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Consensus a must, election to be a 'grand festival'

Says Yunus at talks on
implementing July Charter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday stressed that there is no alternative to consensus on the July Charter, warning that any delay or disagreement could threaten the nation's hard-won stability.

"There is no turning back from the path we have embarked upon. We must reach a consensus. I may be speaking strongly, but this cannot be ignored," he told political leaders.

He sat with the politicians as part of National Consensus Commission talks amid persistent rift over how to implement the July Charter, a document consisting of reforms agreed upon during the dialogues.

Yunus, also the chair of the commission, said the student-led July uprising had created a unique opportunity for a new beginning, and that the only way to secure it was through cooperation and compromise.

"We can argue endlessly, but we must stay on the path of solutions. Some may feel discomfort now, but later there will be peace, and the nation will benefit. If we remain mired in disputes, we cannot predict when or where they might erupt," he said.

Describing the consensus commission's work as unprecedented, Yunus said, "This initiative was not taken from any book. Considering the current situation, we tried this method to solve the problem.

He urged the parties to complete the final stage of implementation flawlessly, so that the commission could set "a global example" for resolving political crises.

Turning to the February election, he said it would be more than just a vote. "The election will be a grand festival, the true rebirth of the nation. All the sacrifices and bloodshed will become meaningful if we achieve

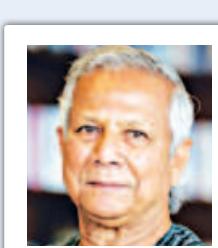
Displaced Palestinians
move with their
belongings southwards
on a road in the
Nuseirat refugee camp
area in the central Gaza
Strip following renewed
Israeli evacuation
orders for Gaza City
yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



"All ways for dictatorship
must be blocked. Everyone
must agree to stop
dictatorship ... I call on
everyone to agree on the
charter so that the election
can be meaningful."

Prof Muhammad Yunus



this new beginning. We must not get lost in minor issues; aim for the bigger goal."

On reforms, Yunus called for unity to prevent any return of authoritarianism. "All ways for dictatorship must be blocked. To stop dictatorship, everyone must agree. There can be no dissent. If disagreement remains, we cannot complete this process. I call on everyone to agree on the charter so that the election can be meaningful," he said.

BNP OPEN TO MORE TALKS

During the meeting on the second day of the third phase of talks between parties and the consensus commission, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed cautioned against linking reforms, justice, and elections.

"Reforms are a continuous process. Justice cannot be bound by time limits; otherwise it will lead to injustice. Whoever comes to power, trials must continue. But elections cannot be made conditional."

Warning that any delay could trigger instability, Salahuddin said, "If the election is not held in February, it will create uncertainty and open opportunities for fascist forces. Some are calling it a national security threat, but I say it could become a regional security threat. Two regional powers may exploit this situation. We do not want Bangladesh to fall into that trap."

About the July Charter, he said the BNP was open to further discussions on whether to give the document a legal basis.

He said most provisions of the charter were simple to implement, but constitutional issues might require advisory opinions from the Supreme Court under article 106 of the constitution.

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Israel orders Gazans to evacuate southwards

Intensifies military ops in the enclave;
48 more Palestinians killed

AGENCIES

Israeli forces destroyed at least 30 residential buildings in Gaza City and forced thousands of people from their homes to move south, Palestinian officials said, as US Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrived yesterday to discuss the future of the conflict.

According to an army post on X, more than 250,000 people have reportedly fled the city. The military is urging remaining residents to travel via al-Rashid Street towards al-Mawasi or camps in central Gaza.

However, a journalist said, "Despite intense bombardment in Gaza City, many residents have stayed put -- or returned after seeking shelter elsewhere -- because many of Israel's designated evacuation zones are desperately overcrowded and under-resourced, including lacking proper water access."

The United Nations estimates from late August indicated approximately one million Palestinians were living in and around Gaza's largest urban centre, where famine conditions are taking hold after months of deteriorating circumstances, reports Al Jazeera online.

The UN and the international community have called on Israel to abandon its plans to capture the city, warning that such an assault could worsen the humanitarian crisis.



- ▶ Over 250,000 reportedly fled the Gaza City
- ▶ 30 buildings destroyed
- ▶ Qatar PM urges world to 'stop using double standards'
- ▶ Netanyahu hosts Rubio at Western Wall ahead of talks

Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani yesterday urged the international community to "stop using double standards" and punish Israel for what he described as its "crimes".

He was speaking at a preparatory meeting on

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Refused to fire on protesters despite orders

2 cops tell ICT-1 during
cross-examination

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two police officials yesterday told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 that they had defied direct orders to open fire on unarmed student protesters during last year's July uprising, saying they believed every bullet would mean a life lost.

Testifying as prosecution witnesses, Ajay Ghosh and Naik Abdur Rahman, constables of the Armed Police Battalion (APBn), recounted how superior officers repeatedly instructed them and others to use lethal weapons against protesters in Dhaka's Chankharpul area on August 5, 2024. At least six students were killed there that day.

Ajay said that when then additional deputy commissioner (ADC) Shah Alam Md Akhterul Islam ordered him to fire on crowds, he hesitated.

The ADC then verbally abused him, snatched his Chinese rifle with 40 rounds of ammunition, and handed it to constable Sujan Hossain, who opened fire along with constables Imaz Hossain Imon and Nasirul Islam.

"I saw students collapsing under gunfire at Nabab Katra, Bakshi Bazar, Mayor Hanif Flyover and nearby roads. Later, I heard six to seven had been killed," he told the tribunal.

He added that Sujan later surrendered the rifle with

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SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Life term may be reduced for elderly convicts Says home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is reviewing whether to reduce the tenure of life imprisonment, particularly for elderly inmates, Home Affairs Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said yesterday.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting of the Core Committee on Law and Order at the Secretariat, the adviser noted that under the Penal Code of 1860, life imprisonment in Bangladesh is equivalent to 30 years.

"We are reviewing whether the duration can be lowered considering age," Jahangir said.

"For women, it could be reduced to 20 years, while for men, it may be a little higher. The provision will depend on the convict's age at the time of sentencing," he added.

The adviser also said the proposal has not yet been finalised and will

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

New round of US-China trade talks kicks off in Madrid

AFP, Madrid

China and the United States kicked off the latest round of trade talks yesterday in Madrid, where they are set to thrash out their TikTok dispute and President Donald Trump's promised hefty tariffs.

The Chinese delegation is in the Spanish capital until Wednesday and senior officials, including Vice Premier He Lifeng, will meet with the US delegation led by Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent.

The Spanish government said yesterday's talks got under way at the Palacio de Santa Cruz, the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Trade tensions between Beijing and Washington have been on a rollercoaster ride in 2025, with both sides slapping escalating tariffs on each other.

Tit-for-tat US-China tariffs reached triple digits on both sides at one point this year, snarling supply chains.

Washington and Beijing have since reached an agreement to de-escalate tensions, temporarily lowering tariffs to 30 percent on the United States' side and 10 percent on China's part.



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus poses for a photo with political leaders after chairing a meeting at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka yesterday as part of the third round of talks of the National Consensus Commission with political parties on how to implement the July Charter.

PHOTO: PID

NEW EC DELIMITATION Protests intensify in Faridpur, Pabna, Bagerhat

STAR REPORT

Demonstrators yesterday enforced blockades and staged sit ins in Faridpur, Pabna, and Bagerhat, protesting the Election Commission's recent redrawing of constituencies in their areas.

The EC on September 4 issued the gazette notification, redrawing boundaries in 46 constituencies across the country.

As per the new delimitation, Bagerhat lost one parliamentary constituency, reducing the number from four to three, while Faridpur's two unions and Pabna's one upazila were moved from one constituency to another.

In Faridpur, protesters blocked roads and railways for around 12 hours, protesting the transfer of Algi and Hamirdi unions of Bhanga upazila from Faridpur 4 to Faridpur 2 constituency.

The blockade began at 6:00am and continued till around 5:30pm, said Md Rokibuzzaman, officer in charge of Bhanga Highway Police Station.

Due to the blockade, road communication between Dhaka and 21 districts in the southwest got suspended.

Traffic services were also disrupted, with the Nakshikatha commuter and Sundarban express trains stranded at Bhanga and the Madhumati express at Rajbari. Traffic movement on Dhaka-Khulna and Dhaka-Barishal highways, as well as train movement



through Bhanga resumed in the evening.

Former member of Algi union parishad Md Eskandar Miya announced that similar dawn-to-dusk blockades would be enforced today and tomorrow.

In Pabna, a dawn to dusk hartal was observed in Bera upazila, protesting the removal of the upazila from Pabna 1 and including it in Pabna 2 constituency.

Agitators put up barricades, felling trees at different points on Dhaka-Pabna highway, while most of the shops and other establishments remained closed.

Traffic movement on the highway was suspended, causing immense suffering to commuters.

"I travel from Pabna to Sirajganj every day for work. Due to the hartal in Bera, I was forced to take a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, which took

more time and cost me extra," said Pollob Ibne Shayekh, a government employee.

Traffic movement resumed around 6:00pm, said Md Habibul Islam, OC of Bera Police Station.

In Bagerhat, protesters staged sit ins in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office and District Election Office, demanding that the district's four parliamentary constituencies be retained.

Around 11:00am, the protesters gathered at the main gate of the DC office, locked the gate and chanted slogans in favour of their demand. Similar demonstrations were held in front of all the nine upazila election offices, UNO offices, and other government establishments. The sit ins continued till noon.

The protesters announced another dawn-to-dusk hartal in the district today.

Consensus a must

FROM PAGE 1

"We are open to that. Beyond that, if there are other legal options, let us know -- we are ready to sign the charter," he said.

He added that while no document can stand above the constitution, a Special Constitutional Order after consultations could provide stronger legal safeguards.

"We are ready to compromise, to negotiate further if necessary. This charter must be a national, political, and historical document, free from clerical errors or confusion."

"Issues not discussed in detail should not be inserted at the last moment; otherwise, unnecessary controversies will arise," he said.

JAMAAT FOR PCO OR REFERENDUM

At the meeting, Jamaat-e-Islami Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman Azad said his party believes the upcoming election will only be free, fair, and acceptable if it is held based on the July Charter.

The Jamaat wants the July Charter to be implemented through a Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) or by referendum to prevent any political party from challenging the charter in court.

"There are precedents for both. If the political parties fail to reach a consensus, the people can deliver their verdict through a referendum," Azad said.

In a set of proposals submitted to the National Consensus Commission, the Jamaat has said all parties and candidates must swear an affidavit or oath of allegiance to the charter as a precondition for participating in elections.

Those refusing to do so, it suggested, should be disqualified.

The party further proposed that any candidate who campaigns against the charter should face not only disqualification but also sedition charges.

Speaking to journalists after the meeting, Azad defended the proposal.

Asked whether requiring an

Jamaat proposes all parties and candidates must swear an affidavit or oath of allegiance to the July Charter. Any candidate who campaigns against the charter should face not only disqualification but also sedition charges.

According to the party's proposal, the Provisional Constitutional Order implementing the July Charter shall remain valid and enforceable until a new constitution is passed by parliament with at least a three-fourths majority and subsequently ratified by the citizens of Bangladesh through a referendum.

The Jamaat further recommended that all provisions of the new constitution must remain consistent with the principles of this order.

Once the constitution is adopted, its legality and constitutionality should no longer be open to challenge by any authority, the party said.

It added that all institutions and authorities would be considered created and governed under the framework of the new constitution.

The party argued that this step is necessary to prevent any political party from legally disputing the July Charter in the future, thereby providing a stable foundation for reforms, governance, and upcoming elections.

The Jamaat leader also responded to a question about the party's opposition to the creation of Bangladesh during the Liberation War.

"We have always done politics by following Bangladesh's legal and constitutional process. We have repeatedly said that the Liberation War of Bangladesh is our achievement. Everyone is doing politics by accepting Bangladesh, and so are we. Therefore, there is no scope to bring back old debates. If the Liberation War is not accepted, it is in fact rejecting Bangladesh," he said.

NCP FOR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Akther Hossen, member secretary of the National Citizen Party, said his party believed only a constituent assembly election could guarantee the sustainable implementation of the reforms.

"A new constitution, written with fresh clauses and articles, is necessary to make the agreed reforms effective," he said, warning that ordinary amendments could be challenged and struck down in court.

He noted that the commission's discussions had identified two types of reforms: those achievable through ordinances or executive orders, and those requiring major structural changes to the constitution.

"Such big changes cannot be made sustainable by ordinary constitutional amendments alone. That is why the political parties must agree on a proper method," he added.

In his opening remarks, the commission's Vice-President Prof Ali Riaz urged political parties to protect their unity and cooperation until the July Charter is fully implemented.

"Fascist forces and their allies are still trying to thwart the state reform process," he warned.

