation Indicators (SGI). The CDP will review these reports at its February 2026 plenary.

MISCONCEPTIONS Debapriya noted several misconceptions about deferrals. For example, it is often claimed that Myanmar chose to delay its graduation.

In reality, although Myanmar was willing, the CDP withheld its 2021 decision due to uncertainty following the February 1, 2021 military takeover. The decision was later deferred to 2024, and again to 2027.

He also highlighted that many LDCs remain stuck in the graduation pipeline, particularly small island developing states (SIDS) such as Tuvalu and Kiribati (since 2009), with later additions including

Comoros and Djibouti. These countries remain highly vulnerable to climate and external shocks.

Meanwhile, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda are expected to join the pipeline soon. If Bangladesh opts for deferral, it would stand as the only South Asian country other than Afghanistan still in the LDC group.

Debapriya stressed that any decision to seek deferral has to be very well thought out, and based on compelling empirical evidence and with expressed political support from the international development partners.

He also pointed out that the process would require rescinding the March 13, 2025 decision by the cabinet of advisers confirming Bangladesh's graduation in November 2026.

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation
"BSC Bhaban", Saltgola road, Chattogram.
REF: 18.16.0000.373.02.265.25 Date: 07.09.2025

Re-Tender Notice

S.L No.	Tender ID	Name of the Tender	Tender Closing & Opening Time & Date
1	COMC-07092025 DATED: 07.09.2025 REF: 18.16.0000.373.03.265.25	BADC-265// INTERNATIONAL LIMITED FREIGHT RE-TENDER FOR TRANSPORTATION OF 2ND LOT OF 40,000 MT (+/- 10%) DAP FERTILIZER IN BULK FROM FANGCHENG PORT, CHINA AND DELIVERY IN 50 KG NET BAG TO TRANSPORT AGENT LOCATED AT CHATTOGRAM AND SHIROMONI GHAT (KHULNA) VIA OUTER ANCHORAGE OF CHATTOGRAM PORT (A/B/C ANCHORAGE), BANGLADESH AND/OR HARBARIA, MONGLA PORT, BANGLADESH AS PACKAGE BASIS (RATIO: CTG & MONGLA : 40%:60%) LAY CAN 11-15 SEPTEMBER, 2025 A/C BADC.	09.09.2025 11:30 HRS (LT) & 09.09.2024 11:35 HRS (LT)

Website address: Detail information & tender document will be available in the website of www.bsc.portal.gov.bd.

Capt. Md Mozibur Rahman
General Manager (Chartering)
Phone: 031-728269
E-mail: gm-cht@bsc.gov.bd

GD-1961

AFGHANISTAN EARTHQUAKE Survivors refuse to return to villages, fearing landslides

REUTERS, Masud

Haunted by the fear that aftershocks could bring rocks crashing down from the mountains, survivors of Afghan earthquakes vowed not to return to destroyed villages but camp in fields and on riverbanks instead, even without tents to keep off the rain.

"We have no shelter, not even a tent," said 67-year-old farmer Adam Khan, leaning on a stick outside his ruined home in the village of Masud

in Afghanistan's eastern province of Kunar. "It rained last night, we had no place to take cover," he added. "Our biggest fear is the big rocks that could come down at any moment."

Two earthquakes since around midnight on August 31 killed more than 2,200 people and injured over 3,600 across the region, flattening thousands of homes, while aftershocks brought fresh landslides, leaving families trapped between unstable mountains and swollen rivers.

London's Tube network shuts

Workers begin week of strikes

REUTERS, London

London's Tube network came to a standstill yesterday as its workers began a week of strikes over pay and working conditions, disrupting travel for commuters and tourists in the British capital.

Almost no London Underground trains are expected to run between yesterday and Thursday. Additionally, the Docklands Light Railway, which connects the financial centres of Canary Wharf and the City of London, will not run today and Thursday.

Londoners reported making longer journeys to get to work yesterday morning, with many choosing to cycle and others taking detours.

"The prospect of it being all week, it's a bit of a nightmare... it's probably taken me twice as long to get in this morning," said legal counsel Laura Sutton, 46, who was near London Bridge station.

সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি
কমন সার্ভিসেস ডিভিশন
প্রধান কার্যালয়, মতিঝিল, ঢাকা

ইংরেজি ২০২৬ সালের জন্য ২০,০০০ (বিশ হাজার) পিস
খামসহ ৮,৫০,০০০ (আট লক্ষ পঞ্চাশ হাজার) দেয়াল
ক্যালেন্ডার মুদ্রণের লক্ষ্যে দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
(উনুজ দরপত্র)

কাজের নামঃ Printing and Supplying of 8,50,000 (Eight Lac Fifty Thousand) Pieces of Wall Calendars & 20,000 (Twenty Thousand) Pieces of Envelopes.

টেন্ডার রেফারেন্সঃ 2025/96 Date: 07/09/2025

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির বিস্তারিত তথ্য সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি এর Website www.sonabank.com.bd এর Tender Board এ রয়েছে।
যোগাযোগঃ কমন সার্ভিসেস ডিভিশন, সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা।
ফোনঃ ০২-২২৩৩৮৪৬৪২, মোবাইলঃ ০১৭০৮-১৫৯৩১৯

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ডেপুটি জেনারেল ম্যানেজার

GD-1962

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Let's not fill wetlands to build campuses

Proposed site for Sunamganj university warrants environmental scrutiny

It is unfortunate that despite having strong environmental laws, Bangladesh continues to see water bodies, forests, and wetlands being threats. Dekhar Haor in Sunamganj is currently at risk of being degraded as a proposal to build a 125-acre campus of Sunamganj Science and Technology University, covering a portion of this haor, was recently sent to the education ministry for approval. Though the university obtained environmental clearance from the Department of Environment (DoE) in 2023, activists are rightly concerned that the haor area, which remains flooded for nearly seven months a year, would be compromised if that portion was filled. It would disrupt the Nainda River's flow and affect the haor's seasonal agricultural use and biodiversity.

Nearly 100 acres of Dekhar Haor are used for rice cultivation during the dry season, while the rainy season sees an influx of fish, birds, and aquatic mammals. Why, then, did the DoE give its clearance despite the environmental risks? Ironically, it was only two weeks ago that the government finalised the draft haor protection order (under the Water Act, 2013). Does the decision to build a university on a haor not contradict the draft order? Unfortunately, this is not the first time that public infrastructure has been allowed in ecologically sensitive areas. Last month, Ecenc approved the construction of Rabindra University despite concerns that it would block the water discharge path of the Chalan Beel. Although Ecenc conditioned the approval on further evaluation by the DoE, the question about the latter's integrity remains as questionable as before.

Interestingly, in both cases, the reason for selecting sites near or at wetlands is not a lack of alternative locations. Rather, arbitrary reasons have been used to defend the chosen sites. While we understand the need for permanent campuses for universities, that should not come at the cost of irreparable environmental damage. It will be an even greater irony to build a science and technology university on a site that disregards the very principles of sustainability and ecological conservation that science itself teaches.

Bangladesh has already lost over 2,500 kilometres of haor land in just 32 years. Do we want to continue this destruction, or will we finally use our laws to protect the water bodies, haors, and other vital ecosystems? Before any government body approves such projects, this is a question they must answer. We especially expect the interim administration to take a stricter stance in this regard as several advisers have been vocal environmental advocates for years. Protecting our natural resources must be a top priority.

Enforce science-based dengue control

Rising infections show outdated strategies are failing to contain it

The dengue situation is once again taking a worrying turn. With over 34,000 infections and 137 deaths recorded so far this year, the urgency cannot be overstated. In the first week of September alone, more patients were admitted to hospitals compared to the first weeks of July and August. At least 13 people have already died, while 2,383 were hospitalised during this period. Experts warn that August's rain, unchecked mosquito breeding, and weak anti-mosquito drives have contributed to this surge. If this trend continues, the coming weeks could see another deadly outbreak.

Particularly troubling is the sharp rise in cases outside Dhaka. Surveys by the DGHS, IEDCR, and CDC have all confirmed the widespread presence of *Aedes albopictus*, or the Asian tiger mosquito, in districts such as Khulna, Chattogram, Barishal, Jashore, and Faridpur. Unlike *Aedes aegypti*, the principal dengue carrier that mostly breeds in urban settings, *albopictus* thrives in natural and man-made containers alike, making control far more challenging. Its growing dominance in rural and semi-urban areas has made the spread of dengue increasingly unpredictable. Meanwhile, Dhaka's mosquito-control efforts remain largely ineffective despite spending around Tk 707 crore in the last nine years. Both city corporations continue to rely heavily on fogging and insecticide spraying, though entomologists have long warned that these methods bring little long-term benefit. A significant portion of annual budgets is spent on insecticide purchases, while sustainable strategies such as integrated vector management, biological larvicides, and coordinated community drives receive little attention. As a result, annual outbreaks persist.

Experts have repeatedly stressed the need to treat dengue as a year-round public health threat. This requires continuous mosquito surveillance, accurate reporting of infections, and stronger district-level health facilities. Currently, DGHS data comes from only a fraction of hospitals, leaving the true scale of infections unclear. Making dengue a notifiable disease, with mandatory reporting from all healthcare providers, is therefore essential. High incidence areas also need sustained drives to destroy adult mosquitoes and breeding sites. Construction sites, drains, and water storage containers must be monitored regularly, while communities should be mobilised through awareness campaigns to do their part properly. Climate change is shifting the timing of peak infections and expanding mosquito breeding grounds. Unless outdated measures are replaced with science-driven, long-term strategies, Bangladesh will remain trapped in this cycle of preventable tragedy every monsoon.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Mao Zedong dies

On this day in 1976, Marxist revolutionary Mao Zedong died. He had emerged as the undisputed Chinese Communist Party leader following the Long March (1934-35) and dominated China in the period after the communist takeover in 1949.



