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Independent commission needed to make police pro-people

Say speakers at Star roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police reform means putting safeguards in place so that the force can never again be abused for political gains, said lawyers, politicians, academics, and current and former police officials.

The only way forward to make the changes lasting is to form an independent police commission, they observed at a roundtable organised by The Daily Star at its office yesterday.

"No political party can dictate against whom I can file a case or submit a charge sheet. This is the least that must be ensured," said Baharul Alam, inspector general of police.

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed admitted that parties used the police for political gains.

"We all have, at some point in time, used the police -- either to stay in power or to return to power. The police also allowed themselves to be used. Every government has tried to keep them happy, turning them into kingmakers during elections," he added.

The police are still pandering to the powers of the day, Salahuddin said. "The filing of retaliatory cases en masse and mob violence represent this government's failure. The police could have refused to accept such cases."

"For example, when I was forcibly disappeared, my wife was not even allowed to file a general diary. This shows that the police do, in fact, have the capacity to refuse cases."

Justice Farid Ahmed, a former High Court judge, said, "Investigators take so much time because police officers operate on orders from political parties. They intentionally delay the submission of investigation reports."

At the roundtable, titled "Need for Police Reform: Civil Society Perspective", the speakers called for a new ordinance befitting a modern-day police force, replacing

the colonial-era laws still governing the police.

They debated about what a truly independent police commission looks like.

Earlier, on September 11, the interim government directed the law ministry to draft laws for the establishment of two commissions within the police: the Independent

is holding talks with parties on key reforms, Iftekharuzzaman lamented that recommendations of the Police Reform Commission were never properly discussed. "No recommendations, no reports -- nothing was debated. There was resistance. This needs research."

He criticised the reform commission's composition as well, saying eight of the 11 members were bureaucrats, including five in service, and two police officers. "Full of conflict of interest," he said.

Mohammed Iqbal, a member of the reform commission and former director general of the Department of Narcotics Control, said no conclusive recommendation on the formation of an independent police commission was made because of debate over the issue of its oversight.

"Some interpreted it [independence] as a commission that is out of the government executive branch. Fundamentally we agree that there should be an independent mechanism that will oversee police activities and how the state manages this institution. However, we cannot have a fully independent police commission outside of ministerial oversight," he said.

Former IGP Nurul Huda countered, "If police's investigative power cannot be separated from the government's executive authority, then you will see that one person faces 20 cases and ends up in jail, and once power changes, all those cases get dismissed."

Badiul Alam Majumder, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (SHUJAN) and a member of the consensus commission, noted that political parties unanimously agreed to an independent police commission.

"However, this won't be a constitutional commission. Being a constitutional body does not guarantee independence. This has to be created through law," he said, pointing out that the home ministry dissented on the proposal.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Prevent police's use for political party agendas

Make recruitment free from political influence

Dedicate teams for gender-based violence cases

Ensure budget, resources reach ground officers promptly

Investigation Services, headed by the law adviser, and the Internal Complaints Commission, headed by the home adviser.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman questioned this move. "So, the government retains the authority and control over the commissions," he said.

A member of the National Consensus Commission, which



Shamim Hossain jumps in the air after completing the final run that sealed Bangladesh's four-wicket victory over Sri Lanka in the first Super Four match of the ongoing Asia Cup yesterday. Opener Saif Hassan and Towhid Hridoy struck fifties as the Tigers chased down Sri Lanka's 169-run target with one ball to spare at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. Story on page 12.

PHOTO: ACC

World should not be intimidated by Israel

Says UN chief as Israel intensifies its 'horrendous' Gaza offensive; 51 Palestinians killed

AGENCIES

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the world should not be "intimidated" by Israel and its creeping annexation of the occupied West Bank, as the nearly two-year-long Israeli offensive in Gaza intensified yesterday, killing at least 51 people.

Guterres spoke to AFP on Friday ahead of the UN's signature high-

level week at which 10 countries will recognise a Palestinian state, according to France -- over fierce Israeli objections.

The meeting of more than 140 heads of state and government, which paralyses a corner of Manhattan for a week each year, will likely be dominated by the future of the Palestinians and the war in Gaza.

Israel has reportedly threatened to

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Star gets Superbrand status for 2025-26

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star, the highest-circulating English daily in Bangladesh, has been recognised as a Superbrand for 2025-26.