Israel orders Gazans to evacuate southwards

FROM PAGE 1

the eve of an emergency summit of Arab and Islamic leaders organised by Qatar after Israel carried out an unprecedented air strike on Hamas leaders in Doha on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Palestinian officials said at least 48 people were killed by Israeli fire across the enclave, with at least 28 in Gaza City alone. Hamas said that Israeli forces have destroyed at least 1,600 residential buildings and 13,000 tents since August 11, reports Reuters.

Gaza's health ministry reported two deaths in the enclave due to famine and malnutrition in the past 24 hours, raising the death toll from the hunger crisis to 422, including 145 children.

Israeli settlers stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque under the protection of the Israeli police, Wafa news agency reported. According to eyewitnesses,

The trip is taking place after Trump rebuked Israel over the unprecedented attack against Hamas leaders meeting in Doha on Tuesday.

The military also destroyed the al-Kawthar residential tower in the southern Al-Rimal neighbourhood of Gaza City with several missiles, less than two hours after residents were warned to leave.

In a post on Telegram, the Israeli army, without providing any evidence, blamed Hamas for using the tower as an information gathering base.

Israeli troops also carried out a ground operation in the southeastern Deraa province, Syria's state news agency reported.

They also carried out searches in the Sajoun and Jamlah towns, which are adjacent to the 1974 ceasefire line that was meant to separate Israeli and Syrian troops.

allegations brought against their clients were "unfounded".

Meanwhile, following a prosecution application, the tribunal extended the date for submission of probe reports in six cases over crimes against humanity committed during the uprising.

Besides, the tribunal allowed the ICT investigation agency to interrogate Major Gen (forced retired) Ziaul Ahsan in connection with the enforced disappearance of BNP leader Ilias Ali.

5.9 magnitude earthquake jolts six countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 5.9 earthquake shook Dhaka and some parts of Bangladesh yesterday afternoon, according to USGS.

The epicentre of the quake was Assam in India.

The tremor was felt in Dhaka at 5:15pm.

The earthquake also jolted Myanmar, Nepal, Bhutan, and China.

SAGAR-RUNI MURDER Court unhappy over delay in probe completion

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday expressed dissatisfaction over the delay in completing the probe into the case filed over murders of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi in 2012.

In response to the summon issued by Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Minhazur Rahman, Investigation Officer Md Azizul Haque, also an additional superintendent of police at the PBI, appeared before the court and said he was trying his best to complete the probe as early as possible, said a sub-inspector working at the court.

The court also extended the time until November 30 for submission of the probe report.

This marks the 122nd extension of the deadline, according to case records.

The magistrate also asked the IO to complete the probe as soon as possible.

On August 11, the metropolitan magistrate summoned the IO to appear in person before it yesterday and submit the progress report on investigation. Investigators have so far spoken to over 70 people, said a PBI official.

Earlier on November 11, 2019, the High Court expressed disappointment as there is no significant progress into the investigation.

Sagar, news editor at Mastranga TV, and Runi, senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed on February 11, 2012, at their rented apartment in Dhaka's West Rajabazar.

SADA PATHOR LOOTING Suspended BNP leader held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SYLHET

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab 9) on Saturday night arrested suspended BNP leader Shahab Uddin, prime suspect in the case filed over the looting of large-scale white stone from Sada Pathor area in Sylhet's Companiganj upazila.

Shahab Uddin, former president of Companiganj unit of BNP, was arrested in Sylhet city's Kumarpara area around 11:15pm, Rab said in a press release yesterday.

The release described him as "one of the masterminds" behind the looting of stones.

He was later handed over to police in connection with the case filed by Bureau of Mineral Development with Companiganj Police Station on August 15, in which 1,000, 1,500 unidentified people were also made accused.

According to Rab, Shahab is also an accused in seven other cases with Companiganj and Kotwali police stations.

Over the past year, huge quantities of stones were illegally extracted from Companiganj and Gowainghat upazilas, sparking national outrage after media reports exposed the scale of the looting.

The government has since formed an inter-ministerial probe body to investigate the stone looting, which is awaiting submission of its report to the Cabinet Division.

Later, constables Sujan (with Ajay's

defence counsels for Arshad, Sujan, Nasirul and Imaz and the state-

defence counsel representing four absconding accused -- ex-DMP commissioner Habibur, joint commissioner Sudip, former ADC Akhtarul and ex-AC Imrul -- cross-

examined the two policemen who testified.

All the defence counsels said the

New govt pay scale to be finalised soon Says NPC chairman

UNB, Dhaka

The new pay scale will be finalised ahead of the scheduled six-month timeframe, said National Pay Commission Chairman Zakir Ahmed Khan yesterday.

Zakir Ahmed, also former finance secretary and chairman of the Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), informed this to Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus during a meeting with a National Pay Commission (NPC) delegation at the state guest house Jamuna.

He said although inflation and GDP have risen significantly over the last decade, salaries have not increased proportionately.

The commission is not only working on timely salary revisions but also preparing a separate salary structure for specialised jobs. This includes structures that take into account income tax payments,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

TYPHOID VACCINE
90 lakh children registered so far

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 90 lakh children have so far been registered as the government prepares to launch its first-ever typhoid vaccination campaign on October 12.

The health authorities have set a target of bringing 4.9 crore children aged between nine months and 15 years under the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI).

Online registration for the vaccine began on August 1. To register, one must visit <https://vaxepi.gov.bd> and provide the 17-digit birth registration number. The registration for vaccination is currently ongoing.

The guardians need to have their children registered for the vaccine.

After registration, a digital vaccination card will be issued, which has to be presented at the designated centre to receive the vaccine.

Children without a birth registration certificate can be registered directly at vaccination centres.

According to officials, the campaign will be conducted in all educational institutions during the first 10 working days from October 12, followed by the next eight working days

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



People from all walks of life paid their last respects to Farida Parveen by placing wreaths on her coffin at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka yesterday. The 'Queen of Lalon Geeti' passed away on Saturday at the age of 70, leaving behind a legacy that transcends generations and is deeply rooted in the rich soil of Bangladeshi folk music. Her body reached Kushtia around 8:30pm and she was laid to rest in her parents' grave at the municipal graveyard following a namaz-e-janaza after the Esha prayers.

PHOTO: STAR

Children left alone at home vulnerable offline, online

Speakers urge stronger steps to protect children of working parents from harm

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday called for stronger government and private sector initiatives to protect children left at home by their working parents from harm in both the physical world and cyberspace.

They said while such children are vulnerable to various forms of physical violence, they are also highly at risk online due to lack of knowledge, especially during the daytime in the absence of their parents.

Terre des Hommes Netherlands, with support from Breaking the Silence (BTS) and Village Education Resource Centre, organised the discussion at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

At the event, Terre des Hommes Country Manager in Bangladesh Nazrul Islam said although the government has enacted several laws and undertaken various policies, child protection is still "largely neglected" in the country.

He stressed that stakeholders must come forward and demonstrate responsibility to improve the situation, since legislation alone is not sufficient.

Zahidul Islam, director (programme and planning) at Breaking the Silence, said many RMG factories have daycare facilities but those are inadequate compared to the number of

working parents.

"This inadequacy could harm the parents' dedication in providing quality service and subsequently impact the sector negatively," said Zahidul, who moderated the discussion.

INCIDIN Bangladesh Executive Director AKM Masud Ali said there are parents who leave their

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen child protection mechanisms
- Ensure sufficient daycare facilities in RMG factories
- Involve trade unions, civic groups, industries in protection efforts
- Raise awareness among parents, children
- Provide counselling for child victims of virtual harm
- Make effective use of "109" helpline

children back home in rural areas for months while they seek fortune in cities like Dhaka. Strengthening protection mechanisms for such left-behind children is also crucial, he said.

A tripartite initiative involving government infrastructures, the economic strength of the industry sector, and civic platforms

could provide sustainability to child protection mechanisms in Bangladesh, he added, emphasising the need to involve trade union groups in the process.

SM Taifur Rahman, deputy director at Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, said just like the physical world, children should also be made aware of keeping distance from unknown individuals in cyberspace.

"Virtual harm could be as severe as physical harm," he said, stressing the need for generating awareness among parents about online safety and ensuring counselling and motivation for victims.

Roisul Islam, project manager at the Multisectoral Programme of the Women and Children Affairs Ministry, said they receive about 6,000 phone calls on average per day on the "109" helpline service, mostly concerning domestic violence, sexual harassment, and violence against children.

He said officials document the complaints and take action based on the merit of the problems by involving local administration until those are resolved.

Abdul Hamid Mia, director (administration and finance) at the Department of Social Services, and Roksana Sultana, general secretary of Breaking the Silence, also spoke at the discussion.

He said officials document the complaints and take action based on the merit of the problems by involving local administration until those are resolved.

Abdul Hamid Mia, director (administration and finance) at the Department of Social Services, and Roksana Sultana, general secretary of Breaking the Silence, also spoke at the discussion.

Covid vaccine 'Bangavax' gets US patent

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's Globe Biotech Limited has received a US patent for its Covid-19 vaccine, Bangavax, officials of the company said yesterday.

This is the first US patent obtained in Bangladesh's pharmaceutical sector, they said at a press conference at the company's office in Dhaka's Tejgaon industrial area.

Kakon Nag, chief executive officer of Globe Biotech Ltd, disclosed the information at the press conference.

In a press release, the company said Globe Biotech Ltd, a subsidiary of Globe Pharmaceutical Group of Companies Limited, began research during the pandemic on the development of Covid-19 detection kits, vaccines and medicines to meet national needs, under the overall supervision of Dr Kakon Nag and Dr Nazrul Sultana.

The Covid-19 mRNA vaccine developed through this research received approval for clinical trials from the Bangladesh Medical Research Council and the Directorate General of Drug Administration.

The World Health Organization included the mRNA vaccine developed

SEE PAGE 9 COL 8

JU HALL UNION 34 elected JCD candidates undecided on taking office

JU CORRESPONDENT

Despite boycotting the Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union (Jucusu) election, the Jatiyatobadi Chhatra Dal (JCD)-backed panel secured 34 posts across 21 hall union councils.

Each hall council has 15 posts, making a total of 315 positions. JCD fielded partial panels in 11 male halls but none in the 10 female halls.

The panel won the highest number of seats, 10, at Bishwakabi Rabindranath Tagore Hall, including the vice president, general secretary, and assistant general secretary posts.

It also secured eight posts in Shaheed Salam Barkat Hall, four each in Maulana Bhashani Hall and Male Hall No. 21, two each in Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam Hall, Tajuddin Ahmad Hall and Male Hall No. 10, and one each in Kamal Uddin Hall and Shaheed Rafik Jabbar Hall.

Jahir Uddin Mohammad Babor, convener of JCD's JU unit, told The Daily Star, "Even after boycotting the election midway, JCD candidates won a good number of posts in the hall unions. We will consult our central committee to decide whether our candidates will take office. Their decision will be final."

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



CU gears up for student union polls after 35yrs

SM MAHFUJ AHMED

Chittagong University is abuzz with excitement as student organisations are preparing for the long-awaited Chittagong University Central Students' Union (Cucusu) and hall union elections scheduled for October 12.

The campus has taken on a festive look as nomination form distribution started yesterday.

The disused student union building is being renovated as organisations negotiate alliances and campaign activities gain momentum.

Alongside several platforms, including July uprising leaders, a number of independents are also contesting.

Many among the electorate -- with 27,634 eligible voters -- say they want candidates to safeguard the rights of general students rather than serve partisan interests.

Journalism student Roxy said candidates must truly serve students' interests, adding, "I will vote for whoever proves most sincere."

The likely modes of participation this year include single party panels, independent panels, coalition panels, and individuals.

Independent and coalition slates are attracting the most attention, as both unaffiliated students and organisations are in talks to field joint panels.

The CU unit of Chhatra Odhikar Parishad has already announced it will run independently under the panel name "Cucusu for Rapid Change".



SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



সরকারি সব শিক্ষা উন্নয়ন টাকা সহজেই নিন রকেট-এ

নিরামদে নিশ্চিন্তে ঘরে বসে উন্নয়ন টাকা
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আপনার রকেট নাম্বারটি নিবন্ধন করুন।



Three more die in Netrakona speedboat capsiz

Death toll now four

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

The bodies of three people, including two children, who went missing following a speedboat capsiz in the Dhanu river in Khalajuri upazila of Netrakona on Friday, have been recovered.

The deceased are -- Laila Akter, 7, Saiya, 11, and Shirin Akter, 18. Their bodies were recovered yesterday afternoon about one kilometre away from the site of the incident in Charpara area of the river, said Hafizur Rahman, assistant deputy director of Netrakona Fire Service and Civil Defence.

With this, the bodies of all four missing victims have now been recovered. The Fire Service concluded the rescue operation yesterday following the recovery of the bodies.

On Saturday, the body of Ushamoni, 5, was found approximately 500 yards away from the accident site.

