



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Participants at a discussion titled "Women in Energy: Inspiring Change" during the Women and Energy Carnival 2025, organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation under its Women's Empowerment and Energy Project, at the Liberation War Museum in Agargaon, Dhaka yesterday.

ENERGY SECTOR Women remain largely under-represented

Experts tell Women and Energy Carnival 2025, call for inclusive, gender-responsive energy transition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women make up only 10 percent of Bangladesh's energy workforce, far below the global average of 32 percent.

In public utilities within the power sector, just 6 percent of staff are women, while only 16 percent of officers in the Power Division are female.

The gap is even wider in engineering roles – only 6 percent (304 of 5,006) are women, mostly in junior posts. Just 45 serve as executive or senior engineers, mainly within the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB).

Against this backdrop, speakers at an event yesterday stressed the need to recognise women as key stakeholders in Bangladesh's renewable energy transition.

They urged the government and policymakers to ensure women's equal participation in decision-making, policy processes, and leadership positions in the energy sector.

The discussion took place at the Women and Energy Carnival 2025, organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) under

AT A GLANCE

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- Only 45 women serve as executive or senior engineers (mainly in BPDB)

its Women's Empowerment and Energy (WEE) Project, at the Liberation War Museum in Agargaon, Dhaka.

Delivering the keynote address, Banasree Mitra Neogi, director of Rights and Governance Programmes at MJF, said, "It is crucial to see whether everyone's participation in inclusive energy is being ensured. Equitable fairness is required."

She noted that many areas of the country, such as hilly regions, still

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Shibir sweeps DU male hall union polls under 'independent' banner

BGCS leads female halls

MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

Although nearly all of the top positions in Dhaka University's 18 hall unions were won by independent candidates, most of them are affiliated with either Islami Chhatra Shibir or Bangladesh Ganatantrik Chhatra Sangsad (BGCS).

Shibir dominated the male dormitories, while BGCS led in the female hall unions.

The Daily Star found that of the 36 top posts of vice presidents (VP) and general secretaries (GS) in the hall unions, 20 are affiliated with Shibir and 10 with BGCS.

Interestingly, 21 of them were involved with the "disciplinary committees" or "reform committees" that were unofficially formed in the halls after the July 2024 uprising.

One has affiliation with Chhatra Odhikar Parishad – Salimullah Muslim (SM) Hall's GS-elect Sadman Abdullah.

Most organisations, except Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, did not field panels in the hall unions.

Only Jagannath Hall's VP-elect, Pallab Chandra Barman, won from the JCD panel. The GS-elect there, Sudepto Pramanik, won as an independent.

Including Sudepto, only four were identified as "true independents". The other three are from female hall unions, or their affiliations could not be

confirmed by this newspaper.

Except for Jagannath Hall union, all other male dormitories elected Shibir men as either VP or GS. Out of 13 male dorms, 12 hall unions elected Shibir men as their leaders.

In eight of these halls, both VP and GS posts went to candidates affiliated with Shibir.

The eight dormitories are – Surja Sen Hall, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall, Kabi Jasimuddin Hall, Bijoy Ekattor Hall, Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall, Fazlul Huq Muslim Hall, Amar Ekushey Hall, and Dr Muhammad Shahidullah Hall.

In addition, Muktijoddha Ziaur Rahman Hall's GS-elect Asif Imam, Sir AF Rahman Hall's VP-elect Rafiqul Islam, SM Hall's VP-elect Zayedul Haque, and Shahid Sergeant Zahurul Huq Hall's VP-elect Ahsan Habib Imroze are also affiliated with Shibir.

In these male dormitories, except for the SM Hall union, the three remaining top posts went to candidates affiliated with BGCS.

Among the five female dormitories, BGCS activists secured the top six posts in three halls – Kabi Sufia Kamal Hall, Shamsun Nahar Hall, and Bangladesh Kuwait Maitree Hall.

In addition, Ruzayyah Hall's GS-elect Sinthia Mehrin Sokal is affiliated with BGCS. The VP-elect of this hall, Fatematul Jannat Ima, along with Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall's VP-elect Tasnim

Akter Alif Nabila and GS-elect Nishita Jaman Niha, have no known organisational affiliation.

INVOLVEMENT WITH DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES

Following the July uprising, Shibir and BGCS took control of the unofficial "disciplinary committees" or "reform committees" in halls, posing as general students, according to

When Chhatra Dal announced its hall committees on August 9, students protested, saying they did not want student politics in the dormitories.

However, it appeared that other parties also had candidates in the halls but did not announce them. Chhatra Dal earlier raised concerns over this issue, saying this breached the level playing field.

Although the "disciplinary committees" were declared dissolved in March this year, provosts from different halls flagged the issue in an August 25 meeting with the Ducsu election commission, saying the committees were still active in some places.