Superbrands Bangladesh, the local representative of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



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Independent commission needed to make police pro-people



“

If the police's investigative power isn't separated from the government's executive authority, you'll see someone with 20 cases be jailed — only for all those cases to be dismissed when power changes.”

MD NURUL HUDA, former inspector general of police



“

All political parties agreed to have an independent police commission during the Consensus Commission meetings. However, the Home Ministry opposed it.”

BADIUL ALAM MAJUMDAR, member of Consensus Commission



“

We have all, at some point, used the police — either to stay in power or to return to power. The police also allowed themselves to be used.”

SALAHUDDIN AHMED, standing committee member, BNP



“

They [police] were not only used; they allowed themselves to be used. In doing so, they gained advantages, enjoyed power, and violated citizens' rights.”

IFTEKHARUZZAMAN, executive director, TIB



“

No political party should have any influence over whom I can file a case against or name in a charge sheet — this minimum freedom must be ensured.”

BAHARUL ALAM, inspector general of police



“

Sensitive cases of gender-based violence should be investigated by a separate investigation team, equipped with the appropriate mindset and focus.”

FAHMIDA AKHTER, women's rights activist



“

During my last detention in July 2024, I was forcibly disappeared for four days. They pushed me against a wall and beat me until they got tired. I had a heart attack during the first day of remand.”

MOBARAK HOSSAIN, central committee member, Jamaat-e-Islami



“

Police often conduct arbitrations. When people come to the station to file a case, officers decide whether the matter is suitable for arbitration.”

JAVED RASIN, senior joint convener, NCP

FROM PAGE 1

Former additional IGP Motiur Rahman Sheikh said pressure to serve the ruling party hinders accountability and transparency. “The institutional sub-culture has been aligned with political loyalty rather than law enforcement ethics.”

Rizwanul Islam, law professor and dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, North South University, said bureaucratic impact would diminish if the police could be made more independent.

The depoliticisation can be achieved by focusing on key areas like recruitment and resource allocation, said speakers.

Justice Farid added, “We have to be very serious at the recruitment level. The political allegiance of the candidate must not be made public during recruitment. Recruitments must be finished in the shortest possible time so that there is no scope to lobby on anyone's behalf.”

Rizwanul stressed that the recruitment method needs to be changed so that the constable can have some hope of climbing the ladder.

Iqbal noted accountability and entitlement in the police force exist only up to a certain level of the force. “Beyond that, there is a grey area.”

He also highlighted resource shortages. “At the thana level, if



Speakers at a roundtable titled “Need for Police Reform: Civil Society Perspective” held at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

a police officer finds a dead body, they must cover transport costs themselves and are reimbursed a year later. The budget must be instantly available to duty bearers.”

Md Mobarak Hussain, a central committee member of Jamaat-e-Islami, narrated how he was arrested

seven times, and tortured in custody. “During my last detention in July last year, I was forcibly disappeared for four days. They pushed me against a wall and beat me until they got tired, and then they came back again. They broke my finger such that it was misshapen and bent and

I had to undergo a surgery.

“After being produced at court, I was taken into remand. I had a heart attack during the first day of remand,” he recalled.

Javed Rasin, senior joint convener of National Citizen Party, called for transparency in the evaluation and

monitoring of performance of police officers.

“The police often conduct arbitrations. When the people come to the station to file a case, the police decide whether arbitration can be conducted,” he said.

Women's rights lawyer Fahmida

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Indonesia volcano erupts as alert level raised

AFP, Jakarta

A volcano in eastern Indonesia has erupted multiple times, spewing a column of ash kilometres into the sky after authorities raised its alert level to the highest, prompting a local airport to suspend operations on Saturday.

Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki, a 1,584-metre high twin-peaked volcano on Flores island, launched into a series of eruptions Friday evening, with the largest at 10:46 pm local time sending volcanic material six kilometres (nearly four miles) above its peak, the volcanology agency said in a statement.

World should not be intimidated by Israel

FROM PAGE 1

annex the West Bank if Western nations press ahead with the recognition plan at the UN gathering.

But Guterres said, “We should not feel intimidated by the risk of retaliation.”

“With or without doing what we are doing, these actions would go on, and at least there is a chance to mobilise the international community to put pressure on them not to happen,” he said.