"Strong river currents made the operation extremely difficult. Divers worked continuously for nearly 48 hours. The delay in recovery was due to the bodies drifting downstream," added Hafizur.

The accident occurred on Friday noon when a speedboat carrying 15 wedding guests from Itna upazila in Kishoreganj sank in the river.

Khalajuri Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mokbul Hossain said the accident happened while the speedboat tried to avoid a collision with a bulkhead. In doing so, the speedboat struck a fishing boat and overturned. Four people went missing in the incident, and three others sustained injuries, while the rest managed to swim ashore.

2 children drown in N'ganj pond

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Two children drowned in a pond near their home in Sajai village under Narayanganj's Araihazar upazila yesterday.

The victims were Anisur Rahman Anis, 7, son of Abul Hossain, and Zahidur Rahman Zahid, 5, son of Jahangir Hossain -- both first-grade students.

Locals said the boys were playing near the pond when they went missing. Around 12:00pm, villagers found their bodies floating and took them to Araihazar Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared them dead.

Dr Ashraful Amin, residential medical officer at the health complex, said they had died before arrival, adding that excess water in their stomachs caused the deaths.

New govt pay scale

FROM PAGE 3

calculations of allowances such as house rent, medical and transport, methods to adjust salaries in line with inflation, and retirement benefits including timely pensions.

He said the commission plans to recommend salary structures based on employee evaluations and rationalise financial benefits both in cash and in kind.

"We have already begun work in full swing," said Khan.

"Although six months have been allotted to determine the salary structure, we hope to submit the final report

earlier than scheduled."

Yunus directed the commission to devise a rational salary structure for government and autonomous officials and employees that aligns with present-day realities.

Emphasising the importance of health insurance for officials, the chief adviser said even if salaries increase, many people lose their assets due to illness.

The National Pay Commission has been formed after a decade to review and recommend a new salary structure for government and autonomous officials and employees.



22 LGED projects stall for a year in Patuakhali

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

At least 22 development projects under the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) in Patuakhali have been stalled for over a year, causing immense suffering for residents.

The projects include roads, bridges, and drainage structures, all left abandoned midway across different upazilas of the district.

From the Koromjatala road and drainage system in Sadar upazila to Shonkhola in Galachipa, Balitali in Kalapara, and Charkhali in Mirzaganj, the situation is the same.

In some places, locals are forced to cross broken bridges by boat, while in others, unfinished brick soiling has deteriorated to the point of making roads impassable.

Locals said the projects were awarded to former Pirojpur-2 lawmaker and district Awami League joint secretary Mohiuddin Maharaj, who reportedly went

into hiding after the political changeover on August 5 last year, leaving behind project works worth around Tk 100 crore.

Contractors alleged that LGED projects in the southern region had long been dominated by the "Mirajul-Maharaj syndicate".

Under the name of Mirajul Islam's company Ifti ETCL, the syndicate reportedly secured 22 projects in Patuakhali between 2011 and 2023.

These included 12 in Sadar upazila, three each in Galachipa and Mirzaganj, two in Kalapara, and one each in Dumki and Rangabali.

Of the projects, seven were under the "Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of Iron Bridges in the Southern Region" scheme for 22 iron bridges, involving Tk 76.57 crore. So far, overall progress has been less than 40 percent, with only two projects completed while the rest remain stuck.

The delays have left locals

frustrated.

"We suffer immensely using the unfinished road. The brick soiling has worn off, rendering it unusable. The bridge has been lying incomplete for a year. The contractor is nowhere to be found," said Rahim Biswas of Poshurhunia village in Kalikapur union under Sadar upazila.

Mizanur Rahman, a rickshaw-puller, said, "If new contractors are appointed and the projects are completed promptly, our sufferings will end."

Contacted, Md Hossain Ali Mir, executive engineer of Patuakhali LGED, said, "Around 50 percent work of the 22 projects awarded to Ifti ETCL has been completed."

"However, since the contractor is unavailable at present, complications have arisen regarding the projects' progress. Local contractors are reluctant to continue. We have informed higher authorities in this regard, and a decision will be taken accordingly," he said.

CU gears up for student union

FROM PAGE 3

Roman Rahman, the organisation's member secretary and a candidate for vice president (VP), said, "We are considering an independent panel, although we remain open to alliances if necessary. Our main goal is to protect students' rights..."

Islami Chhatra Andolan is expected to contest under "Shocheton Shikkhatri Parishad", while Bangladesh Gonotantrik Chhatra Sangsads (BGCS) has confirmed its intention to run by itself.

Several cultural and social groups are said to be in talks for joining forces to form an independent slate.

Among the names under discussion are Mahfuzur Rahman for VP and Rashid Dinar for GS.

Chhatra Shibir is reportedly working on a coalition panel that may include female candidates, July uprising activists, religious minorities, and members of indigenous communities. However, their VP candidate has not yet been finalised.

Jatiyatabdhi Chhatra Dal is also exploring the

possibility of running together with five organisations from the Democratic Students' Alliance and Chhatra Majlis.

Sajid Hossain Hridoy, organising secretary of JCD CU Unit, said the organisation favours a joint panel due to Shibir's dominance on campus.

"Talks are ongoing with left-leaning groups and BGCS. That is why we have yet to finalise our VP candidate," he added.

This year, candidates must pass dope tests or face disqualification.

Campaigning will start after the final candidate list is announced and continue until a day before polling. It is allowed from 10:00am to 9:00pm. Rules ban class disruptions, interference with exams, and participation of outsiders.

Chief Election Commissioner Prof Moniruddin said no candidate or supporter will be allowed to distribute voter slips within 100 metres of polling centres on election day.

Violations may result in fines of up to Tk

20,000, cancellation of candidature, expulsion, or legal action, he added.

As per the schedule, nomination forms have to be submitted between September 15 and 17. These forms will be further scrutinised on September 18, followed by a publication of a preliminary candidate list on September 21.

The deadline for withdrawal is September 23 at 3:30pm and the final list will be announced on September 25. Polling will be held on October 12 from 9:00am to 4:00pm.

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SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW

China warns Philippines against provocations

REUTERS, Beijing

China's military said yesterday it had conducted routine patrols in the South China Sea and warned the Philippines against any provocations.

The two countries have been engaged in a long-running maritime standoff in the strategic waterway that has included regular clashes between coast guard ships and massive naval exercises.

A spokesperson for the Chinese military's Southern Theater Command said the Philippines must immediately stop provoking incidents and escalating tensions in the South China Sea.

"We sternly warn the Philippine side to immediately stop provoking incidents and escalating tensions in the South China Sea, as well as bringing in external forces for backing such efforts that are destined to be futile," the spokesperson said.

"Any attempt to stir up trouble or disrupt the situation will not succeed."

The Philippine maritime council and armed forces did not immediately respond to questions outside office hours, while the Philippine embassy in Beijing did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The US Indo-Pacific Command said in a statement that Japan, the Philippines and the United States conducted joint maritime exercises in the Philippines' Exclusive Economic Zone from Thursday to Saturday to strengthen regional cooperation and support a free and open Indo-Pacific region.



VENEZUELA TENSIONS

US F-35s seen landing in Puerto Rico

REUTERS

Five US F-35 aircraft were seen landing in Puerto Rico on Saturday after President Donald Trump last week ordered 10 of the stealth fighters to join a military buildup in the Caribbean to counter drug cartels amid rising tensions with Venezuela.

The F-35s were seen landing at the former Roosevelt Roads military base in Ceiba, Puerto Rico, by Ricky Arduengo, a contract photographer working for Reuters. US helicopters and Osprey aircraft as well as other US transport aircraft and military personnel have been seen at the base in recent days.

The latest sightings come after a surprise visit to Puerto Rico this week by US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth along with the top US general amid escalating tensions with Venezuela.

Asked about the aircraft, a Pentagon duty press officer said: "We have no force posture changes to announce currently."

Sources told Reuters that the Trump administration ordered the deployment of 10 F-35 fighter jets to Puerto Rico to conduct operations against drug cartels.

In announcing the plan last week to send more aircraft to the region, Trump said the United States was not talking about regime change in Venezuela.



Court personnel gather under makeshift tents beside heaps of charred vehicles at the torched Supreme Court premises in Kathmandu yesterday, as judicial operations resume and legal services are provided to Nepali nationals.

PHOTO: AFP

Nepal counts cost of Gen Z uprising

Billions lost, thousands jobless as charred hotels, burned vehicles are common sights across the country

THE KATHMANDU POST/ANN

It is autumn, the time of year when Nepal's economy is usually vibrant. Hordes of tourists flock to the country, while Nepalis abroad return home to celebrate the long festive holidays. From retailers to hotels, and from airlines to transport operators, businesses

are common sights across the country.

The recent anti-government protests have scared tourists from around the world, particularly Indians, whose numbers were expected to swell due to heavy bookings for pilgrimage tours to Kailash Manasarovar, the revered site.

Economists estimate the collateral damage at around Rs3 trillion—nearly equal to Nepal's budget for one and a half years or half of the GDP when damages to both government and private sector infrastructure and government documents are taken into account.

"The economic growth this fiscal year will be under 1 percent, according to our rough estimates," said economist Chandra Mani Adhikari. Nepal's biggest taxpayers—Bhat-Bhateni Supermarket, Chaudhary Group, and Ncell—have all suffered heavy collateral damage.

The losses are staggering. This collateral damage comes on top of the prolonged drought that Nepal recently faced. Moreover, the upcoming elections scheduled for March—more than two years ahead of time—are expected to drain another Rs30 billion from state reserves, said Adhikari.

Estimates compiled by hoteliers, automobile dealers, and retail chain Bhat-Bhateni suggest the bloodshed has rendered nearly 10,000 Nepalis jobless overnight.

This week, the Hotel Association Nepal issued a statement noting that the sector had already suffered damages worth Rs25 billion. Auto dealers estimate their losses at around Rs15 billion.



Out of Bhat-Bhateni's 28 outlets nationwide, 21 sustained damages during Tuesday's Gen Z protests, with several completely destroyed.

Initial assessments indicate the insurance claim of Bhat-Bhateni is more than Rs2.5 billion with IGI Prudential Insurance alone, according to Beemastan, an online news portal.

Hopes, however, are high. Yogendra Shakya, a noted hotelier, said that in the short term, quick political stability and the appointment of a new prime minister could reassure travelers, limiting the impact on tourism.

In the medium term, however, Shakya warned that if political parties return to disruptive election tactics, confidence could erode, causing deeper damage to tourism over the next six months.

SUDAN'S SOUTH

Paramilitary drones hit key sites

AFP, Khartoum

Multiple paramilitary drones attacked key army positions and civilian infrastructure in Sudan's south yesterday, an army official said, just a week after similar strikes hit the capital.

Since April 2023, Sudan has been gripped by a brutal war between the regular armed forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), killing tens of thousands and displacing millions.

Yesterday's strikes targeted the headquarters of the Sudanese army's 18th Division, along with fuel depots on the western bank of the Nile, east of the army-held city of Kosti in White Nile state, the official said.

Additional attacks hit the Kenana airbase and airport, located southeast of Kosti, while drones also struck the Um Dabakir power station, east of the city, the official added.

Eyewitnesses in Kosti, located some 320 kilometres (200 miles) south of Khartoum, reported extremely loud explosions during the attacks.

There has been no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks and the extent of the damage remains unclear.

An army spokesman separately said that a number of paramilitary drones targeted early Saturday facilities in El-Obeid, the capital of North Kordofan state.

NIGERIA BUS CRASH

19 women, children killed

AFP, Nigeria

A bus taking part in wedding celebrations fell into a river in northern Nigeria, killing at least 19 women and children among the passengers, a union official and residents said yesterday.

The driver stopped the bus on a bridge that had partially collapsed on Saturday evening but it rolled back into the river, Abubakar Muhammed, an official with the NURTW transport operators union, told AFP.

The bus was in a wedding convoy escorting a bride to her new husband's house and crashed near the village of Fass in Zamfara state, added the official, who said the driver may have forgotten to use the hand brake.

The bus had been heading for Jega in neighbouring Kebbi state. Residents of Fass confirmed the toll of women and children killed.

Traffic accidents are frequent on Nigeria's badly maintained roads. Some 9,570 accidents recorded last year caused 5,421 deaths, according to federal road safety statistics.

N Korea leader's sister warns against US joint drills

REUTERS, Seoul



Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un, warned joint military exercises of US, South Korea and Japan could bring about "negative consequences" for themselves, state media reported yesterday.

South Korea, Japan and the US will conduct annual defensive drills called the "Freedom Edge" starting on September 15 to upgrade aerial, naval and cyber operational capabilities against North Korea's nuclear and missile threats, South Korea's military has said.

"This reminds us that the reckless display of power displayed by the US, Japan, and South Korea in the wrong places, namely around the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, will undoubtedly bring about negative consequences for themselves," Kim said via KCNA news agency.