Managing our external debt needs a balanced strategy



MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun is executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

The global public debt has reached an unprecedented level, raising concern among all stakeholders. The amount stood at \$102 trillion in 2024, a \$5 trillion increase from 2023, according to a recent report by the UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Several factors, such as government borrowing during the Covid pandemic, rising interest rates, and a slowing global economy, drove this surge. For low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and least developed countries (LDCs), which are already grappling with limited fiscal space and development challenges, a rising public debt has far-reaching consequences.

High levels of debt constrain a government's capacity to invest in essential development areas, such as



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

Bangladesh's external debt, which has been around \$100 billion in recent times, may not seem extraordinary when compared with other developing countries. But the challenge emerges when this debt is compared against the country's earnings.

healthcare, education, infrastructure, and climate adaptation. Debt servicing, which encompasses the cost of paying back the interest and principal amounts, is consuming an increasing share of national budgets. This constricts spending on public services, which is already limited in poor countries. Interest payments account for a significant portion of government revenue in developing countries. The net interest payment on public debt made by developing countries reached \$921 billion in 2024, a 10 percent increase compared to 2023.

The composition of debt is changing over time. Developing countries are increasingly borrowing from private

creditors and international capital markets, rather than relying on concessional loans from multilateral institutions. This allows access to larger sums of finance. However, it comes at higher interest rates and shorter maturities. This increases these countries' vulnerability to global financial shocks.

For countries like Bangladesh, which aspires to the upper-middle-income status while preparing for graduation from the LDC category in 2026, this trend presents both challenges and opportunities. In Bangladesh, debt levels have risen steadily over the past decade, becoming a pressing issue in recent years. Although the debt situation is manageable as per the international benchmark, the rising cost of repayments is worrying. Foreign borrowing has become more expensive due to higher interest expenses, a larger share of non-concessional loans, and tougher lending conditions. Due to limited foreign exchange reserves, the strain of repayment is felt more. The cost of debt servicing is rising due to an increase in global interest rate and currency volatility. Since Bangladesh borrows mostly in US dollars, repayments become more expensive when the taka depreciates.

Bangladesh's external debt, which has been around \$100 billion in recent times, may not seem extraordinary when compared with other developing countries. But the challenge emerges

when this debt is compared against the country's earnings. Nearly 80 percent of the debt belongs to the public sector, while the rest to the private sector. In 2016, the country's foreign debt was equal to just over half of the value of annual exports. Now the debt amounts to more than the full value of exports. Debt compared to government revenue has also increased significantly. With a

domestic source of funding.

For Bangladesh, adopting a balanced strategy is crucial. The government needs to be careful in financing development while maintaining debt sustainability. It must expand concessional borrowing from multilateral development banks. Such funding is critical for infrastructure, climate adaptation, and social protection programmes at low cost. At the same time, the country should also explore innovative funds. For example, debt-for-climate swaps where a portion of external debt is forgiven in exchange for investments in climate-resilient projects. Such mechanisms can reduce debt burdens, while also helping reduce climate vulnerabilities.

Another critical avenue is domestic revenue mobilisation. While external debt remains significant, Bangladesh can reduce its reliance on borrowing by improving tax collection and broadening the tax base. Clearly, countries with stronger domestic resource mobilisation are better positioned to sustainably manage debt and invest in long-term development. Higher tax collection should be coupled with efficient public spending. That requires transparency in borrowing and investment so that debt translates into tangible benefits rather than creating fiscal pressure.

In a world of economic pressure and uncertainty, characterised by trade protectionism and currency fluctuations, Bangladesh must diversify its sources of financing and build financial resilience to withstand global shocks. It needs to adopt sustainable financing strategies to avoid debt crises. Debt is not inherently bad, unmanaged and excessive debt can erode growth, social welfare, and resilience. With prudent policies, careful planning, and innovative financing strategies, Bangladesh can harness debt as a tool for sustainable development rather than a source of vulnerability. While the government should follow a more cautious borrowing policy, structural reforms in revenue collection, public expenditure, and project execution must be pursued simultaneously. Strengthening institutions to improve these areas is critical for easing debt repayment pressures and maintaining macroeconomic stability. External borrowing will remain important for development financing. However, its management will determine whether it becomes a growth enabler or a looming burden.

Rent control: A law that exists only on paper



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SHILAJIT KUMAR ROY

Picture this: your landlord knocks at the door and casually announces that the rent is going up starting next month. No discussion, no explanation. Or maybe your landlord tells you to leave within days without any prior notice. Perhaps you've been asked to pay two or three months' rent in advance just to move in.

For many tenants across major cities and towns, these situations are quite normal. On paper, the Premises Rent Control Act, 1991 promises protection from such abuses. In reality, landlords often ignore the law, tenants do not know their rights, and enforcement is almost nonexistent, creating a crisis that underlines not just tenants' rights but also the stability of the housing sector. The act, for example, prohibits sudden rent increases except when the landlord has made genuine improvements to the property and the increase is approved by the Rent Controller. Section 23 of the act also makes it illegal to take more than a one-month deposit without the controller's approval. However, many tenants report paying far more than that. Likewise, eviction without prior notice is also barred, which is often

ignored, forcing families to move out.

Researchers thus find a significant gap between the law and its implementation. Many tenants remain unaware of their rights, or even the law itself. A 2017 BIGD study found that only 15 percent of renters in Dhaka knew about the existence of a rent controller, the official responsible for resolving disputes over rent or eviction cases. In Chattogram and Sylhet, as per another study, about half of the tenants had no knowledge of the act, and even those who knew were mostly unaware of their rights. These renters, typically from middle- or lower-income households, are often victimised by their landlords, highlighting how legal protections can come undone by the lack of awareness or enforcement.

The lack of legal awareness is manifested in other ways. The BIGD study, for instance, found that only 27 percent of tenants signed a formal rental contract. Among those who did not, only six percent asked for a contract. Worse, 85 percent of Dhaka tenants paid rent without getting any receipt. Without a contract or receipt, tenants have no evidence to support their rights in court. In Chattogram

and Sylhet, the situation is more or less similar.

With little documentation and limited awareness, any legal case can drag on for years. As the 2016 study on Chattogram and Sylhet shows, only about 100 rent cases were filed each year, and fewer than 15 percent were resolved. Many cases take three to four years to decide, and some stretch on for over a decade. Meanwhile, tenants continue to face unauthorised rent hikes. In Dhaka, 75 percent of renters reported annual increases, often without any justification being provided, apart from vague references to inflation or market demand.

The financial burden thus imposed on tenants is significant. According to one study, 82 percent of households in Dhaka spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent. Half of these families have to cut back on other essential expenses to cover their rent. With property prices and home loans increasingly out of reach, many have no option but to rent under any conditions. Tenants often accept unfair terms and pay higher rents simply to remain close to their workplace or their children's school.

The question is, why is the government failing to regulate this vital sector, when, by all indications, it is clear that average house rent is rising faster than the average income growth? One may recall that a High Court ruling in 2015 ordered the government to address arbitrary rent increases. It also recommended forming a commission to set area-

wise rent ceilings. These rulings are being rendered ineffective because of the lack of enforcement.

The Legal Aid Services (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, which came into effect in July this year, now requires landlords and tenants in rent-control cases to try mandatory mediation before going to court. The government thinks such mediation will help settle disputes more easily and quickly. Experts also believe many rent issues can be resolved through discussion, which could reduce court backlogs. However, critics warn that with few legal aid offices and limited staff, routing every case through mediation might overwhelm the system and delay urgent help, such as in case of tenant evictions. Given the rent control act's history of weak enforcement and slow proceedings, mediation alone is unlikely to make justice faster or fairer.

Against this backdrop, it is important that the relevant law is further strengthened and updated. Activists want local rent offices staffed with trained employees, official rent charts for neighbourhoods, and an easy registration system. Many also call for a national rent commission to regulate the sector. It is also important that tenants receive written contracts and rent receipts to help them defend their rights in court. Faster dispute resolution, real penalties for offenders, and proper enforcement of rent rules are crucial to address the plight of tenants in Bangladesh's expanding urban landscape.

From the end of empire to China-centric unipolarity



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FARIDUL ALAM

When Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt published *Empire* (2000), they envisioned a global order where sovereignty was diffuse and power no longer resided in the Westphalian nation-state. A decentred, networked form of rule was emerging, dissolving traditional hierarchies into a postmodern regime of control. In *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), Bill Ashcroft and his collaborators framed postcoloniality as a condition in which the peripheries could “write back” to the centre, destabilising its authority. Yet, nearly a quarter century later, what has unfolded looks markedly different. Instead of a borderless, postnational empire or a chorus of postcolonial voices transforming the centre, we see the gradual decline of the US led order and the simultaneous rise of a rival architecture with China at its hub. The “decline of the West,” once the domain of Spenglerian pessimists, is visible in material realities today: the waning legitimacy of US military interventions, its internal crises of democracy, the fragmentation of Western alliances, and the accelerating global movement towards dedollarisation.

This trajectory raises a paradox: “empire” has not “written back” in the way Ashcroft anticipated. Rather than the peripheries speaking to and transforming the centre, the centre itself is shifting—from Washington to Beijing. Power, instead of dissolving, is relocating. History is not witnessing the evaporation of unipolarity but the conditions for its reconstitution in a China-centric form.

The waning of the dollar and the US order

The dollar has long been the linchpin of US hegemony. Since Bretton Woods in 1944, the greenback has underpinned global trade, reserves, and financial governance. Even after the Nixon Shock of 1971 severed the gold peg, the “petrodollar” system, which tied oil trade to dollar-denominated transactions, continued to underpin US global dominance. This monetary privilege allowed Washington to finance deficits cheaply, project military power globally, and wield sanctions as a devastating geopolitical weapon.