“What we are witnessing in Gaza is horrendous,” Guterres said as Israel threatened “unprecedented force” in its ongoing assault on Gaza City.

“It is the worst level of death and destruction that I've seen my time as Secretary-General, probably my life and the suffering of the Palestinian people cannot be described — famine, total lack of effective health care, people living without adequate shelters in huge concentration areas,” he said.

Israel's far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich has called for the annexation of swaths of the West Bank with an aim to “bury the idea of a Palestinian state.”

Israel's staunch ally, the United States, has held back from any criticism of the war in Gaza or vows to annex the West Bank -- and excoriated its allies who have vowed to recognise a Palestinian state.

Portugal became the latest country

in announcing plans to recognise a Palestinian state. In a statement on Friday, the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the recognition will take place on Sunday, a day before a high-level conference on Palestinian statehood at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

On the ground, Israel's military kept up its assault on Gaza City and the wider Gaza Strip yesterday, dismantling underground shafts and booby-trapped structures.

- ⦿ Guterres slams annexation drive of the occupied West Bank
- ⦿ Trump admin pursues \$6bn weapons sale to Israel: WSJ report
- ⦿ Portugal latest country to recognise a Palestinian state

Israel's intensified military demolition campaign targeting high-rise buildings in Gaza City began this week alongside a ground assault.

Its forces, which control Gaza City's eastern suburbs, have in recent days been pounding the Sheikh Radwan and Tel Al-Hawa areas from where they would be positioned to advance on central and western parts of the city, where most of the population is sheltering.

The military estimates it has demolished up to 20 Gaza City tower blocks over the past two weeks and believes some 350,000 people have left Gaza City since the start of September. Another 600,000 or so remain, however.

Meanwhile, according to The Wall Street Journal, the Trump administration is seeking congressional approval to sell more than \$6bn in weapons to Israel.

The planned package includes a deal worth \$3.8b for 30 AH-64 Apache attack helicopters and \$1.9b for 3,250 infantry assault vehicles for the Israeli army. In addition, the Reuters news agency reported that \$750m worth of support parts for armoured personnel carriers and power supplies are also working their way through the sale process.

Yesterday, Hamas' military wing released an image of the hostages on the messaging site Telegram, warning that their lives were at risk due to Israel's military operation in Gaza City.

In almost two years of fighting, Israel's offensive has killed 65,208 and injured another 166,271 Palestinians, according to Gaza health authorities. The offensive has started a famine in the blacked Palestinian territory, demolished most of its structures and displaced most of the population, in many cases multiple times.

Trump hits H-1B visas with \$100,000 yearly fee

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump on Friday ordered an annual \$100,000 fee be added to H-1B skilled worker visas, creating potentially major repercussions for the tech industry, where such permits are prolific.

The new measure, which could likely face legal challenges, was announced alongside the introduction of a \$1 million “gold card” residency program that Trump had previewed months earlier.

“The main thing is, we're going to have great people coming in, and they're going to be paying,” Trump told reporters as he signed the orders in the Oval Office.

H-1B visas allow companies to sponsor foreign workers with specialized skills — such as scientists, engineers, and computer programmers — to work in the United States, initially for three years, but extendable to six years.

The United States awards 85,000 H-1B visas per year on a lottery system, with India accounting for around three-quarters of the recipients.

Large technology firms rely on Indian workers who either relocate to the United States or come and go between the two countries.

Tech entrepreneurs — including

Trump's former ally Elon Musk —

have warned against targeting H-1B visas, saying that the United States does not have enough homegrown talent to fill important tech sector job vacancies.

“All the big companies are on board,” said Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, who joined Trump in the Oval Office.

Trump has had the H-1B program in his sights since his first term in office, but faced court challenges to his earlier approach, which targeted the types of jobs that qualify. The current iteration has become the latest move in the major immigration crackdown of his second term.

According to Trump's order, the fee will be required for those seeking to enter the country beginning Sunday, with the Homeland Security secretary able to exempt individuals, entire companies, or entire industries.

The order expires in a year, though Trump can extend it.

The number of H-1B visa applications has risen sharply in recent years, with a peak in approvals in 2022 under Democratic president Joe Biden.