A protester shouts slogans through a megaphone during a rally against the far-right Rassemblement National (RN) party's meeting in Bordeaux, southwestern France, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh Open University
Engineering and Estate Division
Gazipur-1705, Bangladesh
Website: www.bou.ac.bd

বাড়ি'র দীক্ষা: সবার জন্য উন্মুক্ত কর্মসূচী, গবেষণা ও জীবনব্যাপী শিক্ষা

Ref. No. BOU/E&E/28(468)/2025/310

Dated: 11/09/2025

e-Tender Notice

e-Tenders is invited through e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by University Engineer, Bangladesh Open University, Gazipur-1705 for the procurement of work, which will be available at e-GP website from 15/09/2025, on 10.00am.

SL. No.	Tender ID, Ref. No. & Package No.	Name of work	Last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time
1	Tender ID: 1149382 Ref. No. BOU/EE/Repair/ Bagerhat/30/2025-2026 Package No. 30	Repair & Renovation works of Bagerhat Sub-Regional Center Bagerhat, BOU.	Date: 29/09/2025 Time: up to 14.00pm	Date: 30/09/2025 Time: at 14.00pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents can be deposited online through any bank's branches as per tender notice.

Sd/-
Engr. Md. Shahriar Sahan
University Engineer
Bangladesh Open University
Phone: 02996691121

GD-2007

We cannot afford any election delay

Political parties must put aside divisions, help restore stability

There seems to be a broad consensus by now that the nation cannot afford to have the next national election delayed beyond February, as doing so would further undermine stability. At a *Prothom Alo* roundtable, participants also stressed that the government must play a more decisive role in ensuring that the polls take place on schedule to avoid the risk of a plunge back into chaos. One speaker even warned that delaying the election could endanger national security.

The prevailing uncertainty is already taking a toll on the country. Beyond politics, it is fuelling an economic crisis marked by rising poverty and unemployment. The interim government, inherently weak as it is, cannot provide the long term stability needed to tackle these challenges. Public confidence in governance in general seems quite low. The cost of a delayed democratic transition has also been evident in rising social unrest.

The core challenge right now is not the lack of reform ideas, but the failure to implement them. Leaders across the political spectrum appear to agree on the need for change, but their unity must translate into concrete action. We acknowledge that this moment is an opportunity for a proper transition to democracy, not simply a change in leadership. It is about building a system that reflects the aspirations of the people. A prolonged interim period without a clear mandate would, however, make it difficult to carry out the necessary constitutional and institutional reforms. The longer the delay, the harder it will be to implement those changes.

Political parties, therefore, must rise above their divisions and petty interests. The responsibility for ensuring a peaceful transition through elections also rests with them. They cannot allow their disunity to become a pretext for delaying the election. Against this backdrop, the fresh demands raised by Jamaat-e-Islami and like-minded parties underscore the underlying complexities of that endeavour. These groups are seeking to tie the polls to a four-point agenda, including the implementation of the July Charter and a proportional representation (PR) system for an Upper House. Their demands, which also include a call to ban the Jatiya Party, introduce a new layer of tension in an already delicate process.

But these demands, whether justified or not, should not be allowed to derail the election in the larger national interest. Politicians must accept that the election is a matter of national urgency in which any partisan demands, while significant to the parties involved, should not be viewed as absolute preconditions. For the sake of stability, these issues must be addressed through dialogue—and swiftly—not through actions that could jeopardise the ongoing process.

Political parties must try to look beyond their immediate demands and divisions. The time for arguments over various demands has passed; the time for action is now. The election is the first and most vital step towards a democratic future. All other demands, no matter how important, must be pursued within that framework, not as a barrier to it. The government must also facilitate an enabling environment for this transition.

Don't abandon kids with special needs

Govt must not remove specialist doctors from Shishu Bikash Kendras

We are concerned about the government's plan to cut specialist care for the 35 Shishu Bikash Kendras that have long provided affordable care to children with special needs in the country. Reportedly, under the Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Programme, the health ministry set up these centres in 2008–24 in medical college hospitals and 11 in district hospitals—while appointing developmental paediatricians, therapists, and child psychologists to provide treatment and therapy to children aged up to 16. Over the years, these centres have transformed the lives of countless children with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, ADHD, epilepsy, delayed speech, intellectual disabilities, and other disorders. But since the project's term expired last June, the future of these centres now hangs in the balance.

Reportedly, the health ministry proposed a two-year initiative to run these centres. However, when the finance ministry forwarded the plan to the Planning Commission, the posts for developmental paediatricians were dropped. Instead, it suggested outsourcing 35 therapists and 12 psychologists. According to those associated with the centres, specialist doctors have to devote a significant amount of time to each patient. If they are replaced by general doctors, the centres' core purpose will be lost. Experts warned that cutting specialist care may save money in the short term but will lead to higher long-term costs, as children deprived of early treatment risk growing up dependent on state support.

The importance of these centres with specialist care cannot be overstated. Since the project was launched, a total of 243,000 children have received treatment in these centres, with more than 1,000 patients receiving treatment daily. What is unique about these facilities is that they provide treatment to children from low- and middle-income families—for only a fee of Tk 10—who otherwise cannot afford the expensive treatment for their conditions.

We, therefore, urge the government to develop a comprehensive plan to run these centres smoothly. If the government does have a plan to integrate them into the mainstream system, it should be implemented without compromising the standard of treatment. We may recall that the Health Sector Reform Commission recommended establishing multidisciplinary child development centres in all district and medical college hospitals, while also proposing a Child Development Centre Act to ensure sustainability. The government must pay heed to these suggestions and act accordingly. Since there are very few facilities for children with developmental needs in the country, the existing ones must not be discontinued or weakened under any circumstances.

EDITORIAL

After Ducusu polls, Shibir has its work cut out for itself

WINKERS AWEIGH!



Tanim Ahmed
is digital editor at The Daily Star.

TANIM AHMED

In the final analysis, the comprehensive victory for Shibir-backed candidates in the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) election was not a surprise. Their margin of victory, however, was sobering for many who had thought that Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing would never win. This result may not be an exact reflection of how the youth might vote in the national election, but it certainly does provide some indication. That is one takeaway. However, the new Ducusu office-bearers will have their work cut out for them. But before delving into that, a few other takeaways.

With the voter turnout hitting close to 80 percent, it does not appear that there was any feeling of disenfranchisement in the absence of Awami League's student wing, the Chhatra League (now a banned outfit). If anything, the results underscored just how irrelevant the outfit has become, having failed to build a loyal following to counter Shibir despite its sometimes-brutal campaign against the latter (the killing of Buet's Abrar Fahad comes to mind).

The National Citizen Party's (NCP) student wing also hardly made a ripple, or dent. In hindsight, they were never a force to reckon with in this election. The currency that the July uprising leaders thought they still carried seems to have fizzled out on the very campus that was the cradle of that movement. Since young voters are presumed to be the NCP's natural support base, the Ducusu result warrants serious scrutiny over whether this debacle also signals waning popularity for the parent party.

BNP's student wing came in for the rudest awakening. Chatra Dal appeared to have been riding on the hope that, no matter what, students of this university would not vote for

a platform backed by Shibir, given its controversial past. That only showed how out of touch with the ground reality they were. Clearly, that controversial past did not matter to the general students, many of whom seemed to fear that voting for Chatra Dal would simply recreate another Chhatra League-style atmosphere on campus.



From left, Abu Shadik Kayem, SM Farhad, and Mohiuddin Khan of the Shibir-backed Oikyaboddho Shikharthi Jote gesture triumphantly after winning the top three posts in the recent Ducusu election. FILE PHOTO: STAR

Coming back to Shibir, this was the first time in Bangladesh's history that Jamaat's student wing openly contested an election on the DU campus. Although the panel's name, Oikyaboddho Shikharthi Jote (or United Student Alliance), suggested a broad union of general students, it was essentially Shibir-backed—a signature strategy it has long used to mask direct

students. Another apologised to fellow students for the intrusive conduct of their campaign over the past few weeks. Perhaps the only reason congratulatory messages are not pouring in from all quarters, including their campus rivals, is their tainted legacy.

In fact, Shibir's main rivals, Chatra Dal and its parent party BNP, are

power programme. Bangladesh must take a long view of nuclear fuel and waste. Relying solely on one country for lifelong fuel supply is risky. A long-term nuclear fuel cycle policy should ensure a secure supply for at least 80 years by diversifying sources through competitive markets.

At the same time, a radioactive waste management company should be established to handle operational wastes safely and to develop long-term storage and disposal facilities. Identifying a permanent site for intermediate-level waste disposal should be treated as a strategic priority, not a distant concern.

Preparing for emergencies and technical support

Even the safest Generation III+ VVER-1200 nuclear plant must prepare for robust emergencies. Before Rooppur becomes operational, Bangladesh must establish a fully functional Nuclear and Radiological Emergency Preparedness and Response Centre. This centre should be equipped with trained staff and modern equipment and vehicles to coordinate rapid responses in a crisis.

After Rooppur's commissioning, Bangladesh should also establish a Technical Support Organisation (TSO) capable of providing timely expertise in troubleshooting, system upgrades and specialised safety analysis. The TSO may be structured as a public entity, a private organisation or a public-private partnership, but it must have the necessary expertise and sufficient capacity in nuclear technology. Otherwise, the country will have to depend on Russian or Indian assistance, which is often costlier and more time consuming.

Rooppur is not just another mega-project. It represents a commitment to fostering a culture of safety, security, transparency and long-term responsibility in the peaceful use of nuclear technology. The reforms outlined above are the minimum requirements to ensure its safe, secure and sustainable operation. Therefore, there is no need to rush bringing the reactor online until the recommended issues are properly addressed.

What must be done before Rooppur begins operation



Dr Md Shafiqul Islam
is professor at the Department of Nuclear Engineering at University of Dhaka, and former visiting professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA. He can be reached at msislam@du.ac.bd.

MD SHAFIQUL ISLAM

Nuclear power carries both immense promise and immense peril. With the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) expected to begin operation early next year, Bangladesh stands on the threshold of becoming a nuclear energy-producing nation. If successfully implemented, this project will not only expand the country's clean electricity supply and support its climate goals but also strengthen long-term energy security, sustainability and international credibility.

Yet, nuclear power can bring severe risks if not managed properly. An accident could have far-reaching consequences beyond national borders, eroding public trust and damaging international confidence. To avoid this peril, Bangladesh must uphold certain non-negotiable obligations: an unwavering commitment to safety, institutional independence, professional competence, transparency, a strong safety culture and long-term planning. Without these, the risks could outweigh the benefits.

To ensure Rooppur becomes a success story rather than a cautionary tale, reforms across government, regulatory, operational and policy levels are essential, not optional. These steps are critical to maintaining the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) safety standards.

In this regard, the IAEA has recently conducted a Pre-Operational Safety Review Team (Pre-OSART) mission involving 14 international experts. The mission provided important recommendations to be addressed before the plant begins operation, including enhancing fire safety systems for effective prevention and response; strengthening leadership

and operational standards; and improving equipment preservation during commissioning to safeguard systems and components. The mission also identified good practices of global significance, such as the Rooppur Training Centre's use of a state-of-the-art simulator for training in refuelling machine operations.

The Pre-OSART mission focuses solely on operational safety. It is neither a nuclear governance review, nor a regulatory inspection, nor a design review, nor a substitute for a comprehensive assessment of the plant's overall safety status. Before Unit-1 begins operation, the following issues must be addressed properly to ensure robust nuclear safety and to uphold both national and international confidence in Bangladesh's nuclear journey.

Strengthening governance and independence

Good governance is the cornerstone of nuclear safety. At present, the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC), the Nuclear Power Company of Bangladesh Ltd (NPCBL) and the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority (BAERA) all operate under the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST). This structure undermines regulatory independence, a principle emphasised by the IAEA. To align with global best practices as well as the IAEA's recommendations, BAERA must operate independently, reporting to the prime minister, the president or a separate ministry. The chair of BAERA should have a proven track record in nuclear expertise.

Additionally, the National Technical Committee should be strengthened with high-level experts from engineering, public health,

law enforcement and emergency management, and must meet regularly to monitor project progress and timelines, identify causes for delays, and mitigate risks through prudent and prompt decisions.

BAERA must evolve into a truly credible regulator. That requires establishing a strong management system, cultivating a culture of safety and training staff according to IAEA standards. Most of the regulations necessary for the operation of Rooppur are yet to be developed, which includes regulations covering every stage of the nuclear lifecycle, from construction to decommissioning. Enforcement of these regulations must also be ensured.

Equally important, BAERA should open official channels of communication with relevant nuclear safety and security stakeholders and the public. Nuclear safety and security are not only technical matters but also depend on transparency, sharing best practices, collaboration and trust among stakeholders.