But cracks in this edifice are widening.

Dedollarisation is no longer a rhetorical aspiration of adversaries but a lived practice. The BRICS states are experimenting with local currency settlements. Russia and China conduct the bulk of their trade in rubles and yuan. Even US allies, wary of overreliance, diversify their reserves by accumulating euros, yen, and gold. Central banks in the Global South are actively reducing their exposure to dollar assets, accelerating a structural shift in global finance.

As the financial sinews of empire fray, Washington’s capacity to weaponise the dollar through sanctions diminishes. Its ability to dictate terms in institutions like the IMF and World Bank erodes, vastly amplified by President Donald Trump’s tariff war against the rest of the world. What once seemed unassailable now looks fragile, threatening the very foundations of US global leadership.

China’s alternative architecture

China has emerged as the principal cause and beneficiary of this unravelling. Its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched in 2013, stretches across Eurasia, Africa, and Latin America, weaving more than 140 countries into a web of infrastructural and financial connectivity. Roads, railways, ports, and digital networks bear the imprint of Beijing’s capital.

Parallel financial institutions are multiplying. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank provide financing without the austerity strictures of the IMF. The yuan’s use in trade financing has grown, particularly in energy markets, with Shanghai’s oil futures market challenging dollar-based pricing. By promoting digital yuan pilots across BRI countries, Beijing is laying the groundwork for a currency regime less tethered to the dollar.

This is not merely China’s integration into the US-dominated order; it is the construction of an alternative system with Beijing at its centre. Where Washington sought to universalise liberal norms, many think that Beijing institutionalises infrastructural dependency, an architecture tailored to

its developmentalist ethos and strategic imperatives.

Decline of the West: Beyond economics

The decline of the West is not confined to financial indicators. Militarily, US and Nato power projection faltered in Afghanistan, where two decades of investment collapsed within weeks. In Europe, divisions over Ukraine—ranging from the degree of military support to the economic pain of sanctions—

challenging Western dominance in the discursive sphere. The ideological monopoly that once accompanied US unipolarity no longer holds.

The prevailing discourse frames our era as multipolar. States like India, Brazil, and Turkey assert growing regional influence, complicating any straightforward unipolar narrative. Yet, history suggests transitional multipolarity rarely persists. The interwar

Indo-Pacific. Economically, policies such as the CHIPS and Science Act seek to preserve US leadership in semiconductors, a critical strategic industry.

Yet, these measures feel defensive rather than visionary. Where the US once set the global agenda, it now appears reactive, scrambling to preserve a status quo that steadily erodes. Its alliances are strained; its dollar hegemony weakens; its liberal ideology confronts mounting scepticism. The image is less of confident leadership than rearguard action, signalling the limits of Washington’s capacity to maintain systemic control.

A striking feature of this transition is that the postcolonial “writing back” to empire, articulated by Bill Ashcroft and his collaborators, has not unfolded as anticipated. The challenge to the US led order has not come primarily from subaltern voices but from another state-centred project. The peripheries have not destabilised the centre by transforming the language of power. Instead, the centre itself is shifting—from Washington to Beijing.

This does not render the Global South irrelevant. Many states in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are repositioning themselves, diversifying partnerships and hedging against overdependence on either pole. Yet, their agency operates within a broader gravitational movement of power relocation. The “writing back” that Ashcroft once identified has been subsumed within a larger recentring of global order, showing that historical power relocations now occur at the centre rather than through peripheries.

Towards a new unipolarity?

If the “unipolar moment” (Krauthammer) is fading, what replaces it may not be a balanced bipolar order but a new unipolarity—this time with Beijing at the helm. Such a system would not replicate the liberal international order but embody a different logic: infrastructural dependency, sovereign hierarchies, state-managed capitalism, and a developmentalist ideology privileging stability over liberty. We are moving not to a postimperial vacuum but to the emergence of another empire. The language of multipolarity risks obscuring this trajectory, mistaking transitional turbulence for equilibrium. The tectonic shift is gaining momentum as India gradually tilts towards China, its formidable neighbour, driven by the perceived unreliability of its traditional ally, the US. The 21st century’s centre of gravity is quietly shifting from Washington to Beijing, signalling the rise of a China-centric order anchored in infrastructure, technology, and state-managed capitalism.



If the ‘unipolar moment’ is fading, what replaces it may not be a balanced bipolar order but a new unipolarity—this time with Beijing at the helm.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

expose fraying cohesion.

Culturally and ideologically, Western liberalism faces diminishing appeal in the Global South. Leaders from Africa to Southeast Asia increasingly dismiss Western lectures on democracy and human rights as hypocritical. Interventions in Iraq, Libya, and Afghanistan undermine the credibility of liberal norms as a universal model. By contrast, China’s authoritarian developmentalism, emphasising sovereignty, order, and economic growth, largely resonates with elites who prioritise regime survival over liberal reform.

The West’s ability to shape the dominant narratives is also eroding. Digital platforms have decentralised information flows, enabling alternative perspectives to proliferate. China, Russia, India and other actors promote counter-narratives

period of multipolarity gave way to bipolarity, and the Cold War’s bipolarity gave way to US unipolarity. Power tends towards consolidation.

Today’s fragmentation may coalesce into a dominant pole—centred not in Washington but in Beijing. China’s technological edge strengthens this pull. In AI, 5G infrastructure, renewable energy, and electric vehicles, Beijing is positioning itself at the global cutting edge. Its capacity to set standards in emerging technologies may replicate the role the US played postwar, where technological dominance translated into systemic influence.

The US response: Containment or rearguard action?

Washington is not passive. Initiatives like the QUAD (with Japan, India, and Australia) and AUKUS (with the UK and Australia) aim to counterbalance Chinese influence in the

An election that could return Ducsu to the students



Maisha Islam Monamee is a student at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), University of Dhaka, and a contributor at The Daily Star.

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

To be honest, I had never thought I would care about Dhaka University Central Students’ Union (Ducsu). I spent most of my time at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) of Dhaka University (DU) focusing on classes, assignments, internships, and networking. Ducsu, for us, was the iconic spot where you get breakfast for Tk 10, something that amuses IBA freshers. Campus politics always felt like a story I read about. And DU for most of my life, felt like a place where student politics existed in the background, a constant hum, but not something that shaped my daily reality.

This is because I had the luxury of being apolitical. At IBA, one’s academic performance, dedication, and ideas mattered far more than political affiliations. Politics, in the traditional DU sense, simply did not reach us, and this was a privilege that most of the other students did not have. They lived in a different reality, one that was shaped, constrained, and intimidated by the dominance of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL). We read these horror stories online, heard people talk in hushed voices and genuinely felt bad for them, but speaking up didn’t seem like an option. However, now, I feel like I cannot look away. There is a sense of possibility in the air, a rare, almost tangible feeling that something is different.

My father, who enrolled in DU as part of the 1986-87 batch, had a different university experience. Back then, they could vote for whoever they wanted in the Ducsu election. He recalls cherishing that freedom. Over

the last 15 years, that freedom was far from a reality as the student wing of the former ruling party shaped a reality where every choice carried weight beyond personal preference. This year, that contrast makes this election feel all the more remarkable as it presents a rare window for students to truly unshackle their voices.

that dominance was frustrating and isolating. And we watched from the sidelines, wondering whether student leadership could ever represent students like us, who wanted a fair, academic, and inclusive environment, rather than a politically charged one. This time, for the first time in my life, it feels like Ducsu could genuinely belong to the students. Suddenly, panels I have never heard of before are stepping forward, with candidates who do not have any political legacy to lean on, who speak in language that makes sense to a student like me. There is little political jargon and more of a vision for students being heard, represented, and respected.

What really stands out is how much the conversation has changed

reforms. Candidates are engaging students with surveys and informal discussions, asking not just what we need but what we want, with a shift from performative politics to meaningful engagement. And it is not just the ideas, but the tone. There is a certain energy, curiosity, and respect. Students are debating and challenging without fear of reprisal. This offers an opportunity to reshape the culture of representation, accountability, and engagement.

So this time, if we turn up, engage, and vote, this election could bring back to the original idea of student politics, where Ducsu is not dominated by a single party, and where students from every faculty, background, and gender can participate meaningfully. It is also tempting to feel sceptical because student politics in Bangladesh has always been messy, brimming with partisanship, violence and apathy in equal parts. But this year, I see glimpses of something different. I see panels willing to listen, students daring to question, and a campus ready to imagine a better system. I see a Ducsu that might actually embody the ideals we have only ever discussed in theory.

This Ducsu election also matters because it tests a broader societal aspiration and the hope that institutions can be inclusive, accountable, and responsive to their constituents. If a university known for seething political tensions can foster a free, fair, and student-centred election, it becomes evidence that meaningful change is possible when people believe and work towards it.

Last week, when I went to DU for my internship registration, I noticed the conversations. Students are curious, cautious, and excited. There is no cynicism, at least not the kind that paralyzes action. So, yes, this year, our vote could matter, not just for the Ducsu, but also for the future of this university. It is time to turn up and make a difference.