In contrast, the peak in rejections was recorded in 2018, during Trump's first term in the White House.

The United States approved approximately 400,000 H-1B visas in 2024, two-thirds of which were

renewals.

Trump also signed an order creating a new expedited pathway to US residency for people who pay \$1 million, or for corporate sponsors to pay \$2 million.

“I think it's going to be tremendously successful,” Trump added.

Yunus leaves for NY tonight

FROM PAGE 12

On September 30, the UN will, for the first time, host a high-level conference on the situation of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar.

The chief adviser will deliver his speech at the UNGA on September 26, said Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain.

The chief adviser, who is scheduled to reach New York on September 22, will return home on October 2.

Chief Adviser's Deputy Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad Majumder on Thursday said inclusion of political leaders in the delegation is a welcome step, as it provides an opportunity to showcase national unity before the world, regardless of political differences.

Star gets Superbrand

FROM PAGE 1

Superbrands Worldwide, unveiled the list of 49 of the country's most influential and reputable brands at an event yesterday.

The ceremony was held at a city hotel.

The recognition followed a rigorous selection process carried out by a distinguished Brand Council consisting of multidisciplinary experts from across the country.

Brands were evaluated on key attributes such as heritage, category relevance, perceived quality, performance, and top-of-mind awareness. Only the highest scoring brands meeting all criteria were officially recognised as Superbrands.

Md Tajdin Hassan, chief business officer, and Ehsanur Raza, commercial editor of The Daily Star, received the award on behalf of the organisation.

Stay united, follow party decisions

FROM PAGE 12

Finally brought its downfall.

He said BNP may have differences of opinion with some political parties, but when it comes to Bangladesh, people's right to vote, their security, employment and livelihoods, there is no disagreement, as BNP wants to ensure these rights.

He stressed the need for establishing a government that is accountable to the people, based on the people's opinion and mandate, to ensure the country's development and the nation's welfare.

Stating that the interim government will hold national elections next February, Tarique said if BNP's 31-point agenda is to succeed and win the people's verdict, all party members and activists across the

country must remain united at any cost.

The BNP leader pointed out that different views may exist within a large party, but once the leadership and party policymakers make a decision, every member has a duty to stand behind it.

“Are you workers of an individual, or of the sheaf of paddy? You are soldiers of Ziaur Rahman and Khaleda Zia's ideals. That means we must remain united behind the party's decisions and implement them at any cost,” Tarique said.

He emphasised that unity is essential. Just as family members follow the decisions of their elders, party members must rally behind the decisions of the policymaking body, he added.

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Mahalaya today

BSS, Dhaka

Mahalaya, an auspicious occasion that heralds the advent of Goddess Durga, will be celebrated at dawn today through different rituals by the Hindu community across the country.

With the beginning of "Devipaksha", Mahalaya is observed six days before Durga Puja. Special programmes will be arranged at different temples. Hindus will remember and pay homage to their ancestors, who passed away, by performing puja, and offering the Brahmins clothes, food and sweets in their names.

A special programme will be arranged at the Dhakeshwari National Temple at dawn. Similar programmes will also be arranged in different temples in the capital and across the country.

Durga Puja will formally begin on September 28 on the day of Maha Shasti.

SONY MURDER Convict Tagor remanded in arms case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed Mushfiq Uddin Tagor, a convict in Buet student Sabekun Nahar Sony murder case, on a two-day remand in an arms case.

The order was passed after Investigation Officer Motiur Rahman Bulbul, a sub-inspector of Lalbagh Police Station, produced him before the court.

The IO said Tagor was involved in collecting illegal weapons from border areas and supplying those to buyers in Dhaka.

Rab 3 arrested Tagor on September 18 in Azimpur.

Sony, a second year student of Buet's chemical engineering department, was killed in June 2002 during a factional clash between two JCD groups.

Sony died after getting caught in the line of fire.

4 of a family suffer burns in AC blast

UNB, Dhaka

All four members of a family suffered burn injuries after an air-conditioner exploded in Jatrabari area of Dhaka early yesterday.

The injured were identified as Md Tuhin Hossain, 38, of Madaripur district, his wife Eva Akter, 30, and their two sons - Tanvir, 9, and Tawhid, 7.

A fire broke out after the air-conditioner of a room exploded around 1:00am, leaving all four members of the family injured. Later, they were taken to the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery.