As the operator of Rooppur, NPCBL holds the primary responsibility for safety. This calls for leaders chosen on merit, not patronage, and for a workplace culture guided by technical competence and accountability. When management issues arise, root-cause analysis—not ad hoc dismissals—should be the norm.

Transparent communication, especially with residents near Rooppur, is essential to ensure they receive accurate information about safety measures and emergency preparedness. At the same time, both on-site and off-site safety systems must be in place for normal operations and potential emergencies.

BAEC, as the parent and facilitating organisation, must be strengthened with competent manpower and expertise. It should expand its capacity in nuclear safety analysis, security and safeguards, radiation protection, waste management, instrumentation and control, and nuclear economics. Building domestic expertise will reduce overdependence on foreign partners and enhance the long-term sustainability of the country's nuclear

The battle against dengue needs collective action



Dr Syed Abdul Hamid is professor of health economics at Dhaka University, convenor of Alliance for Health Reforms Bangladesh and Network for Healthcare Excellence, and chief adviser of Universal Research Care Ltd.

SYED ABDUL HAMID

In Bangladesh, dengue is no longer a seasonal or urban disease; it has spread nationwide and is now prevalent almost throughout the year. According to Bangladesh's Dengue Dynamic Dashboard (2025), from January 1 to September 14 this year, 37,891 people have been hospitalised due to dengue. The actual number of hospital admissions is likely to be higher, as not all hospitals in the country are yet included in the data reporting system. The dashboard further shows that this year, the highest number of cases were reported in Dhaka division—14,987 people, which is 40 percent of the total. However, Barishal's infection rate as a percentage of its total population is the highest compared to the rates in other divisions.

Monthly data on deaths reveal that the highest number of fatalities from dengue occurred in July (41 deaths), closely followed by August (39 deaths). In the first 14 days of September, 28 people have succumbed to dengue, bringing the total number of deaths to 150 between January 1 and September 14. Nearly half of the deceased were aged below 30 and only nine percent of the dead were aged over 60. Clearly, dengue is claiming the lives of children, young people, and those in their

and local government bodies occasionally spray insecticides with fogging machines, but research has shown that such fogging is not effective in destroying the primary dengue vector—the Aedes mosquito. Hospitals face bed shortages, doctors and nurses are overwhelmed, and there is a lack of adequate blood supply, all of which further weaken dengue treatment capacity. Administrative responses remain superficial, while systematic

The social catastrophe the disease brings by shattering families and putting children's education and safety at risk seems to escape our attention. The disease's prevalence did not become severe overnight, however. It is the cumulative effect of failures at the personal, familial, social, institutional, and state levels. As individuals, we do not keep our homes and surroundings clean. Families fail to create dengue awareness among their children. As

used. Besides, a proper mixture of insecticides must be ensured, and applied in scientifically effective ways—for example, adhering strictly to when adulticides and larvicides should be used. At the same time, continuous training must be arranged for mosquito control workers so that they become skilled in proper application methods. Introducing performance-based incentives can be considered to keep workers motivated and attentive.

The effectiveness of dengue control activities must be monitored and observed regularly. Community-based social monitoring could be introduced, where designated individuals ensure that mosquito control workers have indeed sprayed insecticides at scheduled times. Most importantly, a robust surveillance system must be built to support data-driven decision-making.

Communities and educational institutions also need to be effectively engaged. Every school could form a "wellbeing club" through which students are made aware of dengue prevention, alongside other health and wellbeing issues. Similarly, involving Rover Scouts, Girl Guides, the "Little Doctor" programme, and other youth organisations in dengue prevention activities and discussions could multiply the social impact.

In addition, mosques, neighbourhood clubs, and NGOs should be effectively engaged in creating dengue awareness and control. At the same time, citizens must act responsibly by keeping rooftops, yards, flowerpots, drains, and all water-collecting spaces clean on a regular basis. At the state level, integrated policy formulation, sufficient budget allocation, strengthened research activities, and expansion of hospital and laboratory facilities must be prioritised. Above all, continuous awareness campaigns through mainstream and social media and in educational institutions are essential.

Dengue is not just a disease—it is a reflection of our mismanagement, negligence, and failure to uphold responsibilities. If we continue to remain idle, more lives will be lost, families will collapse, and society will grow increasingly fragile. So we must raise awareness in this regard. Through collective effort, under the leadership of local government bodies (city corporations, municipalities, district councils, upazila councils, etc), and with the active participation of social organisations, we can build an effective social movement against dengue.



The highest number of fatalities from dengue occurred in July this year. This photo was taken on July 3 at the capital's Mugda Medical College and Hospital.

FILE PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

The effectiveness of dengue control activities must be monitored and observed regularly. Community-based social monitoring could be introduced, where designated individuals ensure that mosquito control workers have indeed sprayed insecticides at scheduled times. Most importantly, a robust surveillance system must be built to support data-driven decision-making.

most productive years. The death of a young and working individual is not only a personal tragedy but also a blow to our economic productivity. When an earning member of a family dies, the household loses its source of income. At the same time, the state loses a promising citizen who would have contributed to the economy through income, savings, consumption, and taxes. Such deaths also negatively impact the country's GDP.

This raises the question as to why state institutions are not acting decisively despite so many deaths. The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) publishes daily statistics on cases and deaths, but beyond that, no effective policy initiatives are visible. City corporations

and long-term planning is missing.

Ordinary citizens cannot escape responsibility either. We post about dengue on social media, share pictures or news of the dead, express grief briefly, and then return to our usual routine. Beyond that, there is hardly any social response. We seem to have accepted dengue's prevalence as our fate, reflecting a mindset of neglecting duties and responsibilities which is rendering us passive. We do not seem to think about the children left orphaned after losing their parents to dengue or about families who lose their only breadwinner. Neither do we appear to worry about the risk that our own children and family can fall victim, too.

a society, we do not take collective action. Local government bodies evade responsibility. At the state level, there is a lack of policy, weak coordination, and insufficient budget allocation.

Therefore, to reduce the devastation of dengue, immediate collective action is necessary. Local governments must lead ward-based cleanliness drives and effective mosquito control programmes. For those to succeed, the entire ecosystem of the programme must be made fully functional, including a comprehensive, well-structured dengue management plan. This should include regularly testing whether mosquitoes have grown resistant to the insecticides being

The cost of leaving home



MIND THE GAP

Barrister Noshin Nawal is a columnist for The Daily Star. She can be reached at nawanoshin@gmail.com.

NOSHIN NAWAL

Arif left Dhaka last year for what he called "a better life." On paper, he's thriving: a stable job in IT, a modest flat in Manchester, a new fondness for waterproof jackets. But when I asked him what he missed most, he didn't just say "lazy mornings," "adda over chaa," or "my mother's voice." He mentioned, "having someone to laugh with at 2am without booking it on Google Calendar."

This is the unspoken cost of leaving—the everyday moments that don't fit into migration agency brochures or glossy remittance statistics. Every year, thousands of young Bangladeshis chase foreign horizons. They leave with suitcases stuffed with pickles, dry fish, and dreams, imagining a land paved with career opportunities and better healthcare systems. And yes, the paycheques are bigger, the streets are cleaner, and no one honks when the traffic light turns green. But no one tells you that in exchange for your pounds and dollars, you must mortgage your roots, your community, and sometimes, your sanity.

The first year abroad is often a blur of survival. You're figuring out buses, signing tenancy agreements, and learning how to cook dal without it resembling uputan. You post triumphant photos on Instagram—new jackets, neat flats, foreign skylines—because admitting you cried into a frozen paratha from a supermarket doesn't fit the narrative of success. Back home, your family beams with pride as they whisper to neighbours about "amader chele UK te ase." What they don't see is their son walking home from work through a city of strangers, the silence broken only by the squeak of his shoes.

Across oceans and time zones, the promise of greener pastures often ends with patchy Wi-Fi calls where

mothers pretend not to cry and fathers say, "Don't worry about us, you just take care of yourself."

The festivals hurt most. Eid, which once meant noisy cousins, chaotic kitchens, and new clothes, becomes an awkward Zoom background. Abroad, you microwave frozen samosas, slip into your one neatly ironed panjabi, and send digital

Home is not just geography. It is shared memory, messy togetherness, and the comfort of being known. When we trade that for Western salaries, we gain financial stability but lose something harder to measure: belonging. In the end, I think the question is not just how much we gain by leaving, but how much we lose by not staying.

salamis. The only "Eid crowd" you face is the queue at the halal butcher. It is festive enough for Facebook posts but hollow enough to make you long for the sweaty, noisy, joyful chaos of Dhaka mornings, where 30 relatives fought over who got the leg piece of the roast.

Weddings aren't spared either. Back home, they're three-day-long circuses of colour, gossip, and gluttony. Abroad, you scroll through grainy livestreams on Facebook, hearts breaking as you spot your childhood best friend dancing without you, your favourite auntie crying at her daughter's farewell. You send a congratulatory message with emojis, but deep down you know: emojis cannot hug, and live

streams cannot smell of roses and kacchi biryani.

Even ordinary days are filled with absence. No cousin showing up with shingara on a rainy afternoon. No uncle popping by to argue politics over cha. No rooftop cricket games at sunset, no neighbourhood shopkeeper who already knows your brand of chanachur. Abroad, you are anonymous—another brown face in a sea of commuters, another "Arif" mispronounced as "A-reef." You gain privacy but lose belonging.

And then there are the parents. They age faster in your absence. They pause longer before answering the phone. They skip details about illnesses because they don't want to worry you. You send them money; they send you blessings. Then both sides cry after pressing the red button. In a cruel twist, the very remittances that build bigger houses in Baridhara also build emptier ones, because the children they were meant for live half a world away.

Communities back home feel the loss too. Every farewell party is disguised as a "get-together," with Dhaka increasingly seen as a layover, not a destination. Neighbourhood football teams vanish, rooftops grow quieter, and even weddings lack the warmth they once had. A society can lose more than its workforce; it can lose its laughter, its culture, its collective memory.

None of this is to say staying behind is easy. Bangladesh tests patience in ways no IELTS preparation class ever could. There are traffic jams that feel like psychological warfare, low salaries that make ambition look like a luxury, and politics that would make Machiavelli throw up his hands. It's tempting to leave, and many do. But leaving carries a price tag that no exchange rate can balance: fractured families, eroded traditions, and the slow hollowing out of community life.

Because yes, you can build a house with your pounds, but who will sit in it with you when you come back? You can pay your parents' hospital bills, but will you be there to hold their hands in the waiting room? You can buy your child Lego sets from London, but will they ever know the joy of catching fish in monsoon floods with cousins?

Home is not just geography. It is shared memory, messy togetherness, and the comfort of being known. When we trade that for Western

salaries, we gain financial stability but lose something harder to measure: belonging. In the end, I think the question is not just how

much we gain by leaving, but how much we lose by not staying. And that loss may be the heaviest price of all.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Netrokona District Hospital, Netrokona

e-Tender Notice

Memo No. DSH/NET/2025/E-Tender/702

Date: 14/09/2025

e-Tender will be invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for Supply of following goods.

Tender ID No.	Description	Publication date and time	Online tender closing & opening date and time
1144979	Procurement of Non EDCL Medicine Group	15-Sep-2025 14:00:00	05-Oct-2025 14:00:00
1144988	Supply of MSR Equipment.	15-Sep-2025 14:00:00	05-Oct-2025 14:00:00
1144989	Supply of Gauge, Bandage, Cotton	15-Sep-2025 14:00:00	05-Oct-2025 14:00:00
1144990	Supply of Linen	15-Sep-2025 14:00:00	05-Oct-2025 14:00:00
1144992	Supply of Chemical Reagents	15-Sep-2025 14:00:00	05-Oct-2025 14:00:00
1144993	Supply of Furniture	15-Sep-2025 14:00:00	05-Oct-2025 14:00:00

This is online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through and registered bank branch. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

*Rehman
14/09/2025*

Dr. Mohammed Ekramul Hasan
Superintendent (Acting)
Netrokona District Hospital,
Netrokona

Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's political satire '840' lands on iScreen

After its theatrical release, Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's film **840** is set to debut on the streaming platform iScreen on September 15. The series is being called a 'double-up' of the director's wildly popular 2007 Channel i drama, **420**, which became a cultural phenomenon in its time.

A poster for the project was shared by iScreen on Friday, confirming the release date for what they describe as a mystery-filled plot.

840 features a stellar cast, led by Nasir Uddin Khan in the central role. Other acclaimed actors, including Marzuk Russell, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Zakia Bari Mamo, Shariar Nazim Joy, and Zayed Khan, also grace the film.