This year, our vote could matter, not just for the Ducsu, but also for the future of this university.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

For decades, DU has been dominated by the BCL. They were omnipresent with posters, slogans, campus events, and the silent pressure of a system where political alignment often dictated opportunities. For many students residing in the halls, who simply wanted to focus on academics,

on campus. In the past, even talking about Ducsu was dangerous because you had to know who was associated with whom, what that meant for you socially and academically, and how to engage without being caught in a web of political allegiances. This year, the conversation is about ideas and

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 Artist Duchamp
- 7 Make finer
- 11 Crumbly Italian cheese
- 12 Not busy
- 13 Pinnacle
- 14 Writer Uris
- 15 Fixes copy
- 16 Sky sights
- 17 - good example
- 18 Thwart
- 19 Words of understanding
- 21 Throw in
- 22 “Shoop” trio
- 25 Cobbler’s tool
- 26 Rapper Rick
- 27 Monkey (with)
- 29 Play group
- 33 Plant anew
- 34 Run-down
- 35 Avenue liners
- 36 Music genre
- 37 Theater unit
- 38 Milestone birthday
- 39 Some bills
- 40 Rabble

DOWN

- 1 Crew members
- 2 Stage comment
- 3 Hit the ball out of the park
- 4 Marsh plant
- 5 They may clash
- 6 Cut off
- 7 Like riverbeds
- 8 Brainstorming diagram
- 9 “Club Can’t Handle Me” rapper
- 10 Showed fear
- 16 Flight makeup
- 18 Madrid mister
- 20 Scatter
- 22 “No Flex Zone” rapper
- 23 Beggar
- 24 Gets away
- 25 Not active
- 28 Fence supports
- 30 Friend of d’Artagnan
- 31 Gem
- 32 Sorts
- 34 Latvia’s capital
- 36 Deli meat

ARISE	BATES
LETUP	OPRAH
LAWNS	REUSE
USA	ICE EYE
DOS	LAD TON
ENAMOR	CONS
GUNSHOT	
PROM	EITHER
LEO	BAR EMU
AID	ETA GIN
INDIA	BLAND
NEARS	LAMER
TRYST	ENEMY

FRIDAY’S ANSWERS

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



PHOTOS: SNEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

This award is truly exceptional for me

PORI MONI

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The fourth iteration of Blender's Choice—The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2024 recognised Pori Moni as the Best Actor (Female) in the Popular Choice category for her powerful performance in Anam Biswas's web series *Rongila Kitab*. This Hoichoi original, adapted from Kingkor Ahsan's book, also marked her debut on OTT platforms.

While receiving the award, the actress shared her experience of portraying the role, saying, "I have received many awards in my life, and perhaps I will receive more in the future, but this one will always remain special to me. It is different because this award came for playing the role of a mother, something I was personally going through at that time. It allowed me to relive the journey of my own motherhood."

She then called her director, Anam Biswas—whom she recognises as her mentor—on stage and expressed her gratitude for trusting her

with such a challenging role.

Pori Moni went on to add, "This is not just an award to me; it is much more. It is a recognition that a mother can do anything and achieve anything she sets her mind to. After giving birth, I was body-shamed for gaining weight. Many people commented on how 'fat' I had become. But only a few truly understand what a mother goes through—unless they are mothers themselves."

Reflecting on her journey, she spoke about how such remarks continued even after her transformation. "Today, when I entered the hall for this award show, many people again commented on how much weight I had lost. I don't believe a woman's dignity should ever be tied to her weight, her appearance, or any other external factor. What matters most is what she does as a person, what she achieves, and the content of her character."

She concluded by saying, "So, thank you to The Daily Star and Blender's Choice for giving me this honour. I am truly grateful."



'Byatikrom O Niyom'

Prachyanat brings Bertolt Brecht's *The Exception and the Rule* to the Bangladeshi stage as *Byatikrom O Niyom*, adapted by Shahidul Mamun and directed by Azad Abul Kalam. Featuring Shatabdi Wadud, Sakhawati Hossain Rezvi, and Diana Maryline, the production blends striking visuals, music, and choreography with urgent political resonance.

Date: Wednesday-Friday | September 10-12, 2025
Time: 7pm-8:30pm

Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Aryan Khan's 'The Ba***ds of Bollywood' trailer teases star cameos, musical firepower



The *Ba***ds of Bollywood* trailer has dropped, giving audiences the first real look at Aryan Khan's directorial debut for Netflix. Loud, witty, and unapologetically larger-than-life, the seven-episode series is produced by Gauri Khan under Red Chillies

Entertainment.

The trailer teases cameos by SRK, Aamir Khan, Salman Khan, and Ranveer Singh, among others, with quirky moments—from Avtar, played by Manoj Pahwa, mistaking SRK for rapper Badshah to Aamir defending idly sambar over vada pav.

Leading the cast is Lakshya as Aasmaan Singh, an ambitious newcomer, opposite Bobby Deol's superstar Ajay Talvar. With music by Shashwat Sachdev, alongside Anirudh Ravichander and T-Series, the series premieres on Netflix September 18.

Tanim Noor announces film based on Humayun Ahmed's work

Director Tanim Noor and his team behind *Utshob* were honoured with the Cinematic Excellence Award at Blender's Choice - The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards on Sunday, September 7.

While receiving the award, Tanim surprised fans by announcing his next project, which will be based on a story by the legendary Humayun Ahmed. He also hinted that the film is slated for release during Eid-ul-Fitr next year.

Sharing his excitement, Nuhash Humayun wrote on social media, "Best wishes to Tanim on his next film! *Utshob* felt like a wonderful throwback to stories of old. Excited for his new adaptation of my father's work."

Tanim Noor's *Utshob*, which premiered during Eid-ul-Azha this year, earned widespread praise from audiences and critics alike, performing strongly both in theatres and on OTT platforms.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

NEWS

Protect people fleeing conflict in Myanmar

FROM PAGE 12
Around 1.2 million Rohingyas have fled atrocities in Myanmar and taken shelter in Bangladesh. More are fleeing amid conflicts between the military and the Arakan Army rebel group.

Despite escalating violence, the Myanmar military seeks legitimacy by organising military-controlled elections, Turk said.

"The people of Myanmar demand justice, peace, and democratic civilian-run institutions. Conditions do not exist for free and representative elections. I echo ASEAN's view that de-escalation and humanitarian access are the way out of this crisis, not elections," he said.

The UN rights chief also said humanitarian access must be ensured, and parties in Rakhine must respect

provisional measures imposed by the International Court of Justice to protect Rohingya lives.

Turk highlighted that civilians throughout Myanmar are suffering severe consequences.

Since the 2021 coup, over 7,000 civilians have been killed and some 30,000 arrested for political reasons. In August alone, 277 civilians were reported killed.

Some 350,000 people have been displaced in Rakhine and Chin States since November 2023, with 150,000 more Rohingyas seeking refuge in Bangladesh.

Turk said the long-standing persecution of the Muslim Rohingya minority has intensified. Armed groups, including the Arakan Army, have joined attacks on civilians.

Eight years after the Myanmar military massacred tens of thousands of Rohingyas, the Arakan Army now controls nearly all of Rakhine State, committing killings, abductions, torture, forced recruitment, and village burnings.

On August 5-6, 2024, drones and artillery strikes killed hundreds of Rohingyas attempting to flee across the Naf River, the UN rights chief said.

As the military loses ground, it increasingly targets civilians through aerial attacks and other human rights violations. Rohingya armed groups have also committed abuses, including killings, forced recruitment, and displacement.

Turk reiterated call for the UN Security Council to refer Myanmar's situation to International Criminal Court.

Career Slam

FROM PAGE 12
to be honest," said the 22-year-old Alcaraz, who has not made it past the quarterfinals in four trips to Australia.

"When I just go to the pre-seasons to what I want to improve, what I want to achieve, Australian Open is there."

"It's the first or second tournament of the year, and it is always the main goal for me to complete a career Grand Slam, calendar Grand Slam. So it's going to be great."

Alcaraz's compatriot Rafael Nadal holds the record as the youngest man to win all four majors. He achieved the feat at the age of 24 in 2010 when he won the first of his four US Open titles.

"Obviously I'm going to try to do

it next year, but if it is not next year, hopefully in two and three and four. So I will try to complete it," said Alcaraz.

He will reclaim the world number one ranking from Sinner on Monday, returning to the top of the men's game for the first time since September 2023.

Alcaraz dropped just one set throughout the tournament and continued his recent mastery of Sinner, getting revenge for his loss to the Italian in the Wimbledon final.

Alcaraz and Sinner are the torchbearers of the current generation, sweeping the last eight majors between them and taking 10 of the last 13. Novak Djokovic has won the other three.

'Gaza is a graveyard'

FROM PAGE 12
In the Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem, Palestinian gunmen opened fire at a bus stop, killing six people and wounding several others, reports AFP.

Israeli emergency service Magen David Adom (MDA) said there were six victims dead in the shooting attack, updating an earlier toll of five. Police said the two gunmen were also killed.

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez yesterday announced nine measures aimed at stopping "the genocide in Gaza", including an arms embargo on Israel and a ban on vessels carrying fuel for the Israeli military from using Spanish ports.

Israel's defence minister told Hamas yesterday to lay down its arms or face annihilation, after US President Donald Trump said the group must accept a deal to release hostages in Gaza.

Courts grapple with shortage of judges

FROM PAGE 12
However, among them, three are on leave and five have been kept away from judicial functions since October 16 last year following student-led protests on the SC premises, demanding removal of "pro-Awami League fascist judges", said SC sources.

"The huge backlog of cases in the Appellate and HC Divisions makes it very tough to get dates for hearing even for urgent cases," said SC lawyer Saqeb Mahbub.

"While recruitment of judges is an inevitable solution to the problem, its impact will be visible in the long term. The sufferings are likely to continue in the short term," he said, adding that the newly appointed HC judges are yet to preside over benches.

The Judiciary Reform Commission has suggested raising the number of lower court judges to at least 6,000 from around 2,000 to bring the backlog of cases to a manageable level.

When contacted, Md Muajjem Hussain, spokesperson for the SC, said steps have been taken to address the shortage of judges at courts.