Shawn Bin Rahman, resident surgeon of the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, said among the victims, Tuhin suffered 47 percent burn injuries, while Eva with 15 percent, Tawhid 8 percent and Tanvir 40 percent burn.

STUDENTS' UNION ELECTIONS

Two new panels announced for Cucusu polls

CU CORRESPONDENT

Two new panels have been declared for the upcoming Chittagong University Central Students' Union (Cucusu) polls.

At a press conference yesterday, the Bishwa Insaniyat Biplob Student Front announced a five-member panel titled "Revolution for State of Humanity".



Following a long 35-year wait, the Rucusu election is finally set to take place on September 25. In the run-up to the polls, the RU campus is abuzz with anticipation as candidates put forward their pledges. The Daily Star spoke with two such aspirants -- VP candidate Tasin Khan and GS candidate Fahim Reza -- to gain insight into their thoughts and aspirations.

Tasin pushes for 10-year academic accountability, roadmap at RU

SADI MUHAMMAD ALOK

Tasin Khan, vice-president candidate in the Rajshahi University Central Students' Union elections, has said that if elected, she will put pressure on the administration to formulate an academic master plan with emphasis on research.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the VP candidate from Sharbajani Shikkharthi Sangsad said Rajshahi University, despite being 72 years old, had yet to establish itself as a proper educational institution.

"At the end of the day, students are being graduated not as skilled human resources but as political activists or unskilled



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SHARIF M SHAFIQUE

Fahim Reza, contesting for the post of general secretary in the upcoming Rucusu election from the Islami Chhatra Shibir-backed Sammilito Shikkharthi Jote panel, has pledged to establish a system through which students can evaluate the performance of teachers, the university administration, and Rucusu representatives.



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Allocate more budget for medical research: experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With Bangladesh lagging far behind in funding for medical research compared to some neighbouring countries, health experts and officials have demanded that the government increase the medical research budget to ultimately improve health services.

They also said research needs to be conducted on problems and situations specific to the country in order to identify the real issues and provide healthcare accordingly.

They were speaking at views exchange meeting organised by Bangladesh Medical Research Council (BMRC) at its office in Mohakhali yesterday.

Earlier, Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum inaugurated a dormitory for researchers at BMRC building.

In her presentation, BMRC Chairman Prof Sayeba Akhter said the annual budget of India's research council, the Indian Council of Medical Research, is \$283.13 million, with a per capita allocation of \$0.19.

In contrast, BMRC's budget is only \$1.82 million, or just \$0.01 per capita. The allocation is even lower than that of Sri Lanka, whose National Research Council (NRC) has a budget of \$0.86 million, amounting to \$0.04 per capita.

"In the past, our focus was not on research," she said, adding, "We won't be able to move forward unless we improve in research."

She said they received a much higher number of applications for research funding last year but could

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FESTIVE BREEZE... The arrival of autumn is marked by the gentle sways of white kashful beneath the blue sky. For many, this scene signals the coming of Durga Puja, as people travel miles to spend holidays with friends and family amid fields blanketed with kashful. The photo was taken in Aranghata, Khulna recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN



PHOTO: PID

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus with the authorities of the July Memorial Museum building at Jamuna in Dhaka yesterday.

July museum must instill spirit of resistance Says Prof Yunus

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday thanked all those involved in the construction of the July Memorial Museum and hoped that visitors would feel the spirit of the mass gathering at Gono Bhaban on August 5 last year.

"Instilling the spirit of building resistance against misrule among people is a major responsibility of this museum," he said.

The museum will showcase historical accounts

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

'If you're sure of victory, why delay the election?' Salahuddin asks Jamaat

UNB, Dhaka



BNP senior leader Salauddin Ahmed yesterday questioned why Jamaat-e-Islami is trying to delay the next election through various ploys, including street agitation, if it is so confident about coming to power as its leaders claim.

Speaking at a youth dialogue in the capital, he also criticised Jamaat's demand for banning Jatiya Party and members of the 14-party alliance while the party is now on the streets together with a party that contested the 2024 national election held under Sheikh Hasina's rule.