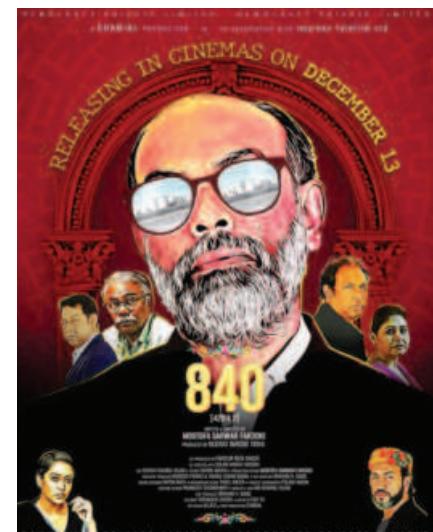


PHOTO: COLLECTED

Cultural world mourns Farida Parveen, the 'Queen of Lalon Geeti'

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Singer Kanak Chapa was one of the first artistes who rushed to the hospital after learning of the death of Farida Parveen, a trailblazer in Bangladeshi music. Hailed as the 'Queen of Lalon Geeti', the 70-year-old singer took her last breath at 10:15 p.m. at a hospital in the capital.

"She was a learning tree, an inspiration," she said. "Whenever I wanted to listen to songs by Lalon, it was her voice which drew me the most. We lost a guardian."

The award-winning singer continued speaking, this time aiming her speech towards netizens, "Please, do not speak ill of artists who have passed away. Do not call them 'sinners,' because it is the artists who have no place to commit corruption. Neither do we endorse falsehoods, we simply make art."

The entirety of Bangladesh's entertainment industry was grief-

stricken after losing this legendary singer to kidney complications.

"Ever since I was little, all I wanted to do was to sing," said Beauty of Close-up One fame. "I came into this industry, trying to emulate Farida Parveen. She was one of the artists that took Lalon's words beyond national barriers."

"I came into this industry, trying to emulate Farida Parveen. She was one of the artists that took Lalon's words beyond national barriers."

Legendary actor Uzzal, visibly distraught, said, "An artist like this comes around maybe once in a hundred years; there surely won't be anyone like her, anytime soon."

"I express deep sorrow at the death of Farida Parveen," wrote Shakib Khan, known as Bangladesh's 'Mega Star.' "She was a shining light in our Lalon

songs, Nazrul Sangeet, and patriotic songs. Her voice carried the soul and culture of the soil and people of Bengal."

Legendary singer and Bangladeshi icon Runa Laila, unable to attend the funeral, joined over video call to pay her last respects to the singer.

In a condolence message on Saturday, Bangladesh's Chief Adviser, Dr. Mohammad Yunus, said, "For five decades, the songs of Lalon Sai from her voice have touched people's hearts. Her songs elevated the inherent philosophy and sense of life in our culture to a new level. Farida Parveen did not stay away from music despite various adversities. Her devotion to music has inspired generations."

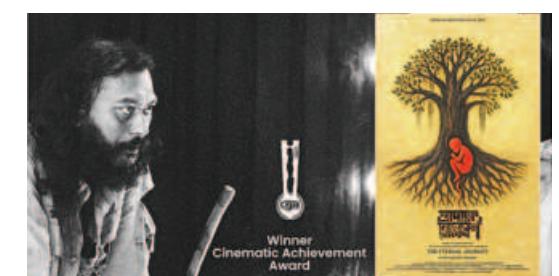
Farida Parveen's body was taken to the central Shaheed Minar at 12 p.m. to allow people to pay their respects. She was laid to rest in her home district of Kushtia. Besides an everlasting legacy in music, she leaves behind four children.

Three plays, one ticket: Charuneedam celebrates 18th anniversary at Shilpkala



Charuneedam Theatre, the Dhaka troupe that began its journey in 2007, celebrates its 18th anniversary with an ambitious triple bill: the company will stage the 100th performances of three plays — **Arshola**, **Nana Ronger Din**, and **Sharater Megh** — this evening at the Experimental Theatre Hall of the Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy. Audiences can see all three productions on a single ticket when the curtain rises at 7 pm.

Renowned director Gazi Rakayet, who helms the company's Chekhov-focused season, has directed the three productions.



Bangladeshi Film 'The Eternal Journey' wins three international awards

In a landmark for Bangladeshi independent cinema, Fozle Rabby's **The Eternal Journey** won three awards at the 3rd Karditsa International Short Film Festival Opseis (KISFFO 2025) in Greece.

The experimental film, exploring self-identity, received the Cinematic Achievement Award, Best Short Experimental Film Award (dedicated to Greek director Angelos Frantzis), and Best Short International Actor Award for Pankaj Chowdhury Rony's powerful performance.

Inspired by Naznin Mostofa's play **Kute Kahar** and Arindam Natya Goshthi's stage production, the film blends documentary realism with poetic abstraction to tell the forgotten story of Bengal's palanquin bearers.

NEWS

Police adopt stringent criteria

FROM PAGE 12

thrice or more previously for major offences, the officer will not be considered for selection.

Also, an officer will be disqualified for the post if punished for a minor offence within a year or for a major offence within two years prior to selection.

Candidates have to score an average of 80 marks in their Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) for five consecutive years and must not have any negative remarks from evaluators in ACRs for three years in a row.

On July 3, the police headquarters circulated the policy, signed by IGP Baharul Alam, to all unit chiefs for implementation.

"The policy aims to ensure selection of highly professional officers as OCs," IGP Baharul Alam

told The Daily Star recently.

He further said that many influential people, including political leaders, often lobby for certain officers to have them selected as OCs at preferred police stations. The new policy will help curb this.

Several police officials told this newspaper that during the Awami League government's tenure, officers loyal to the ruling party secured "lucrative" postings under Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

At that time, both loyalty and lobbying played a decisive role in determining postings, particularly at strategically important stations. There were numerous allegations of officers bribing their superiors to secure postings. Some officers even exploited political links to accumulate wealth, they said.

In a confessional statement to a magistrate on March 24, former IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, now on trial over crimes against humanity during the July uprising, said political interference in the police force intensified after 2018.

He alleged that a section of officers largely ignored directives from the IGP, believing they had political backing to act independently. Some even had close ties with senior leaders of the ruling party.

Giving an indication of the powers wielded by these officers, Mamun said that several OCs of police stations under DMP, along with senior officials, used to attend important meetings that took place at the residence of former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan.

True democracy guarantees equal rights

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Tarique also praised Khaleda Zia for advancing Ziaur Rahman's vision, despite enduring repeated attacks from autocracies.

He criticised the Awami League government for what he described as its obstruction of democracy over the last decade and a half.

Citing this year's theme for International Day of Democracy — "Achieving Gender Equality Action by Action" — Tarique said democracy guarantees equal opportunities and dignity for all genders, a fundamental human right.

"In a democratic society, a strong environment for protests exists, which prevents the deepening of gender divisions and ensures a steady move towards equal rights."

He urged everyone to work together to restore democracy in Bangladesh.

Tarique concluded his message with the hope of building a Bangladesh that ensures prosperity and self-reliance for future generations, alongside an inclusive and liberal political environment, and social stability and justice.

Nepal PM vows to meet

FROM PAGE 12

for those killed in the unrest, before meetings began in the key government complex of Singha Durbar -- where several buildings were set on fire during mass protests on Tuesday, reports AFP.

"The situation that I have come in, I have not wished to come here. My name was brought from the streets," Karki said. Parliament has been dissolved and elections set for March 5, 2026.

"We will not stay here more than six months in any situation, we will complete our responsibilities and pledge to hand over to the next parliament and ministers," she added, in a speech to the nation.

The arson and vandalism that occurred during the protest were criminal acts against the country,

she also said, adding that the criminal acts must be investigated and the truth made public, with those responsible brought to justice, reports The Kathmandu Post.

At least 72 people were killed in two days of protests, and 191 injured, the government's chief secretary Eknarayan Aryal said yesterday, increasing an earlier toll of 51.

It was the worst unrest since the end of a decade-long civil war and the abolition of the monarchy in 2008.

The appointment of Karki, known for her independence, came after intense negotiations by army chief General Ashok Raj Sigdel and President Ram Chandra Paudel, including with representatives of "Gen Z", the loose umbrella title of the youth protest movement.

Thousands of young activists had

used the Discord app to name Karki as their choice of leader.

Ordinary Nepalis said they were hopeful the government would bring change -- but were aware the challenges were heavy.

"This government's list of responsibilities and issues to address isn't easy," said grocery shopkeeper Satya Narayan, 69, in Pharping village, about an hour outside the capital.

"It also needs to ensure unity and harmony in the country by taking all sections along".

President Paudel, who swore Karki into office, said late Saturday that "a peaceful solution has been found through a difficult process".

Soldiers have scaled back their presence on the streets, where they had been deployed in large numbers after the protests.

Trials of defence officers

FROM PAGE 12

former defence officials are in custody over crimes against humanity. They are Maj Gen (sacked) Ziaul Ahsan, accused of involvement in enforced disappearances and assassinations during his time with the Rapid Action Battalion, and Rear Admiral (retd) Mohammad Sohail, former Rab legal and media wing director, charged in a case over abduction, torture, and enforced disappearance.

While briefing journalists, the chief prosecutor said, "The tribunal law was originally formulated to prosecute members of the armed forces. Later, through an amendment, some other elements were added. Therefore, there is no scope to raise the question of whether the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, can try members of armed forces or not. It is irrefutably proven, and by mentioning the law, we have shown the tribunal that this law is mainly for the trial of members of the armed and auxiliary forces."

That is why this law separately mentions various forces, including all state forces, intelligence agencies, and different segments of the police. Crimes committed through them that amount to crimes against humanity, meaning crimes that are widespread and systematic in nature, can only be tried at the tribunal, and nowhere else. Such crimes cannot be tried even at an internal military court, nor at existing criminal courts. The law is very clear

on this."

Meanwhile, Tajul read out the opening statement in a case filed over the killings of six protesters in Ashulia. The protesters were shot and subsequently burned by police on August 5 last year.

The prosecution's witness testimonies and cross-examinations are scheduled to take place in the case today.

In his statement, he said 1,500 people were martyred during the uprising, and thousands of students and citizens suffered paralysis and blindness. On August 5, at least 29 people were killed and hundreds injured by police firing in Ashulia.

Later, the bodies of five deceased and one critically injured person were loaded into a police van and set on fire. He said, "It is beyond imagination how far humanity can fall for someone to commit such acts."

The prosecution stated that investigations show that police and armed activists of the Awami League deliberately opened fire on the peaceful student procession. Not only were people killed, but the perpetrators also tried to destroy evidence by burning the bodies and shifting the blame onto the protesters.

The chief prosecutor said the incident made the international community deeply concerned and constituted a clear violation of international human rights laws and multilateral treaties. He compared

Sheikh Hasina's rule to fascist regimes like Hitler, Mussolini, and Pinochet, saying, "This trial is not a revenge; it is a symbol of justice."

The prosecution added that the evidence against the accused is "irrefutable and beyond doubt."

Witness testimonies, digital footage, forensic reports, human rights organisation reports, and statements from 53 witnesses will be presented before the court, Tajul said.

"This trial will set a precedent in the nation's history. The hand of justice is long, and even absconding accused will not escape accountability," he said.

Man killed

FROM PAGE 12

local betel nut orchards.

Neighbours rushed to the house after hearing the woman scream and discovered her husband lying in a pool of blood.

The victim's wife later told police that the suspect raped her after killing her husband. The suspect denied the allegation.

She was admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital, where she is undergoing treatment following a medical examination.

Police have recovered the knife used in the murder and said further investigation is underway.

A case is being prepared to be filed over the incident.

THE DOUBLE EDGE OF REBELLION

Nepal reshaping the grammar of politics

CP ARYAL

Nepal, a small republic pressed between giant neighbours, is once again breathing through smoke and slogans. From Baneswar, Maitighar to Basantapur, from tea stalls to bus rides in public, one hears the same restless refrain: *aba ta feri ladnu parchha* (now we must fight again).

In every generation, Nepal seems condemned to replay the cycle of hope and disillusionment, revolution and betrayal. Yet this time, something feels different. This time, the young—those born after 1990, raised in the aftermath of the Maoist war, and socialised in the language of TikTok and memes—are at the front. They call themselves Gen-G, a digital generation that has turned despair into anger, and anger into collective action.

Here lies the generational maturity: anger, yes, but also a refusal to abandon democratic gains. Nepal's federal, secular, inclusive republic—though crippled by corruption—remains a historic achievement. The youth are not demanding monarchy or dictatorship; they are demanding a republic that works.

Rumours swirl in Kathmandu like autumn dust: the army may hand power back to the palace, "neighbours" may be scripting events from behind the curtain, the republic may collapse overnight. For now, those fears have not materialised. The constitution remains intact, though cracked.

And in a move both unexpected and symbolic, President Ramchandra Paudel named Sushila Karki—Nepal's first female Chief Justice, known for her integrity—as interim Prime Minister. Some had imagined Balen Shah, Kathmandu's 35-year old mayor, in that role. But he himself refused, cleverly, knowing that accepting interim office would disqualify him from the coming elections.