More judges will soon be appointed to lower courts through Bangladesh Judicial Service Commission (BJSC).

Besides, the chief justice has formed 13 monitoring committees comprising HC judges to keep the backlog of cases at a manageable level, he said.

Requesting anonymity, a law ministry official said the process of appointing around 100 lower court judges is at the final stage.

This correspondent called Law Adviser Asif Nazrul on his mobile phone several times and also sent a message but received no response.

THE WAY FORWARD

SC lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir, who leads Law Lab, said, "At least 1,000 judges should be appointed within the next few months both in higher and lower courts."

"The judiciary needs efficient judges who can dispose of cases quickly," he added.

Saqeb Mahbub suggested the introduction of a centralised management system that prioritises cases based on urgency and enforces strict time limits for hearings.

The cases deemed "non-urgent" may be put on the backburner, he added.

Ex-secy Abu Alam

FROM PAGE 12
banner of a platform called Mancho 71. A Dhaka court sent them to prison the same day.

Latif Siddique, Hafizur, Panna, Mostafa, Zakir Hossain, Tawsifur Bari Khan, Amir Hossain Sumon, Shafiqul Islam Delwar, and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) leader Abdullahil Kayum were denied bail by separate Dhaka courts between August 31 and September 4.

The case statement said Latif Siddique conspired to destabilise the country to overthrow the interim government.

For his speech, people present there surrounded Latif Siddique and others and chanted slogans calling them "Awami fascists", the case statement said. The case also accuses 70 to 80 unidentified individuals.

Man hands over son

FROM PAGE 12
gave a confessional statement to the Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court, said Inspector Residul Islam of Goalanda Ghat Police Station.

The families of two other arrestees claimed they were minors. The mother of one of them said he was born in 2010 and is a student of class 10.

"When the incident took place, my son had only gone there for 10 minutes out of curiosity. Now, if he misses his exams, his future will be ruined," she said.

The aunt of another arrestee said he is a 12th grader at a college

in Faridpur. "He went out to offer prayers. When his father heard of the unrest, he brought the boy back home. But police arrested him when he was roaming near the Goalanda College area."

Police made the arrests in connection with the attack on law enforcers and vandalism of vehicles at the darbar sharif. Police filed the case accusing 3,000 to 3,500 unidentified people of obstructing police duty, attacking law enforcers, and vandalising vehicles.

Although a person was killed in the attack, his family was yet to file a case.

Total literacy elusive after Tk 4,000cr spent

FROM PAGE 12
The first project, taken up in 1991 by the BNP government, cost Tk 10.7 crore. When the project was discontinued in 1997, Bangladesh's literacy rate stood at 51 percent, up from 35.2 percent when it was taken up, according to Education For All Progress Report Bangladesh-2012.

In the meantime, the government in 1995 formed the Directorate of Non-Formal Education. Four more projects were implemented under DNFE before it was transformed into BNFE in 2005.

After the Awami League came to power in 1997, it took up the "Total Literacy Movement" project.

However, the BNP government cancelled the project in 2003 on allegations of irregularities and mismanagement. The BNP government instead took up the Basic Literacy Project in 2004, targeting working children (10-14 years) in urban areas.

The BNFE spent around Tk 2,912 crore on the projects, according to BNFE officials, EFA Progress Report of Bangladesh-2012, and Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the planning ministry.

Then in 2014, the AL government took up the Basic Literacy Project, and in 2018, a Tk 1,320 crore project to provide non-formal education to 9 lakh children who are either school

dropouts or have never attended school.

In September 2023, the government launched a pilot project titled "Skill-Based Literacy for Out-of-School Adolescents (SKILFO)" in Cox's Bazar.

Under the project, completed this June, 6,825 adolescents received literacy and technical training in 13 occupations and more than 6,000 of them were linked to jobs.

Now, the BNFE is preparing two more projects.

Based on the experience of SKILFO, it has prepared "SKILFO-2" project that will be implemented in 16 districts at a cost of Tk 460 crore if approved by the government.

The other project titled "Alternative Learning Opportunity" will be launched in one upazila with low literacy rates in each of the 64 districts.

The three-year-long project worth Tk 188 crore is expected to commence in October if approved.

Educationists, however, are sceptical about eradicating illiteracy with such a project-based approach.

"All literacy initiatives have followed a piecemeal approach, which means that the drive ends when the project expires," said noted educationist Rasheda K Choudhury.

Literacy should be planned as part of the broader education system, not

treated as a short-term intervention.

She also cast doubt on the accuracy of Bangladesh's literacy rate, saying the previous government raised the figure by two percentage points each year, which hardly reflected the ground reality.

"If this [interim] government relies solely on such data without taking the actual ground situation into consideration, it leaves us deeply frustrated."

Rasheda, also the executive director of Campaign for Popular Education, stressed the need for designing a long-term, integrated literacy programme that spans early childhood through adulthood, ensuring continuous learning opportunities across all age groups.

Contacted, Devabrata Chakraborty, director general (additional charge) of BNFE, said: "We are no longer focused only on literacy. Now we are more focused on functional literacy."

Mentioning the SKILFO project, he said it is often difficult to bring students who dropped out back to formal schools. For them, flexible learning has been introduced: 100 hours of literacy lessons with 360 hours of vocational training.

The goal is to fully realise the objectives of SDG 4, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all, Chakraborty said.



PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

A worker loads betel leaves (paan) onto a pickup truck. Betel leaves from Mohanpur, Baghmara, Taherpur and Durgapur areas of Rajshahi are well known. This year, farmers have had a bumper harvest of betel leaves, which are now being sold for Tk 4-10 per bundle depending on quality.

Mob beats youth to death in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On suspicion of mugging, a man was beaten to death by a mob in Dhaka's Mohammadpur yesterday.

The deceased is Yamin, 23, of Bhola, said Inspector (Operation) Abdul Alim of Mohammadpur Police Station. Around 3:30pm, a youth named Alif was returning home to Chandrima Model Town when two muggers snatched his phone. As Alif shouted "chhintaikari" (muggers), a mob formed at the Chandrima Model Town bridge and beat the suspects, the inspector said.

Police later rescued the duo and took them to Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared Yamin dead. The other suspect, Fahim, 23, is in critical condition and undergoing treatment.

Police recovered the snatched phone, and Alif has filed a case with Mohammadpur Police Station.

Ten months on, court order yet

FROM PAGE 3
of Shahin's case have still not reached the investigation agency.

Shahin said if the documents are not presented in court, the trial will certainly be disrupted.

Contacted, Anisur Rahman, a sub-inspector at the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) and also the IO, told The Daily Star, "Now we are investigating the case filed with Ashulia Police Station only. We do not know where another murder case was filed. We did not receive any court

order or case docket in this regard."

Abu Bakar Siddique, the then OC of Ashulia Police Station, told The Daily Star, "I did not receive any court order regarding the matter when I was there."

Nur Alam, bench assistant of the court where Shahin filed the case, said he did not know about the case since it had happened before he was posted there.

Supreme Court lawyer Ishrat Hasan said, "Losing court records is regarded as a serious lapse in the justice system and may constitute

a punishable offence. In such situations, a show-cause notice can be issued against the custodian of the records, and departmental proceedings may follow where appropriate."

"The administrative authorities of the concerned court may also form an inquiry committee to identify those responsible and to recommend disciplinary measures," she added.

Contacted for comment on whether the university administration had exerted any influence, JU Vice-Chancellor Prof Mohammad Kamrul Ahsan said, "I had no information regarding this matter, and personally, there has been no influence from the vice chancellor's office."

"If anyone seeks legal remedy, I expect -- especially after the mass uprising -- that they will receive fair justice," he said.

Meanwhile, several of the nine students accused in the murder case have been seen freely roaming the Jahangirnagar University campus.

Police arrested JU English student Mahmudul Hasan Raihan from Gazipur's Hota para on September 23 last year and Pharmacy student Saiful Islam Bhuiyan from Dhaka's Turag area on September 29 that year.

According to case records, Raihan remains in jail, while Saiful and another accused, Atikuzzaman, a Management Studies student, are currently out on bail.

Witnesses said that since March 21, three of the accused -- Ahsan Labib, Hamidullah Salman, and Mohammad Rajon Mia -- have appeared on campus.

On August 21, Labib, a Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering student, submitted his nomination papers to the Jucus Election Commission to contest in the polls. He has been campaigning regularly since August 29 and was present at the announcement of his "Shikharthi Oikya Forum" panel on August 22.

Salman submitted his nomination papers on August 18 to the Election Commission's member secretary AKM Rashidul Alam. He, too, began campaigning on August 29 and was present on August 28 when the Chhtra Dal-backed panel was announced.

Rajon, Salman, and Labib have since been seen campaigning across the campus ahead of the Jucus elections.

When asked why the accused have not been arrested, investigator Anisur said, "Not everything can be done just by wishing."

Ensure legal recognition

FROM PAGE 3

Strategy, targeted insurance schemes, skill development programmes, and support from the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Social Welfare, NSDA, PKSF, SME Foundation and the Universal Pension Authority, gaps in coordination, weak enforcement and low awareness have limited effectiveness, said the study.

It revealed that most informal workers earn modest incomes, with more than 70 percent making less than Tk 20,000 per month, while household expenditures generally range between Tk 10,000 and 19,000, leaving little room for savings.

As a result, 69 percent save Tk 1,000 or less per month, showing low financial resilience and vulnerability to economic shocks, alongside the urgent need for targeted social protection and financial inclusion.

Awareness and participation in skill programmes are also poor, with only 19.3 percent aware of such opportunities and 1.6 percent having participated, although 44.7 percent expressed interest in training.