"There were a few rallies of Jamaat and other parties across the country yesterday [Friday]. Some newspapers carried headlines today [yesterday] saying that Jamaat leaders claimed they will form the government while BNP will sit in opposition. But who decides that? Is it you, or is it the people? If you are so confident, then why don't you join the election instead of making excuses one after another to obstruct it?" the BNP leader said.

He also said BNP knows what Jamaat's real purpose is -- "to derail the national election."

Arpan Alok Sangha organised the 3rd Dialogue on Youth's State of Thought, titled "Human Value-based Education and Campuses", at the Institution

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY Stop building ramp at Hatirjheel, Panthakunja Park Demand speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent citizens yesterday demanded an immediate halt to the construction of an elevated expressway ramp at Panthakunja Park and the Hatirjheel reservoir, calling the project "anti-people" and "nature destroying".

At a press conference organised by the Bangladesh Tree Protection Movement at the Dhaka Reporters Unity, they said recent development activities were carried out without a valid environmental clearance, which expired in December 2023.

They noted that the ramp -- being built from the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation to Palashi near Buet -- defies a court order and has already damaged the park and reservoir. Its continuation, they warned, would damage the environment of Dhaka University, Buet, Kathalbagan, Kataban, and Nilkhet areas.

Eminent economist Amit Muhammed said the interim government has continued the previous government's projects instead of reviewing them. "The interim government came to office as a result of the uprising but

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

July Museum

FROM PAGE 3

of Sheikh Hasina's 16 years of misrule, including the Pilkhana killings, enforced disappearances, murders, "Aynagar", the Shapla Chittar massacre, and vote rigging, according to officials.

The Museum Construction Authority shared updates about the museum with Prof Yunus yesterday during a meeting at Jamuna.

Cultural Affairs Adviser Mostafa Sarwar Farooki informed the chief adviser that the museum is expected to be completed by October 31, 2025, and inaugurated in the first week of November.

Farooki also said the museum has obtained several audio recordings of orders for enforced disappearances and murders. "These audios will be preserved in the museum. Visitors will also see how Sheikh Hasina personally called families of the disappeared to offer false reassurances," he added.

Chief Curator of the museum Tanjim Wahab said, "We believe this will be a unique institution. The stories of 16 years of misrule will be presented sequentially, allowing visitors to understand how Sheikh Hasina governed the country," Wahab said.

The museum will feature a screening centre with facilities to show documentaries on both the 16 years of misrule and the July uprising.

PATUAHKHALI EPZ PROJECT Bribery allegations surface over land acquisition

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Marginal farmers in Auliapur union under Patuakhali Sadar upazila have alleged that they are being forced to pay bribes to officials and brokers at the land acquisition office to receive compensation for land taken for the Export Processing Zone (EPZ).

Md Bellal, a farmer of Pachakorolia village, said 10.75 decimals of his land were acquired for the project, for which he received Tk 5.07 lakh as compensation.

"But I had to pay 6 percent of the total amount, about Tk 30,000, just to get my rightful money," he told this correspondent.

Bellal further alleged that his family's ancestral land -- over 3 acres -- was also acquired, for which they received Tk 1.34 crore in compensation, but the family had to pay Tk 8.40 lakh as "processing cost" to secure the payment.

Another villager, Md Shahabuddin, said the government acquired 3.50 of his 8.60 decimals of land.

"I have not received any compensation yet. They are demanding money first. Since I refused to pay, I have been told repeatedly to come back after a week," he alleged.

The Patuakhali EPZ Project, undertaken by the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority, was approved by the Executive



Committee of the National Economic Council on August 29, 2023.

A total of 410.78 acres of land has been acquired in Pachakorolia village, of which around 300 acres are already filled with sand for site preparation.

Work on internal roads and boundary walls is ongoing, and rehabilitation of 154 affected families is also in progress.

Affected villagers said the land acquisition office at the Patuakhali deputy commissioner's compound has turned into a hub of harassment and corruption.

According to them, a syndicate of officials and brokers is demanding between 6 and 12 percent in bribes to release compensation cheques. Those who refuse are allegedly subjected to deliberate delays, false objections, or fabricated paperwork to block their payments.

Contacted, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Md Masudul Alam acknowledged receiving complaints.

"The newly appointed deputy commissioner has been informed of the matter, and necessary steps will be taken," he said.