Thus, Sushila Karki carries the nation's fragile hope. Around her name gathers a collective sigh of relief, yet also a storm of suspicion. The streets have quietened, but not stilled. Youthful anger remains, waiting to erupt again should betrayal return.

Symbols and the fragility of trust

Sociology teaches us that symbols carry more power than institutions in times of rupture. Karki, though one individual, became the symbolic answer to

She embodied something rare: credibility in a system corroded by patronage and lies. For a brief moment, her appointment seemed to turn bloodied streets into cautious prayers.

But Weber reminds us: charisma alone is never enough. Charisma must be institutionalised, or it vanishes like smoke. Karki's task is immense: to hold elections within six months, to calm rival parties already furious at the dissolution of parliament, and to rebuild some semblance of trust in the republic.

The old guard—Congress and UML—protest loudly, calling the process illegitimate. Royalists whisper that the time has come to restore their lost throne. Opportunists circle like crows.

In teashops across the valley, one hears the same scepticism: *K garla ra? Ekdama garo cha.* (What can she really do? It's extremely difficult.) Yet there is also quiet admiration: *Kam se kam safā cha.* (At least she is clean.)

These mixed voices capture Nepal's fragile trust. Symbols can soothe anger, but if they collapse, disappointment is deeper than before.

Hijackers of hope

Every revolution risks hijack; Pratap Bhanu Mehta notes that youths' revolutions have more chances of being hijacked during big revolutions. The Gen-G protests began as a raw, authentic cry against corruption and political crookedness. Young men and women, many still in their twenties, marched with banners demanding transparency, jobs, dignity. Yet soon, other forces joined—the royalists, hoping to use youth anger to reopen the palace gates; the new populist parties, eager to claim visibility; even old party factions, pretending to be vigilantes.

Reports suggest these groups were the most violent—smashing property, torching vehicles, throwing stones—actions that diluted the moral clarity of the youth. The question spread quickly on talk shows: were the protests about justice, or about power?

Durkheim would call this moment one of "collective effervescence"—a flood of shared emotion binding people into one body. But effervescence is fragile; it can be redirected by skilled opportunists. Here lies the double edge of rebellion: it awakens possibility but also invites hijackers. In this sense, the youth are both powerful and vulnerable. Their voices carry authenticity, but their platforms can be stolen.

Digital squares and street politics

One cannot understand this uprising without understanding its digital heartbeat. The 1990 People's Movement had the street as its stage. The 2006 uprising used FM radios, pamphlets, and clandestine networks. The 2020s belong to TikTok, YouTube, Discord, or Reddit.

The Gen-G protest did not begin in a square but in comment sections, memes, and livestreams. When teenagers in Baneshwor uploaded videos of police violence, those clips travelled faster than any newspaper headline. The digital sphere became a new public sphere, echoing Habermas but transformed for the algorithmic age.

On TikTok, Oli and Deuba were mocked through parody songs. On Reddit threads, anonymous youth drafted manifestos demanding free healthcare, fair taxation, and the end of *afnā manče* politics (nepotism) while lambasting the NepoBaby (hinting at one's career success attributed to their parents in politics). On YouTube, young creators uploaded fiery speeches comparing Nepal's corruption to a "poison in the national bloodstream."

This digital rebellion spilled into the physical. What had been likes and shares became marches and chants. Baneshwor, Maitighar, Ratna Park—all became extensions of the digital commons; young protesters were seen on the screen of Kantipur TV with the background of a vandalised studio during the protest.

State violence and the collapse of legitimacy

The bloodthirsty state's response was predictable yet devastating. Instead of dialogue, it sent police with batons, tear gas, rubber bullets. Teenagers, some barely 20-28, fell injured or dead. In Chitwan, a young girl was filmed crying, holding her wounded brother, asking, "Why did they shoot us? We were only shouting." That clip went viral, crystallising anger across the country.

When a government kills its youth, it loses its moral right to rule. This was true when the Rana regime fell, true when the monarchy collapsed, and



Demonstrators shout slogans as they stand on a barricade during a protest against corruption and the government's decision to block several social media platforms, in Kathmandu, Nepal, September 8. REUTERS/Navesh Chitrakar

remains true today. Institutions—the police, parliament, cabinet—appeared not as guardians but predators. Giddens reminds us that institutions are the

▲
Nepal's former Chief Justice Sushila Karki has been appointed as the country's interim leader, while President Ramchandra Paudel has dissolved parliament and announced fresh elections for 5 March, 2026.

"structural backbone" of modern life. When that backbone fractures, society collapses into distrust.

Nepalis are no strangers to betrayal. But there was a rawness this time. Whether in tea stalls of Jhapa or in bus queues of Pokhara, people whispered over television news: *Sarkar afnai chhora chhori lai marna tayar cha.* (The government is ready to kill its own children.) That sentence contains the deepest sociological meaning of distrust—when the state is no longer father but predator.

The flame of anger and the architecture of renewal

And yet, even as blood dried on the streets, something else was born: an insistence that this republic, however broken, must not be surrendered. Youth slogans declared: "2063 ko ragat 2082 ma raja lyauña bageko hoina." (The blood of 2006 was not shed to bring back the king in 2025.)

Here lies the generational maturity: anger, yes, but also a refusal to abandon democratic gains. Nepal's federal, secular, inclusive republic—though crippled by corruption—remains a historic achievement. The youth are not demanding monarchy or dictatorship; they are demanding a republic that works.

Sociology teaches that anger can be generative if channelled into architecture. The challenge now is to institutionalise this energy. Strengthen the Election Commission so it cannot be bought. Reform the bureaucracy so a driver's licence does not require bribes. Create spaces for youth in local governments, not as

token ward members but as decision-makers. If this does not happen, today's anger will fade into cynicism. But if it does, the Gen-G rebellion will mark not just a rupture but a rebirth.

Between tea shops and tiktok: Everyday politics transformed

Perhaps the most enduring change is not in parliament but in everyday conversations. Tea shop debates now host fiery arguments about youth futures, unemployment, digital taxation. Bus rides echo with debates about Balen's refusal of the premiership. Farmers in the hinterland wonder aloud if the republic will ever protect their crops. Migrant workers in the Gulf send money home while streaming TikTok lives of the protest.

Politics is no longer distant. It has entered the kitchen, the teashop, the smartphone. Gen-G has forced ordinary Nepalis to see the state not as distant rulers but as accountable servants. Whether this perception lasts depends on how the next months unfold. But the shift is undeniable: the republic now belongs to public conversations, not just parliamentary elites.

The double edge of rebellion

The Gen-G movement stands in continuity with Nepal's long history of revolt, yet it is distinct in form, character, and horizon. It is digital, decentralised, ironic, poetic. It is angry at corruption yet protective of democracy. It is easily hijacked, yet resilient in its refusal to return to monarchy. It is fragile, yet historic.

This is the double edge of rebellion: it can liberate or it can be stolen. It can build institutions or burn them. It can inspire a generation or exhaust it. Which edge cuts deeper will depend not only on the youth but on the opportunists who surround them, and on whether figures like Sushila Karki can protect the fragile promise of transition.

For now, Nepal stands at a threshold, fragile but luminous. The smoke over Kathmandu has lifted with rains, but the memory remains. The youth have spoken: they will no longer scroll silently, no longer accept crumbs, no longer bow to crookedness. Their anger has reshaped the grammar of politics. Whether this grammar becomes poetry or tragedy remains the unfinished story of Nepal.

CP Aryal teaches at Nepal's Kathmandu University, School of Arts.



Star SPORT

DHAKA MONDAY SEPTEMBER 15, 2025, BHADRA 31, 1432 BS

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
NCL T20
Dhaka vs Barishal
Live from 9:30 am
Khulna vs Chattogram
Live from 1:30 pm
Asia Cup T20

UAE vs Oman
Live from 6:00 pm
Hong Kong vs Sri Lanka
Live from 8:30 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD2
World Athletics C'ships
Live from 2:00 pm



Jamaica's Oblique Seville (No. 7) outpaces compatriot Kishane Thompson and defending champion Noah Lyles of USA to win the gold in the 100m final of the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo on Sunday – the first Jamaican to win gold in the blue riband event in 10 years. Seville timed a personal best of 9.77sec for the victory, with Thompson taking silver in 9.82sec while Lyles claimed bronze with a time of 9.89sec. (R) USA's Melissa Jefferson-Wooden took the women's 100m title with a new championship record at 10.61sec, beating Jamaica's Tina Clayton (10.76sec) and Olympic champion Julien Alfred of Saint Lucia (10.84sec).

PHOTO: AFP/REUTERS

Lankans face struggling Hong Kong

STAR SPORTS DESK



Sri Lanka will take on struggling Hong Kong at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium today, hoping to carry their momentum with another win in the group stage of the ongoing Asia Cup.

The Lankans started the tournament with a bang, beating Bangladesh by a convincing margin of six wickets with 32 balls to spare. The win not only helped them leapfrog the Tigers to second place in the points table but also boosted their net run rate to 2.595.

With Hong Kong already suffering heavy defeats in both their matches against Afghanistan and Bangladesh, they still have a mathematical possibility of going through. But Sri Lanka will be eyeing another big win against the Associate nation, which could propel them to the top with a better net run rate than Afghanistan's 4.700.

All these equations mean Bangladesh would not only need to beat Afghanistan by a big margin tomorrow in Abu Dhabi but also hope Rashid Khan and Co suffer a defeat against the Lankans in their final group game to leave the Tigers with a chance of progressing as one of the two best teams from Group B.

Meanwhile, in Group A, UAE will face Oman in tomorrow's other match in Abu Dhabi.

Will Tigers pay for carrying a struggling Hridoy?

EKUSH TAPADER from Abu Dhabi

The ball isn't finding the middle of the bat; the timing is all wrong. This has been the story of Bangladesh's Towhid Hridoy for a while now.

On the eve of the Tigers' Asia Cup opener in Abu Dhabi against Hong Kong, Hridoy left the nets discussing the issue with Parvez Hossain Emon – perhaps seeking a solution to his struggles.

Even Hridoy admitted that he failed to find a solution. "I tried to hit, but the ball just wasn't connecting with the bat," he said after a sluggish knock in the chase against Hong Kong.

Against Sri Lanka, fortune briefly smiled on him when a catch was dropped at 4. But the very next ball, he was run out by a direct throw.

Hridoy's vulnerability outside off stump has been ruthlessly exposed, and Bangladesh are paying the price for persisting with their out-of-form right-hander.

The signs were there in the pre-Asia Cup series against the Netherlands in Sylhet. Dutch spinners Aryan Dutt and Tim Pringle quickly targeted his off-side weakness. Hridoy repeatedly tried to drag deliveries to the leg side, falling into their trap. In modern cricket, such flaws rarely go unnoticed on opposition analysts' laptops.

The numbers underline his slump: across his last 20 innings, Hridoy has managed 403 runs at a strike rate of 112.88. In the last 10 innings, it gets worse – 186 runs at 100.54. By comparison, Jakir Ali struck at a strike rate of 131 across 19 innings in the same span.



In his first 20 T20I innings, Hridoy averaged 30.87 with a strike rate of 135.34, garnering a reputation for clean hitting. But now, his T20 graph only seems to be going downward.

Bangladesh's defeat to Sri Lanka has left them vulnerable in the group stage, with a strong Afghanistan next up. Giving Hridoy another chance now means thrusting him under even greater pressure.

Yet chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu remains reluctant to abandon him. "Maybe Hridoy isn't in his best rhythm. He has more impact on wickets where the ball comes nicely onto the bat. After investing in him for so long, now is the time to get returns – otherwise, the investment itself looks questionable. Hopefully, he'll come back," Lipu told The Daily Star.

Still, concern was evident. Lipu also stressed that responsibility lay beyond Hridoy: "You can't blame only Hridoy. The entire top order failed (against Sri Lanka)."

But in reality, the middle order is expected to rescue the team when the top falters. In recent games, Bangladesh's top order had generally provided a platform, with at least one of the openers between Tanzid Hasan Tamim and Emon able to provide a good start and skipper Litton Das being a consistent scorer at No. 3.

With the Tigers losing early wickets against Sri Lanka, it was the first time in a while that the middle order was tested. That's where Hridoy was expected to play a crucial role, but he failed at the most important stage.

Options do exist. Saif Hassan, recalled after two years, impressed with a stormy knock against the Netherlands. His part-time off spin and sharp fielding also add value. Nurul Hasan Sohan, too, is a possible alternative.

Bangladesh now face Afghanistan tomorrow, where a defeat would mean elimination. Even with victory, their fate depends on the Sri Lanka-Afghanistan result. In a high-stakes scenario, the question remains: should the Tigers persist with a struggling Hridoy when other choices are waiting?