Access to finance relies mostly on informal sources such as local associations (40.4 percent) and individuals (27 percent), while formal institutions play a minor role. Workers identified financial grants (49.5 percent), low-interest loans (30.7 percent) and skill development (11.6 percent) as key requirements for business growth.

The study also showed

limited awareness of social protection schemes, with 87 percent of respondents unaware of the Universal Pension Scheme, highlighting the need for information campaigns and capacity-building.

It recommended recognising informal workers in labour laws, ratifying key ILO conventions and updating policies to address gender, age, disability and migration. It also called for better institutional coordination through a permanent Labour Commission, labour market mapping and a digital labour registry.

Other recommendations included strengthening worker representation, supporting unionisation and ensuring participation in policymaking.

At the event, Parul, an informal sector worker from Rajshahi, shared her struggles. She said she survived by selling snacks near schools, going around villages with turmeric, chilli and dried fish, helping patients in hospitals, and even doing welding work.

She said if she had been included in any social welfare programme, she could have lived her later years with greater security and dignity.

The consultation was chaired by Umme Hasan Jhalmal, vice president of Karmojibi Nari and joint coordinator of Nari Shramik Kantha.

Special guests included Dr Felix Gerdes, resident representative of FES Bangladesh, and Dr Mohammed Hossain

Sarkar, joint secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Mustafiz Ahmed, associate professor at the Department of Social Work at Jagannath University; Rajekuzzaman Ratan, president of the Samajtantrik Shramik Front; and Ruman Ishtiaq, national project coordinator (formalisation project) of the ILO, also spoke, among others.

Sanjida Sultana, additional executive director of Karmojibi Nari, moderated the event.

Committee

FROM PAGE 3

from the police (not below the rank of DIG), a family member of a martyr nominated by the July Martyrs Memorial Foundation, a lawyer, and a human rights activist nominated by the Ministry of Law. The deputy solicitor of the GP-PP branch of the ministry will serve as member secretary.

App launched

FROM PAGE 3

"No fairs of any kind will be allowed. However, the committee may permit one or two small shops," he added.

A specific deadline has been set for the immersion of idols. "We must finish the immersion before 7:00pm. We have given the same instruction to everyone," Jahangir Alam said.

He also noted that no party has expressed any security concern regarding this year's puja.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Accelerating and Strengthening Skills for Economic Transformation (ASSET) Project
Directorate of Technical Education
Plot-F-4/B, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.asset-dte.gov.bd

Memo No. 57.03.0000.000.07.132.23-3119 Date: 08 September, 2025

Corrigendum of Request for Expressions of Interest
(Ref: Package No. S88)

Assignment Title	Last Date of Submission (Original)	Last Date of Submission (Updated)
Selection of consulting firm for Fiduciary Review of the ASSET Project (Time based)	September 18, 2025; 14:00 hours (GMT+06:00)	September 25, 2025; 14:00 hours (GMT+06:00)

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours i.e. 09:00 to 17:00 hours (GMT+06:00).

Mir Zahid Hasan
Project Director (Additional Secretary)
ASSET Project
Telephone: 880-02-41024953
E-mail: pd@asset-dte.gov.bd

GD-1964

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
প্রিন্সিপালের কার্যালয়
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী

স্মারক নং-বিপিএ/প্রশাসন/৫৪৪২ তারিখঃ ০৭/০৯/২০২৫খ্রিঃ

উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থ সালে বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহীর ২য় কোয়ার্টারের রেশন সামগ্রী ও অল্পাধিকারের রেশন সামগ্রী ক্রয়/সরবরাহের নিমিত্তে ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে শর্ত সাপেক্ষে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ-

ক্র.সং	সামগ্রী/বিভাগ	স্বল্পে মরাদ্দ/বিভাগ
১.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
২.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
৩.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
৪.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
৫.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
৬.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
৭.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
৮.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
৯.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
১০.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
১১.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
১২.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
১৩.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী
১৪.	সহকারী	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহী

পরিশিষ্ট-ক

ক্র.সং	সামগ্রীর বিবরণ	প্যাকেজ নম্বর	দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্য	টেন্ডার শিডিউলিং মাস
১	মসুর ডাল (সরবরাহকৃত নমুনা মোতাবেক উন্নতমানের) (৫.৫ কেজি, ৪.০০ কেজি এবং ৩.৫ কেজির উন্নতমানের স্বল্পে পরিপাক্যে প্যাকেটজাত করে প্যাকেটের গায়ে পদের ওজন, উৎপাদনের তারিখ ও মেসাদ উত্তীর্ণের তারিখ উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে)।	১	১,০০০/-	৯৮,০০০/-
২	সয়াবিন তেল উন্নতমানের (০.৫০০ লিটার এবং ০.২ লিটার কানে "সঠিক পুষ্টি সুস্থ জীবন" উল্লেখিত ভিটামিন "এ" সমৃদ্ধ সয়াবিন তেল) বিএসটিআই কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত।	২	১,০০০/-	১,৩৮,০০০/-
৩	গম পেসাই প্যাকেটজাত মোট আন্দোলিত (০৪ কেজি এবং ০৫ কেজির উন্নতমানের স্বল্পে পরিপাক্যে প্যাকেটজাত করে প্যাকেটের গায়ে পদের ওজন, উৎপাদনের তারিখ, মেসাদ উত্তীর্ণের তারিখ উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে)।	৩	১,০০০/-	২৭,০০০/-
৪	জ্বালানী কাঠ (আম/মেহনাদি) শুকনো ও কুড়ালে চেরাই করা	৪	১,০০০/-	৫,০০০/-
৫	রেশন সামগ্রী পরিবহন কাজ	৫	১,০০০/-	৫,০০০/-
৬	কুচি খরচ উঠানো ও নামানো	৬	১,০০০/-	৫,০০০/-
৭	পোশাক ও চাল (উন্নতমানের প্যাকেটজাত-চাটী/এসিআই/সমনাম)	৭	১,০০০/-	৩৫,০০০/-
৮	ছোলা (উন্নতমানের) (ভাসানো ও পরিবহন চার্জ সহ)	৮	১,০০০/-	২৩,০০০/-
৯	পদের কুচি (উন্নতমানের)	৯	১,০০০/-	১৫,০০০/-
১০	ঘর (উন্নতমানের) হলার করা	১০	১,০০০/-	৯,০০০/-
১১	বিচালী (উন্নতমানের)	১১	১,০০০/-	৮,৫০০/-
১২	সয়াবিন মিল (উন্নতমানের)	১২	১,০০০/-	১২,৫০০/-
১৩	বিবিধ যন্ত্রালা (অস্বাভাব্য)	১৩	১,০০০/-	৫,০০০/-

পরিশিষ্ট-খ

ক্র.সং	সামগ্রীর বিবরণ	প্যাকেজ নম্বর	দরপত্র শিডিউলের মূল্য
১	২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থ সালে বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহীর বিবিধ আসবাবপত্র সরবরাহ কাজ	১	৪,০০০/-
২	২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থ সালে বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী, সারদা, রাজশাহীর বিবিধ আসবাবপত্র সরবরাহ কাজ	২	৫,৫০,০০০/-

বিশেষ শর্তাবলী :

- অনিবার্য কারণবশত নির্ধারিত দিনে বা সময়ে দরপত্র দাখিল/গ্রহণ বা খোলা সম্ভব না হলে দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক দরপত্র দাখিলের ও খোলার/গ্রহণের পূর্বনির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময় বিলম্বের মাধ্যমে সশ্রুতি সকলকে অবহিত করা হবে। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখে যদি কোন কারণে অফিস বন্ধ থাকে তা হলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে যথাসময়ে দরপত্র খোলা হবে।
- দরপত্রে উল্লিখিত যে কোন আইটেমের পরিমাণ বৃদ্ধি অথবা কমানোর বিষয়ে কর্তৃপক্ষ পূর্ণ ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।
- দরপত্র শিডিউল জয়ের সময় প্রিন্সিপাল, বিপিএ সারদা, রাজশাহী বরাবরে নিজস্ব প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্যাকেট আবেদনের মাধ্যমে দরপত্র শিডিউল ক্রয় করতে হবে।
- দরপত্র শিডিউল/২০০৬ ও পিপিআর/২০০৮ এবং (STD) মোতাবেক সকল শর্তাবলী কার্যকর হবে।
- কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতীতই কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ কিংবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার পূর্ণ ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

স্বাক্ষর
০৭.০৯.২৫
(মোহাম্মদ সাইফুল ইসলাম, বিপিএম, পিপিএম (বার)
বিপি নং-৭৭০৬১১৭৫৪১
পুলিশ সুপার (ফিন্যান্স এন্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট)
পক্ষে-প্রিন্সিপাল
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ একাডেমী
সারদা, রাজশাহী।

GD-1959

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি
POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212 Web: www.powergrid.gov.bd
স্মারক নং- ২৭.২১.০০০০.৪৪৮.০৭.০০১.২৫.৭৬১ তারিখঃ ০৮/০৯/২০২৫ খ্রিঃ

e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, কালিয়াকৈর দপ্তরের আওতাধীন নিম্নলিখিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

ID	Title of Works
1145662	Construction of 2 (two) new 1DL+4.5M (Wide Base) With 2MRC Type Transmission line Towers replacing Towers No. 69, 70 and 71 of Kaliakair-Tangail 132 kV transmission line and Reconductoring work of 132 kV Lilo transmission line at Mirzapur 132 kV GIS Grid under GMD Kaliakair Power Grid.
1145433	Reconstruction and elevation of the risky portion of the boundary wall due to sand filling for the construction of a new GIS Sub-Station in the residential area east of the control room of Kabirpur 132/33 KV Grid Sub-Station under GMD Kaliakair, Power Grid.