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Application Process

Eligible candidates are invited to submit their applications along with a pay-order of Tk. 1500 only in favor of "MPHRM Program, A/C No: 4405701023392" (The pay-order must be submitted before October 23, 2025, Thursday) or through bKash of Tk. 1520 to bKash merchant no: +8801735463490 (Transaction ID must be provided when filling the application form).

Admission Requirements

- A bachelor degree in any discipline with a minimum CGPA of 2.50 on a scale of 4.00 or second class division.
- Minimum one-year work experiences is required.
- Work experience is exempted for the members of professional bodies like DCCI, BGMEA, DMS Mgt HR Professionals Network, BIM, and different associations of Management and HRM.
- Work experience in Banks and Financial Institutions shall be given preference.

Last Date of Application : October 23 (Thursday), 2025

Admission Test Schedule : October 24 (Friday), 2025, at 03:00pm – 04:00pm
Viva Voc: 4:30pm – 6:00pmAdmission Test Syllabus : MCQ Test: English, General Knowledge, Basic Management and HR Concepts.
Written Test: Paragraph writing.Form submission : Online (<https://managementdu.ac.bd/mphrm-application-form/>)
Or
Executive MBA Office (03:00 pm – 08:00 pm, MBA Building, Room No. 1003, Faculty of Business Studies University of Dhaka).

If you're sure

FROM PAGE 3
of Diploma Engineers, Bangladesh.

Salahuddin, a BNP Standing Committee member, also accused Jamaat of showing "double standards", saying the people are noticing who Jamaat has joined in its simultaneous movement for various demands, including introducing a PR system and banning the 14-party alliance and JP.

"Among the seven parties (in Jamaat's movement alliance), one is now fully that took part in the sham election on January 7, 2024," he said without mentioning the party's name.

"If they are deemed innocent just because they are with you, then what about the 28 others who took part in the dummy election with Awami League? Are they sinners? To suggest that joining you in the simultaneous movement absolves one of past wrongs, while siding with others makes them sinners -- this principle is not right," said Salahuddin.

Salahuddin said differences of opinion are part of democracy and any party can take to the streets to realise its demands by exercising democratic rights.

"But we have been saying that these issues are still awaiting settlement at the negotiation table. So, are you taking to the streets to

apply extra pressure? If you do, we will also have to go to the streets to counter it. Is that what we want now? We want these matters resolved at the negotiation table," he said.

Salahuddin said political parties need to remain united on national issues, including the country's interests, independence, sovereignty and democracy.

"In democratic practice, there will be debates, differences of opinion and pluralism, but the settlement must come at the dialogue table. If both dialogue and street movement are carried out on the same issue, that is a contradiction," he observed.

The BNP leader said some parties are talking about proportional representation (PR), but it is the people who will decide that.

He urged political parties to include their demands in their election manifestos and contest the polls. "If the people give their verdict in your favour, you can implement them. That is the democratic way."

"We want to transform the campus into a better environment with rapid changes. That is why we have included students with diverse involvement, including visually impaired students," he added.

The preliminary list of candidates will be published today, with the final list due on September 25. Voting will take place on October 12.

Two new panels

FROM PAGE 3

primarily to blame. An hour later, Chhakra Odhikar Parishad and Islami Chhakra Majlis jointly announced a 24-member panel under the banner "Sarbojonin Shikkharthi Sangsad".

The joint panel features Chhakra Odhikar Parishad convener Tamjid Uddin, a master's student of the EEE department, as vice-president candidate, while Islami Chhakra Majlis CU president Sakib Mahmud Rumi will contest for general secretary. Roman Rahman of Chhakra Odhikar Parishad has been nominated for assistant general secretary.

Earlier, Chhakra Odhikar had informally announced a standalone panel under the banner "Cucusu for Rapid Change", which has now been dissolved.

Speaking on behalf of the coalition, GS candidate Rumi said his panel members will work above political or ideological differences for the greater interest of the students.

"We want to transform the campus into a better environment with rapid changes. That is why we have included students with diverse involvement, including visually impaired students," he added.

The preliminary list of candidates will be published today, with the final list due on September 25. Voting will take place on October 12.