Rain dampens spirits on NCL T20's opening day

SPORTS REPORTER

Nature had its say on the opening day of the National Cricket League (NCL) T20 as the match between Rangpur Division and Sylhet Division at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogura was wiped out by rain without a ball being bowled, while in Rajshahi, Dhaka Metro handed Rajshahi Division a seven wicket defeat in a five over game.

There was an air of expectation in Bogura for the return of cricket at the venue. The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) had released 10 thousand tickets and according to board sources, tickets worth of Tk 1,30,000 were sold.

However, the Bogura fans had to return home disappointed after the game was abandoned due to rain.

The match in Rajshahi was heavily affected by rain as well, as it kicked off at 12:50pm, more than three hours after the scheduled start.

Rajshahi Division posted 60-3, with Sabbir Rahman hitting an unbeaten 15 ball 33. Metro sealed the chase in 4.3 overs, thanks to Mahfizul Islam Robin's 12 ball 30 not out.

With heavy rain rendering further play impossible at Bogura for the next few days, September 15 and 16's matches have been shifted to Rajshahi.

Matches at Rajshahi and Bogura will go on till September 19 before the tournament moves to Sylhet.

As this year's NCL T20 is taking part in late monsoon, rain is likely to remain a threat throughout the tournament.



Messi's Panenka pain, Ronaldo still ahead

STAR SPORTS DESK



Lionel Messi's Panenka penalty miss in Inter Miami's 3-0 defeat against Charlotte FC in an MLS encounter yesterday reigned comparisons with Cristiano Ronaldo. Messi has now taken 145 career penalties, scoring 113 and missing 32, with a conversion rate of 77.93%. Ronaldo, by contrast, has attempted 210 penalties, converting 177 and missing 33, with a higher success rate of 84.29%.

Messi's miss was his first in nearly three years during regular play, excluding shootouts. His previous failure came at the 2022 FIFA World Cup group stage when Poland goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny denied him in an eventual 2-0 Argentina win. Since then, the Argentine had converted six consecutive in-game penalties for both Argentina and Inter Miami before Saturday's miss.



Manchester City's goal-scoring machine Erling Haaland struck twice in a 3-0 Premier League thrashing of Manchester United at the Etihad on Sunday, giving Pep Guardiola's side bragging rights in the latest edition of the derby. City climbed to eighth with their second win from four, while United are 14th with just one victory.

'Others know me as a source of goals'

Minhazul Karim Shadin's journey in football began after a setback but with strong family support, he redirected his path towards football. Today, he stands out as a promising forward who helped his team, PWD, earn promotion to the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) by becoming both the most valuable player and top scorer of the Bangladesh Championship League (BCL). **The Daily Star's Anisur Rahman** spoke to learn about his past, his present and future plans. Here are the excerpts:

DS: How do you evaluate your performance in the BCL last season?

Minhazul Karim Shadin (MKS): I've always been a dedicated footballer. Before the league began, I set myself the target of finishing on a high so I could make a strong case for playing in the top-tier league. Clubs want to see achievements -- this was my chance to prove myself. Winning both the MVP and top scorer awards in a single BCL season is a rare accomplishment, and I believe it will play a significant role in shaping my future career.

DS: After scoring eight goals and assisting 22 in 18 BCL matches, what's your target in the BPL?

MKS: As a right winger, I'm naturally inclined to assist more than score, but my positioning and performance will ultimately depend on the coach's game plan -- just as it did during our BCL campaign.

DS: How do you view the difference in challenge between the BCL and BPL?

MKS: The BPL is a whole different level. I had offers from other clubs, but I chose to stay with PWD because I believe I'll get more game time here, which is crucial for my development. Of course, the financial incentives are better in the BPL, but for me, consistent playing time matters more at this stage. However, the BPL is going to be challenging for me because everyone now knows me as a source of goals.

DS: Can PWD survive and thrive in the top-tier after finally earning promotion on their third attempt?

MKS: Absolutely. We have a balanced squad with both experienced players and a group of young, energetic players with an average age of around 23.

We've been training intensively for the past 10 days, and our coach is emphasising teamwork, just like he did during the BCL. The team spirit is strong, and we're optimistic about finishing well in the BPL table.

DS: What do you think is your biggest strength?

MKS: I may not be the strongest physically since I'm only 5 feet 9 inches tall, but my strengths lie in technical skills -- especially one-on-one dribbling, early crosses, and set-piece delivery. I took all set-pieces for PWD SC in the BCL, and I think

I assisted 10 to 12 goals from set-pieces alone.

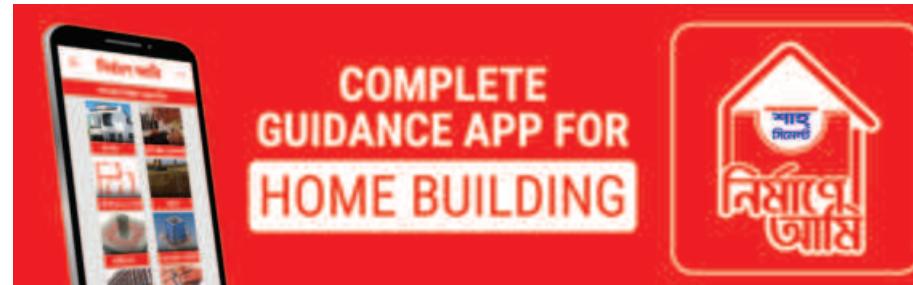
DS: Tell us a bit about your journey into football.

MKS: It all started in 2014 when I failed to get admitted to Jhenaidah Cadet College due to being overweight, despite finishing third in the written and fifteenth in the viva tests. That's when I turned to football. I participated in inter-school football tournaments and was eventually spotted by coach Kazi Maruf of Shams-Ul-Huda Academy in 2015. I trained there from 2016 to 2022. My father, Sergeant Fazlul Karim, played for the Bangladesh Army football team for 17 years, so football runs in the family. I was part of the U-14 squad at the BFF Elite Academy in Sylhet and later played for the Bangladesh under-16 team. Before joining PWD, I played two BCL seasons with Dhaka Wanderers Club.





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THE ONLY STEEL FACTORY IN BANGLADESH TO RECEIVE THE
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True democracy guarantees equal rights for all genders

Says Tarique on occasion of Int'l Day of Democracy

BSS, Dhaka



BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday paid tributes to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the establishment of democracy and extended greetings to pro-democracy people worldwide on the occasion of International Day of Democracy today.

In a post on his verified Facebook page, he highlighted the importance of democracy as a universal value and a political system founded on the free expression of people's will.

"True democracy ensures full participation in all aspects of life -- political, economic, social and cultural... Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman, the proclaimer of independence, has restored multiparty democracy after the aggressive grip of the one-party Baksal rule. The core of his timeless philosophy and Bangladeshi nationalism was multiparty democracy."

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3



MOTHERHOOD IN MONSOON ... A flower seller shields her baby with her scarf and takes shelter under a tree near the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital, as heavy rain lashed the city yesterday afternoon. Even while waiting for the downpour to ease, she checks her flowers to make sure they are fresh for selling later.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Elect women MPs through direct polls

Demands Forum for Women's Political Rights

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Forum for Women's Political Rights has called for sweeping electoral reforms to ensure women's rightful place in parliament.

At a press conference yesterday at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity, the forum presented a written statement demanding that the 100 reserved seats for women be filled through direct elections starting from the upcoming polls.



"Without women's rightful share, parliament cannot truly be a representative institution of the people."

The statement was presented on behalf of the forum by Sushmita Roy, Professor Samina Luthfa, Taslima Akhtar Lima, and Sadaf Saaz Siddiqui. Mahrukh Mohiuddin and Dr Farah Kabir were also present.

The forum urged that political parties be legally required to nominate a minimum of 33 percent women candidates, with the target gradually raised to 50 percent through amendments to the Representation of the People Order.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

2 men beaten to death over theft allegations

STAR REPORT

Two people were killed over theft allegations in separate mob beating incidents in Gazipur and Feni yesterday.

In Gazipur, local farmer Md Mozammel, 50, was accused of stealing a household item. The incident took place in Dakshingaon village of Sanmania union under Kapasia upazila around 7:30am, reports our local correspondent, quoting witnesses.

Severely injured, Mozammel was first taken to Kapasia Upazila Health Complex and later shifted to Gazipur Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Medical College Hospital, where he died while undergoing treatment around 8:00pm.

The victim's cousin Omar Faruk said, "Around 10-12 people took Mozammel from in front of his house to a neighbouring house, accused him of theft, and beat him with sticks. The attackers had personal

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

Police adopt stringent criteria to select OCs

SHARIFUL ISLAM

A new policy has been introduced for selecting officers in-charge of police stations, outlining stringent eligibility criteria for inspectors aspiring to secure the coveted post, widely regarded as a seat of power within the force.

Senior officials say the policy is designed to ensure transparency and merit-based selection for a role that has long been marred by political interference and corruption. An OC commands significant power, with the authority to oversee investigations and manage resources at a police station.

"Only those officers with solid service records, relevant experience and good conduct will make to a list from which OCs will be chosen according to seniority," said an officer involved in drafting the policy.

Approved recently by Inspector General of Police (IGP) Baharul Alam, the new policy stipulates that an officer can hold the post of OC for a maximum of six years.

The move comes around five months before the country is expected to go to the national election in which OCs will play a key role in maintaining law and order.

There are 530 police stations under eight ranges, 110 stations in eight metropolitan police units and 24 railway police stations across the country.

According to the new policy, only those officers who have served as inspectors

for at least three years and completed a police station management course will be considered for inclusion in the list.

Officers above the age of 54 will be ineligible for the post, while those with HSC or higher educational qualifications will be given preference.

Punishment for financial irregularities or moral turpitude



NEW POLICY AT A GLANCE

- Inspectors need 3 years' service, station management course
- Officers above 54 or with record of offences ineligible
- Six-year cap imposed on serving as OC
- Candidates must average 80 marks in ACRs for 5 years
- Preference for HSC or higher educational qualifications

at any point during service will render a police officer ineligible for the position.

If an officer is punished twice or more while serving as an inspector or punished

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Man killed, wife 'raped' in Cox's Bazar Suspect caught by locals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A man was killed, and his wife was allegedly raped in Cox's Bazar town early yesterday.

The incident took place around 12:30am in the Uttarone Residential Area near Kalatali.

The suspect, identified as Birel Chakma, 54, was caught by locals while attempting to flee the scene of the crime and later handed over to police.

Police withheld the name of the murder victim to protect the identity of his wife, who has brought rape allegation against the suspect.

According to Inspector (Investigation) Mohammad Faruk Hossain of Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station, both men's families had recently migrated from Rangamati, and they were working as day labourers at

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

India brush aside Pakistan

AFP, Dubai

Spinners led by Kuldeep Yadav helped India thrash Pakistan by seven wickets in the Asia Cup on Sunday as the neighbours met on the cricket pitch for the first time since a military conflict between them in May.

Kuldeep returned figures of 3-18 and along with fellow spinner Axar Patel kept Pakistan down to 127-9 in a key Group A T20 clash in Dubai.

India lost two wickets after a fiery 31 off 13 balls from opener Abhishek Sharma, but skipper Suryakumar Yadav hit an unbeaten 47 to achieve the target with 25 balls to spare.

Suryakumar put on 56 runs with left-hander Tilak Varma, who hit 31 before being bowled by Saim Ayub.

The captain stood firm and hit the winning six as Indian fans celebrated at a stadium, which had lot of empty seats, and the players from both teams went off without handshakes.

India's bowlers set up the dominant win as Axar, who took 2-18, and Kuldeep combined to rattle the opposition batting, which suffered from a lack of partnerships.

Hardik Pandya struck in the first over to dismiss opener Ayub for a golden duck and fellow quick Jasprit Bumrah sent back wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Haris for three.

Sahibzada Farhan, who top-scored with 40, attempted to rebuild the innings along with Fakhar Zaman, who made 17, in a partnership of 39.

Axar broke the stand with his left-arm spin as he got Zaman caught out and in his next over had skipper Salman Agha out for three.



Residents of Char Ashardiya in Rajshahi's Godagari upazila are now living under open skies after the Padma devoured their homesteads. Over the past three weeks, river erosion has claimed more than 100 homes. This photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Nepal PM vows to meet protesters' anti-graft calls

Terms violence during protests 'criminal acts'; death toll rises to 72

AGENCIES

Nepal's new leader yesterday vowed to follow protesters' demands to "end corruption" as she began work as interim prime minister, after "Gen Z" youth demonstrations ousted her predecessor.



Sushila Karki, the 73-year-old former chief justice, has been tasked with restoring order and addressing protesters' demands for a corruption-free future ahead of elections in six months.

"We have to work according to the thinking of the Gen Z generation," Karki said in her first public comments since taking office on Friday. "What this group is demanding is the end of corruption, good governance and economic equality," she added.

Karki held a minute's silence yesterday

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4