আগ্রহী ঠিকাদারী প্রতিষ্ঠানকে www.eprocure.gov.bd সাইটের মাধ্যমে দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

মোহাম্মদ হাসানুল ইসলাম
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, জিএমডি, কালিয়াকৈর

বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়
নারসিংদী পানি উন্নয়ন বিভাগ
বাগাটোবা, নারসিংদী।
দুরসাপনীঃ ০২২৪৪৫৩৪৭
ই-মেইল: xen.narsingdi@bwdb.gov.bd
xen.narsingdi@bwdb.gov.bd

Office of the Executive Engineer
Narsingdi WD Division
BWDB, Narsingdi.
Phone: 0224453547
E-mail: xen.narsingdi@bwdb.gov.bd
xen.narsingdi@bwdb.gov.bd

BANGLADESH WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Memo No: CCTF-2/282/1213 Date: 08/09/2025

e-Tender Notice

One (1) e-tender notice has been published in the national e-GP Portal for the procurement of the following package:

Tender ID	Description
1149826	Re-Excavation of Haridooa River from Sakurghat Bridge to Kathbagan Bridge (from km. 9.110 to km. 9.860 = 0.750 km.) & Removing water hyacinth at Haridooa River from km 20.000 to km. 40.500, total 20.500 km to combat the Impact of Climate Change, Upazilla-Narsingdi Sadar, District- Narsingdi under CCTF Project.

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. For more details contact e-GP help desk.

পানি-১৯১/২০২৫-২০২৬
৪"X ৩

স্বাক্ষর
০৮/০৯/২০২৫
(M. Nazmul Islam)
Executive Engineer
Narsingdi WD Division
BWDB, Narsingdi.

GD-1963

SPORT

NEW-LOOK SIDES, SAME OLD RIVALRY



NABID YEASIN

When India and Pakistan meet -- in any sport -- the stakes spill over into something more than just a game. It becomes a clash between neighbours bound by political tension, history, and

(ACC) has ensured that the Asia Cup maximises India-Pakistan encounters. Placed together in Group A alongside UAE and Oman, the two sides are likely to meet multiple times -- potentially thrice if they reach the final. It is another effort to give fans what they crave most: the

For India, the tournament signals the beginning of the post-Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli era. With seven changes from the 2024 T20 World Cup-winning squad, the Asia Cup doubles as a springboard for their 2026 T20 title defence.

Attention centres on the top order.

averaged 55.80 at a strike rate of 219.69 in 2025, while Samson became the first to hit three T20I centuries in a calendar year in 2024 -- yet their highest stand together was just 73. Gill's return forces a selection dilemma, compounded by Yashasvi Jaiswal's omission, which drew a lot of criticism.

India's middle order is stacked with options: Suryakumar, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Rinku Singh, Shivam Dube, and Jitesh Sharma. Meaning, balancing batting depth with bowling utility will be key.

Jasprit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh are certainties in the pace attack, leaving the spin combination -- likely between Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakravarty -- to be settled.

Pakistan, meanwhile, are still seeking stability. Since their group stage exit at the 2024 T20 World Cup, they have won only 12 of 26 games, beating Zimbabwe, Bangladesh (at home), and West Indies, but losing to stronger opponents such as Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and once away to Bangladesh.

Their preparation, however, has been stronger than India's. Pakistan reached the final of a tri-series with UAE and Afghanistan just before the Asia Cup, while India played only five T20Is against England earlier in the year.

Their batting, however, remains fragile. Even though the omission of Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan -- criticised for low strike rates and

struggles against spin -- was expected, it left an untested middle order. Captain Salman's 124.53 strike rate this year reflects their conservative starts, while Hussain Talat and Khushdil Shah have underwhelming strike rates and averages.

There are, however, bright spots. Saim Ayub, despite inconsistency, is their top scorer since the 2024 World Cup. Sahibzada Farhan has been prolific in 2025, with four T20I centuries and three POTM awards in 10 games. Hasan Nawaz, meanwhile, has emerged as a key middle-order hitter. In 14 T20Is, he showed adaptability by batting in five positions, with a career strike rate of 175.64 that reflects his clean hitting and ability to clear the ropes.

Pakistan could hope for something from their spin department in UAE conditions. Abrar Ahmed and Sufiyan Muqeem form a mystery-spin duo, supported by all-rounder Mohammad Nawaz, even if his record against India remains uninspiring. The trio have combined for 53 wickets in 26 matches since the last World Cup.

For all their contrasts, both teams share a sense of renewal -- India refining a champion side, Pakistan still seemingly piecing theirs together.

Remarkably, India and Pakistan have never met in an Asia Cup final, despite repeated scheduling manoeuvres designed to create such a showdown. This time, with their revamped squads, could it finally happen?



deep mistrust.

That will be the case again in the Asia Cup 2025, when Suryakumar Yadav's India, the defending champions, take on Salman Ali Agha's Pakistan on September 14 at the Dubai International Stadium.

Once again, the Asian Cricket Council

high-voltage spectacle of the two sides colliding, even if bilateral cricket between the two sides remains suspended since the 2009 Mumbai attacks.

From a cricketer's lens, both squads have one similarity as they arrive with fresh faces.

Vice-captain Shubman Gill returns after a prolific IPL campaign, having earlier partnered with Abhishek Sharma in all five T20Is on the Zimbabwe tour. But in the past year, Abhishek and Sanju Samson opened in 12 straight T20Is. Both excelled individually -- Abhishek

Varying stakes as captains embark on maiden voyage

ASHFAQ-UL-ALAM

The weight of captaincy in any sport compounds exponentially under the bright lights of a major tournament. On top of that, if the captain has not experienced the pressure of leading in that event before, it should put them at an even bigger disadvantage.

But this logical conclusion doesn't hold water in the Men's Asia Cup, as in nine out of its 16 editions so far, a captain leading for the first time in the competition has lifted the trophy.

Sunil Gavaskar, Dilip Vengsarkar, Mohammad Azharuddin, Marvan Atapattu, Mahela Jayawardene, Misbah-ul-Haq, Angelo Mathews, Rohit Sharma and Dasun Shanaka are captains who have triumphed on their first attempt in the past.

And while there is no way to predict which skipper will triumph in the 17th edition, set to begin in the UAE on September 9, another name is sure to

different.

Aiming for new heights
After 2016 and 2022, Asia Cup is set to be held in the T20 format for the third time.

Bangladesh had competed in both previous instances, and in 2016 had even reached the final. But in both editions, Litton Das, the current captain of the Tigers, was absent from the squad.

The 30-year-old is coming into the tournament with runs in his kitty, having made 145 runs in the three-match T20I series against the Netherlands this month. His team is also enjoying a successful streak with three consecutive T20I series wins against Sri Lanka (2-1), Pakistan (2-1) and the Netherlands (2-0).

captaincy in just his third T20I, is leading a Pakistan side that is trying to adopt a bold new style.

His time at the hot seat has been challenging, with series defeats to New Zealand and Bangladesh away, but there were also glimmers of hope in series wins against Bangladesh at home and West Indies in the Caribbean islands.

However, Salman's career strike rate of just 118.32 is already drawing criticism as it goes against the presumed direction head coach Mike Hesson is trying to take the team.

Another captain whose form has been questionable heading into the tournament is Sri Lanka's Charith Asalanka -- who has failed to get into the double-figure mark in six out of his last 10 innings.

He leads a team with several T20 stars and will aim to uphold their reputation of always turning up in big events by bringing home their seventh



get added to this list, as in this year's Asia Cup, all eight captains are first-timers.

Different stakes

For the first time in the competition's history, eight teams -- Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Hong Kong, Oman and the UAE -- are competing in a single edition.

Captains of the respective sides will come into the event with certain goals -- some personal and others collective.

For skippers of Associate sides -- Yasim Murtaza (Hong Kong), Jatinder Singh (Oman), and Muhammad Waseem (UAE) -- causing an upset or two would constitute a successful campaign and qualifying for Super Four would be historic.

But for the men leading the five full-member teams, the stakes would be

For Litton, the ultimate goal would be to take three-time runners-up Bangladesh one step further and, on a personal note, prove his quality on the global stage.

But first, the right-hander would want to survive the perilous Group B, which, alongside Sri Lanka and Hong Kong, includes the dangerous Afghanistan led by Rashid Khan.

Just last year, the maverick wrist-spinner led the Afghans to the semifinals of the ICC T20 World Cup for the first time.

The familiarity of the conditions in the UAE will further aid Rashid and his teammates, who will dare to dream of the main prize this time.

Rebuild and redemption

Salman Ali Agha, who was handed the

Asia Cup title.

The weight of the crown

India captain Suryakumar Yadav is leading the strongest squad in the tournament, who are the odds-on favourites to retain the title.

Although India's nonchalant buildup to the event -- not playing any T20Is in the lead-up -- indicates that the Asia Cup is more of a preparatory tournament for them ahead of next year's ICC T20 World Cup, it would be foolish to assume there are no stakes involved for Surya.

With Test captain Shubman Gill being touted as a future all-format skipper for India, the pressure will be on him to deliver India's ninth Asia Cup trophy or risk losing his chance to lead the national side in next year's ICC T20 World Cup.

