

EC launches voter reg for expatriates in Canada

BSS, Dhaka

The Election Commission (EC) has launched voter registration and smart National Identity (NID) card services for Bangladeshi expatriates in Canada.

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin inaugurated the services on Thursday at the Bangladesh High Commission in Ottawa, where he handed over smart NID cards to several registered expatriate Bangladeshis, officially launching the initiative, according to a message received yesterday.

The CEC said expatriate Bangladeshis, who contribute significantly through remittances, investment, and knowledge transfer, must also have a direct say in shaping the country's future.

The CEC also held a Q&A session with members of the Bangladeshi community who attended the event.

Bangladeshis living in Canada can now avail voter registration and NID services at the High Commission in Ottawa and the Consulate General in Toronto. Officials said the initiative reflects the government's commitment to safeguard the democratic rights of nearly 10 million citizens abroad, ensuring their voices are represented alongside their contributions to national development.



Excavation work by Dhaka North City Corporation has left a 2.5km stretch from Kawlabazar to Dakkhin Khan Bazar in poor condition for the past two years. More recently, work began on another section from Sheyalbari Road to Kawlabazar about four months ago, further disrupting movement.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Woman's body found in sack in Kadamtali

STAR REPORT

Police recovered the body of a woman from Kadamtali's Muradpur area in Dhaka yesterday morning.

The deceased was identified as Rekhsana Begum, 42, of Sutabaria village in Patuakhali's Galachipa, said Kamrun Nahar, a sub-inspector of Kadamtali Police Station.

The body was found near a shop on Haji Lal Mia Sardar Road around 9:15am, the SI added.

"After being informed through 999, we recovered the body that was in a sack. The face was partially decomposed, but there were no visible injury marks on the body," she said.

The body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy. Family members have been informed, and further details will be known once they arrive, she added.

A ROAD TO MISERY

Commuters bear brunt of stalled drainage project in Kawla

HELEMUL ALAM

On Monday afternoon, Tanveer Ahmed, a resident of Shiyaldanga Road, was seen walking home carrying a medium-sized suitcase and a heavy bag. With the road too damaged for vehicles, he had no choice but to walk.

"I have to walk about 10 minutes with these heavy bags to reach my house because no vehicle can pass through this road," said Tanveer, who had just returned from his village home in Rajshahi.

The road, stretching about 2.5 kilometres from Kawlabazar to Dakkhin Khan Bazar via Shiyaldanga Road, is in extremely poor condition due to excavation work by the Dhaka North City Corporation for installing storm-water drainage lines.

According to locals, work on the two-kilometre stretch from Dakkhin Khan Bazar to Northern University, near the back of Sheyalbari Road, has been ongoing for the past two years. Although the drainage lines were laid, DNCC has so far carpeted only about one-fourth of the road.

Meanwhile, work on the section from Sheyalbari Road to Kawlabazar began around four months ago, leaving the road virtually impassable.

No vehicles can move through this portion, said residents.

The poor condition of the road has

worsened daily struggles, particularly for students.

"It now takes me 20 minutes to walk to the university from Kawlabazar, while the rickshaw fare has jumped to Tk 60 from Tk 20 before the road digging," said Anamika Rani Roy, a BSc Textile Engineering student at Northern University.

"During the rain, it is even more difficult, as the muddy road becomes dangerously slippery," she said.

Israt Jahan and Taiyaba Zannat, second-year Pharmacy students at Northern University, who commute from Mirpur-13 and Gazipur, said their journeys have become exhausting.

"After getting off the bus, we now have to hire a rickshaw and then walk another 15 minutes. What used to cost Tk 30 now costs Tk 120 by rickshaw because of detours caused by the road," one of them said.

Residents say the project has caused endless disruptions.

Mohammad Monir, a local, said drainage work along the two-kilometre stretch from Dakkhin Khan Bazar to Shiyaldanga Road has dragged on for two years, while work from Northern University to Kawlabazar has been ongoing for the past six months.

The situation has affected even schoolchildren. Noor Nahar Mim, a fourth-grader at Khilkhet Kawla Government

Primary School, said she faces serious hardships on rainy days. "It takes me 10 minutes to walk home, but the muddy road makes it very difficult," she said.

"My income has dropped by half since the work began. I couldn't pay rent for the last two months," said Md Russel, a tailor. "Customers avoid this road, and vehicles cannot come through."

Taslima Akhtar, caretaker of House-43 on Shiyaldanga Road, said, "Tenants avoid renting houses here because moving furniture is nearly impossible."

She added, "We used to have nine or ten cars in our garage. Now none are here. Owners had to move them outside the area, paying Tk 2,000-3,000 a month for parking elsewhere. The road has been in bad condition for a long time and often goes under ankle-to-knee-deep water. This drainage work was supposed to bring us relief, but instead, it has only brought us more pain."

Contacted, DNCC Administrator Mohammad Azaz acknowledged the delays, saying that resistance from some residents has slowed progress.

"Many people are reluctant to vacate occupied portions of the road needed for widening, which is a barrier to completing the work swiftly. However, we are trying our best to finish the project as early as possible," he said.

Cybercrime cases pile up as trials stall for years

ASHUTOSH SARKAR and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

On October 30, 2017, police arrested Amir Hossain, 37, in Dhaka's Moghbazar area on charges of digital forgery.

According to case documents, Amir opened websites in the name of fake organisations, published false job advertisements, collected money from job seekers, and misappropriated the funds.