These committees were initially formed with representatives from each batch of residential students of respective halls in the absence of regular administration. Later, after new appointments of hall administrations, the authorities endorsed the committees.

But following questions from different stakeholders, the Provost Standing Committee in two separate meetings – one in March and another in August – decided to dissolve the committees.

Still, during the August 25 meeting with the Ducsu Election Commission, some provosts reported that certain hall authorities had yet to dissolve

them.

The committee members were engaged in driving out Chhatra League activists and students involved in "partisan politics" from the halls.

They also carried out administrative duties such as recommending students for or against seat allocations.

Kawser Hamid, a GS candidate for Sir AF Rahman Hall Union from the JCD panel, alleged that the hall administration deliberately delayed his seat allocation because of his political affiliation. His residency was approved only three months before the elections, which he said undermined a level playing field.

"Despite the promises from the Sringskhala Committee members of our hall that they would not run for the elections, they are now vying for the top positions," said Kawser before the polls took place.

Sheikh Md Imrun Hossen, who resigned from such a committee in Ziaur Rahman Hall, wrote in a Facebook post on May 14 that most committee members belonged to a specific political organisation.

"It is irrational to represent students in the name of general students," he also wrote.

The committees also tried to win residential students' trust by offering personal assistance and taking initiatives such as

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ASSESSING HUMAN RIGHTS EU parliament team to visit September 16-18

STAR REPORT

A delegation of European Parliament members will be visiting Bangladesh from September 16 to 18 to assess the reforms and human rights.

The five-member delegation include Mounir Satouri (Greens/EFA, FR), Human Rights Subcommittee Chair; Isabel Wiseler-Lima (EPP, Luxembourg); Arkadiusz Mularczyk (ECR, PL); Urmaz Paet (Renew Europe, Estonia) and Catarina Vieira (The Greens/EFA, The Netherlands), according to a statement of the EU mission in Dhaka.

The delegation members will meet with the representatives of the interim government

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Pakistan PM calls for stronger bilateral ties Meets Bangladesh religious affairs adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has stressed the need to deepen ties with Bangladesh, saying relations between the two countries should continue to strengthen.

He made the remarks when Bangladesh's Adviser on Religious Affairs AFM Khalid Hossain, who is visiting Pakistan, called on him at his office in Islamabad yesterday, according to a statement of the Pakistan Prime Minister's Office.

Khalid was accompanied by Bangladesh High Commissioner to Pakistan Iqbal Hussain Khan.

Welcoming the delegation, Sharif expressed

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Govt waives 7.5% VAT on large ocean-going vessel imports

UNB, Dhaka

The government has decided to waive the 7.5 percent VAT on imports of ocean-going vessels over 5,000 deadweight tonnage (DWT) in a bid to boost foreign exchange earnings and create more job opportunities.

The Advisory Council took the decision at its weekly meeting held at the Chief Adviser's Office with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in the chair.

The council believes that exemption will encourage vessel procurement in both the public and private sectors, expand opportunities for foreign exchange earnings and generate new jobs, said Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam while briefing reporters at the Foreign Service Academy.

"This is not just a measure for business convenience, but also a significant step toward strengthening Bangladesh's capacity in international trade," Alam said.

The meeting also discussed Bangladesh's firm stance on the Palestine issue.

"We have always maintained a clear position on the Palestinian cause," Alam said, adding that Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain will present Bangladesh's position at the upcoming UN High-Level International Conference on the Peaceful Settlement of the Question of Palestine in New York.

The adviser will also attend the OIC Emergency Meeting in Doha on September 15, said Alam.

Progress made by the Reform Commissions was one of the issues that came up for discussion.

Alam said 51 recommendations have already been implemented, while 37 are partially implemented and the remaining ones are under progress.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Local children revel in yesterday's sudden rain, joyfully playing on a footpath in Agargaon, Dhaka, as a welcome relief from the heat.

8 additional DIGs, 6 SPs transferred

BSS, Dhaka

The government has transferred eight additional deputy inspectors general and six superintendents of police including two joint commissioners of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), the home ministry said yesterday.

The ministry issued a circular on the transfers and under the order DMP joint commissioners Sultana Nazma Hossain and Md Saleh Uddin were posted as tourist police chief and to Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) with the rank of additional DIG.

Additional commissioner of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) Md Humaiun Kabir has been posted to Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) as additional DIG.

Additional DIG of Chattogram police range Mohammad Riazul Haque has been posted at police telecom unit with the same rank.

PBI's supernumerary additional DIG Mohammad Anwarul Haque has been posted at police's Sylhet range and Barishal Metropolitan Police's (BMP) additional commissioner Khandkar Md Shamim Hossain was attached to police's Rajshahi range as additional DIG.

Supernumerary additional DIG Md Humaiun Kabir of PBI's Barishal office was posted at police's Barishal range.

Additional DIG Asma Siddiqia Mili,

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