ASIA CUP FIXTURES

GROUP A

India, Oman, Pakistan, UAE

GROUP B

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Sri Lanka

	DATE	MATCH	TIME (BST)	VENUE
GROUP STAGE	9 September	Afghanistan-Hong Kong	8:30 pm	Abu Dhabi
	10 September	India-UAE	8:30 pm	Dubai
	11 September	Bangladesh-Hong Kong	8:30 pm	Abu Dhabi
	12 September	Pakistan-Oman	8:30 pm	Dubai
	13 September	Bangladesh-Sri Lanka	8:30 pm	Abu Dhabi
	14 September	India-Pakistan	8:30 pm	Dubai
	15 September	UAE-Oman	6:00 pm	Abu Dhabi
	15 September	Sri Lanka-Hong Kong	8:30 pm	Dubai
	16 September	Bangladesh-Afghanistan	8:30 pm	Abu Dhabi
SUPER FOUR	17 September	Pakistan-UAE	8:30 pm	Dubai
	18 September	Afghanistan-Sri Lanka	8:30 pm	Abu Dhabi
	19 September	India-Oman	8:30 pm	Abu Dhabi
	20 September	B1-B2	8:30 pm	Dubai
	21 September	A1-A2	8:30 pm	Dubai
	23 September	A2-B1	8:30 pm	Abu Dhabi
	24 September	A1-B2	8:30 pm	Dubai
	25 September	A2-B2	8:30 pm	Dubai
	26 September	A1-B1	8:30 pm	Dubai

FINAL

28 September | Super Four1-Super Four2 | 8:30 pm | Dubai

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Even though India are the official hosts of the 17th Asia Cup, the competition will take place in the UAE. Due to geo-political tensions between India and Pakistan, the two teams don't play in each other's countries.

The Asia Cup was originally played in the ODI format, but over the past decade it has alternated between ODIs and T20Is, depending on the format of the upcoming World Cup.

For the first time in its history, the Asia Cup will feature eight teams. Oman will make their maiden appearance at the Asia Cup, while Nepal -- despite their impressive progress in recent years -- will miss out.



Protect people fleeing conflict in Myanmar

Urges UN rights chief

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk has urged all member states to create safe and dignified pathways for refugee protection and resettlement, particularly for the Rohingyas.

He made the call at the Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on Myanmar during the 60th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva yesterday.



"I once again urge all governments to do everything possible to protect people fleeing the conflict in Myanmar, including by search and rescue operations at sea, and to refrain from refoulements, including pushbacks," he said.

The UN is going to hold a high-level conference on the situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar on September 30 in New York to highlight the crisis.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Relatives mourn beside the bodies of Layan, 2, and Iman Salem, 5, who were killed in an Israeli strike on their displacement tent in the Al-Nasr neighbourhood, at Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

'Gaza is a graveyard'

Says UN rights chief, denounces Israeli 'genocidal rhetoric'

AGENCIES

The United Nations rights chief yesterday voiced alarm at the overt "genocidal rhetoric" by Israeli officials about Gaza and called for decisive international action to "end the carnage".

He said the occupied Palestinian territory was already "a graveyard".

In his opening address to the UN Human Rights Council's 60th session, Volker Turk slammed "Israel's mass killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza (and) its infliction of indescribable suffering and wholesale destruction".

Meanwhile, Israeli attacks across Gaza since dawn yesterday killed at least 40 people and destroyed another high-rise in Gaza City.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) bombed a 12-floor block in the middle of Gaza City where dozens of displaced families had been housed, three hours after urging those inside and in hundreds of tents in the surrounding area to leave.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

Total literacy elusive after Tk 4,000cr spent

WASIM BIN HABIB and ARAEAT RAHAMAN

Nearly one in five Bangladeshis aged seven and above remains illiterate, despite Tk 4,000 crore being spent on literacy programmes over the past 34 years.

The literacy rate among people aged seven and older is now 77.9 percent as per the Bangladesh Economic Survey 2024, said Bidhan Ranjan Roy Podder, the primary education adviser.

The actual rate could be even lower as the previous governments often tried to suppress information, he told reporters on Sunday.

Against the backdrop, Bangladesh yesterday joined the global observance of International Literacy Day.

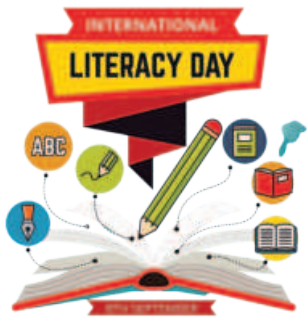
Declared by UNESCO in 1965, this year's theme is "Promoting literacy in the digital era".

In Bangladesh, literacy is most commonly defined as the ability to read and write.

But the UNESCO broadened the definition beyond the conventional concept of reading, writing and counting skills. It encompasses the ability to identify, interpret, create and communicate in an increasingly digital, text-driven, information-rich and fast-changing world.

Literacy is attained through formal education and adult literacy programmes, but in Bangladesh, the focus has largely remained on the former, with the latter receiving less attention.

Since 1991, successive governments have undertaken multiple efforts to eradicate illiteracy, with the Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE) implementing at least nine projects ranging from basic and post-literacy to non-formal education schemes.



SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Ex-secy Abu Alam Shahid Khan arrested

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent former secretary Abu Alam



Md Shahid Khan to jail in an anti-terrorism case.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Saifuzzaman passed the order after police produced him before the court, said a sub-inspector working in the court.

According to defence lawyer Obydul Islam, detectives arrested the former secretary in the Eskaton area early yesterday, even though his name was not included in the FIR.

Earlier, 16 people, including former minister and expelled Awami League leader Abdul Latif Siddique, Dhaka University law professor Sheikh Hafizur Rahman, journalist Monjurul Alam Panna, and freedom fighter Golam Mostafa, were arrested in the case.

On August 29, police filed the case with Shahbagh Police Station against the arrestees, accusing them of inciting terrorism through a speech delivered under the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Courts grapple with shortage of judges

Bangladesh lags behind most South Asian countries in terms of judge-to-population ratio

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

With one judge for every 78,023 people, the Supreme Court and lower courts have been grappling with a growing backlog of cases, delaying legal remedies for thousands of justice seekers.

Bangladesh currently has one of the lowest judge-to-population ratios in South Asia -- 2,307 judges for 18 crore people.

In India, there is one judge for every 68,775 citizens, while Pakistan has one judge for every 81,417, according to Law Lab, which conducts research on legal, constitutional, and human rights issues.

Nepal has one judge for every 63,000 citizens, and Sri Lanka one for every 55,000.

The Maldives has the highest ratio with one judge for every 4,977 people, followed by Bhutan with one judge for 13,278. Afghanistan ranks lowest, with one judge for every 592,361 people, shows Law Lab data.

Overall, most South Asian nations lag far behind developed countries. For example, the USA has one judge for every 6,667 people and the UK one judge for every 13,140.

In Bangladesh, the shortage of judges has resulted in a backlog of 46.52 lakh cases, causing frustration among litigants and lawyers.

According to a SC report, each judge is now burdened with an average of 2,016 cases.

The Appellate Division has only seven judges, who are dealing with a total of 37,000 cases.

Recently, 25 judges were appointed to the High Court Division of the SC, raising the number of HC judges to 113.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



JUDGE-TO-POPULATION RATIO

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF JUDGES	POPULATION (approximately)
Maldives	200	5.15 lakh
Bhutan	60	7.97 lakh
Sri Lanka	416	2.32cr
Nepal	468	2.96cr
India	21,285	146.86cr
Bangladesh	2,281	18cr
Pakistan	3,142	25.58cr
Afghanistan	72	4.26cr
USA	52,132	34.8cr
UK	5,298	6.96cr

Man hands over son to police over Rajbari attack

Says he identified son from a video of grave desecration

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

The father of a suspect in the attack on a darbar sharif at Goalanda upazila in Rajbari has claimed to have handed his son over to police.

The suspect, Apu Kazi, 25, was among seven arrested on Saturday night and sent to jail on Sunday, police said.

Yesterday, his father Arif Kazi said Apu had given a confessional statement to the court under section 164 of the code of criminal procedure.

The attack on Friday afternoon followed protests over controversies surrounding the tomb of a man named Nurul Haque, locally known as "Nurul Pagla". Videos of the assailants exhuming the body and burning it on a highway went viral on social media.

Speaking to this correspondent, Arif said, "I myself identified my son in a video that showed several people exhuming the body from the grave."

"Since he was among them, I handed him over to the police. He must face punishment for what he has done."

Meanwhile, police yesterday said they have arrested seven more suspects, taking the number of arrestees to 14.

Besides Apu, another arrestee

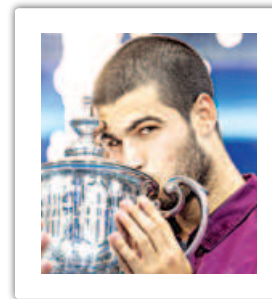
SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



The Bhologanj Sada Pathor tourist spot in Sylhet's Companiganj upazila has regained its natural charm, as white stones earlier looted were recovered by different organisations and reinstalled, restoring the site's scenic beauty.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Career Slam now Alcaraz's 'first goal'



AFP, New York

Carlos Alcaraz says winning next year's Australian Open to seal a career Grand Slam is his main objective after securing a sixth major title in New York on Sunday.

Alcaraz beat chief rival Jannik Sinner 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 to claim his second US Open crown and would become the youngest man to win all four majors if he lifts the trophy in Melbourne next January.

"It's my first goal,

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

IN MEMORIAM

As Numair walked through the dusty streets of his motherland after 10 years away for post-graduate studies, he reflected:
"I am delighted to be back. It has been thrilling for me to see so many old faces again... It has been surreal to wake up to morning prayers, to hear again birds calling from my childhood, and to find old trees, roads, and homes, vanished... I have been returned from the vacuum of my former life, and Bangladeshi air has rushed in."

Dr. Numair Atif Choudhury

Director, BIT
(Date of Death: September 9, 2018)

MAY ALLAH GRANT HIM ETERNAL REST

MS. ANIKA RAHMAN, Sister (Managing Director & CEO, BIT)
MS. TALITA CHOUDHURY, Sister (Board Director, BIT)
LATE MS. LUBNA CHOUDHURY, Mother (Founder Principal, BIT)