On the day of his arrest, police filed a case against him under the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act, 2006 with Ramna Model Police Station.

On May 29 the following year, investigator Ansar Uzzaman, an inspector of the Police Bureau of Investigation, submitted a charge sheet against the lone accused.

He also named 15 individuals, including six police officers, as prosecution witnesses.

More than six years have passed since the Cyber Tribunal (Bangladesh) framed charges against Amir, yet only one prosecution witness testified on July 3 this year, according to court records.

The Daily Star found that 16 hearings were held in the last six years but the prosecution failed to produce most of the 15 witnesses.

Amir went into hiding after securing bail.

"In most hearings in the past, the tribunal has issued non-bailable arrest warrants against the witnesses, but they did not appear to give statements," a court staffer told The Daily Star.

"Police are responsible for implementing the court's orders regarding producing witnesses. If police were prompt in this regard, the backlog of cases would have been reduced to a great extent," the staffer said.



» **4,452** cases pending till June 30, 2025

» **204** cases stuck for over 5 years

» **367** new cases filed, **1,324** disposed of in Apr-Jun

» **116** accused in jail as of July 14

» Delays due to missing witnesses, police inaction, lack of resources

This is just one of 204 cases filed under cyber laws that have remained pending with eight cyber tribunals across the country for more than five years, according to the latest report of the Supreme Court (SC).

Legal experts said trials dragging on for years cause serious hardship for both accused and complainants. They have long raised concerns about the slow pace and inefficiency of cybercrime case trials.

Supreme Court lawyer Ishrat Hasan said with Bangladesh becoming a digitally connected society, cybercrimes have grown to include hacking, phishing, online harassment, revenge porn, financial fraud, digital defamation, and data theft.

"In response, the government has enacted several laws over the past two decades to address emerging threats of cyberspace. However, despite this legislative evolution, the justice delivery system, especially the cyber tribunals, remains

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Tk 150 crore down the drain?

Two unused Dhaka slaughterhouses gathering dust

DIPAN NANDY

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) built two modern slaughterhouses to ensure hygienic animal slaughtering—one in Old Dhaka's Kaptan Bazar and another in Hazaribagh of the Dhanmondi area. The Hazaribagh slaughterhouse has remained idle for six years since its inauguration. The Kaptan Bazar facility remains unused even though it was completed one and a half years ago. City dwellers are yet to reap any benefit from these ventures, costing around Tk 150 crore.

Residents and urban planners say these much-hyped "modern" slaughterhouses have turned into white elephants.

Urban planner Prof Adil Muhammad Khan, president of the Bangladesh Institute of Planners, told The Daily Star, "Before implementing any project, feasibility studies must be done to assess viability. DSCC did not conduct these studies for Hazaribagh and Kaptan Bazar slaughterhouses. Had it been done, such costly projects would not have remained idle or become burdens. The corporation must take responsibility."

DSCC invited tenders four times to lease out the facilities, but no firms applied. Officials said the city corporation lacks

the manpower and expertise to run them. Informal approaches fell apart as well.

The Hazaribagh slaughterhouse, built at Gojmohal, cost Tk 81.19 crore. It was designed to slaughter 30 cows and 60 goats per hour for 16 hours daily. Another Tk 15 crore was later spent on imported machinery. Former mayor Mohammad Sayeed Khokon inaugurated it in 2019, though construction was incomplete. No animal has been slaughtered there since.



The Kaptan Bazar slaughterhouse, started in 2018, was delayed for years due to contractor's negligence. Completed in May 2023 at a cost of Tk 52 crore, it has also remained locked.

A recent visit found the five-storied Hazaribagh slaughterhouse shut, covered in dust, and unguarded. Just outside

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'She was more than just a teacher'

Students, colleagues, family mourn JU teacher Moumita

STAR REPORT

Around 12:50pm yesterday, a white ambulance entered the central field of Jahangirnagar University. Teachers, students, and staff rushed forward, gathering around the vehicle.

Inside lay the body of Jannatul Ferdous Moumita, an assistant professor in the Fine Arts department, who had been on duty during the Jucusu polls just hours earlier.

On the campus where she once studied and later built her academic career, her life came to an abrupt end. She was only 32.

Moumita, the department's first graduate to return as a teacher, joined as a lecturer in December 2021. She fell ill in the morning while working as a polling officer in the Jucusu polls and was later declared dead at Enam Medical College Hospital.

Just a day earlier, she had been on duty at Pritilata Hall. Yesterday, her janaza was held at the central field, attended by hundreds. As her body arrived, many stood in silence with tears



Jannatul Ferdous Moumita

in their eyes, while others wept openly. Friends embraced and consoled one another.

Students recalled seeing her healthy and energetic only days earlier.

"She was not just a teacher to us; she was like our elder sister. The place she held in our hearts, the way she taught us... this is an irreparable loss," said Jannatul



Grief-stricken mourners at Jahangirnagar University.

Ferdous, a student.

Struggling to continue, she added, "On Sunday, she was supposed to teach us landscape drawing."

Another student, Oishi Sarker, said, "We started our first lessons with her. Whenever we went to her for personal or academic reasons, she never turned us away. She treated

us like younger sisters, even counselling us when we were stressed. Accepting that she is gone is impossible."

Faculty members, too, were devastated. Pro-Vice Chancellor (Administration) Prof Sohel Ahmed said, "Moumita was like my daughter. She would talk to me about many things."

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