PRAYER
TIMING
SEPTEMBER 21

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-40 12-45 4-30 6-05 7-30
JAMAAT 5-15 1-15 4-45 6-10 8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Traders bring bamboo by floating it down the Atai river to a weekly market at Abhaynagar in Jashore. Held every Wednesday, the market sells bamboo at wholesale prices ranging from Tk 150 to Tk 600 per pole. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

2 bridges collapse
in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Heavy rainfall and intense river currents have led to the collapse of two bridges in Chuadanga's Jibannagar upazila, cutting off communication for several villages and severely affecting local businesses.

One of the bridges, located over the Bhairab river in Santoshpur village, collapsed on Thursday night after the embankment in neighbouring Singnagar village gave way.

The structure had served as the only link between Santoshpur and neighbouring areas. As a result, villagers, including students, traders and farmers, are facing immense hardship.

Residents of Santoshpur, Manikpur, Rajapur, Ratrimampur, Singnagar, Dhopakhali and Madhabkhali villages have been particularly affected.

Farmers are unable to transport agricultural

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Lightning
strikes kill 2
in Kushtia

UNB, Kushtia

Two people, including a schoolboy, were killed in separate lightning strikes in Daulatpur upazila of Kushtia yesterday afternoon.

The victims were identified as Saif Hossain Toha, 10, a class four student from Shitlai Para in Rilavetpur union, and Jamat Ali, 25, from Bilgathua village in Pragpur union.

Salaiman Sheikh, officer-in-charge (OC) of Daulatpur Police Station, said Toha was fishing near his home when he was struck by lightning. He was rushed to Daulatpur Upazila Health Complex.

Jamat Ali was sitting on a bamboo platform in Bilgathua when he was fatally struck by lightning.

Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Dr Tuhin confirmed that both victims had already died when brought to the Daulatpur hospital.

29 districts
vulnerable ahead
of Durga PujaClaims civic platform
Sampriti Jatra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A civic platform, Sampriti Jatra, has identified 29 districts across the country as vulnerable ahead of the upcoming Durga Puja celebrations, citing a decade-long pattern of "communal unrest" and "targeted violence".

At a press conference yesterday at the Dhaka Reporters Unity, the organisation shared findings on media reports and human rights documentation over the past ten years.

The analysis focused on attacks on puja mandaps, processions, and homes of minority communities.

Of the 29 districts flagged, five -- Dhaka, Rangpur, Jashore, Chandpur, and Noakhali -- were categorised as high risk.

Twenty-four others -- Gazipur, Faridpur, Manikganj, Rajbari, Chattogram, Bandarban, Cumilla, Brahmanbaria, Lakshimpur, Feni, Pabna, Chapainawabganj, Natore, Lalmonirhat, Dinajpur, Gaibandha, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Khulna, Kushtia, Sunamganj, Barisal, Patuakhali, and Netrakona -- were marked moderately vulnerable. The remaining 35 districts were assessed as low risk.

In a written statement, author and researcher Mir Hojaiya Al Mamud said religious sites beyond Hindu temples are increasingly under threat.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

স্বাস্থ্য মন্ত্রণালয়



বাংলাদেশ কোস্ট গার্ড

www.coastguard.gov.bd

উন্নত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। বাংলাদেশ/ ডিভিশন	স্বাস্থ্য মন্ত্রণালয়।
২। সংস্থা	বাংলাদেশ কোস্ট গার্ড।
৩। দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি	স্বাস্থ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ কোস্ট গার্ড, আগারগাঁও প্রশাসনিক এলাকা, সের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।
৪। দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি মুদ্রণ বন্ধু	Marine Binocular ক্লায়।
৫। দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি মুদ্রণ ও তারিখ	৮৮.০৮.২৬৮০.০২০.২৫.০০২.১২.০০ টাঙ্গোরিখ: ২৫ মেস্টের ৩০২৪।
৬। কুর্স ক্লায়	স্বাস্থ্য মন্ত্রণালয় কুর্স ক্লায়।
৭। কুর্সের প্রার্থী	স্বাস্থ্য মন্ত্রণালয় কুর্স প্রার্থী।
৮। বাংলাদেশ কোস্ট গার্ডের উপর উন্নত দরপত্র	স্বাস্থ্য মন্ত্রণালয় কোস্ট গার্ড

1.5C warming goal at risk of 'collapsing'

Says UN chief ahead of UNGA meet

AFP, United Nations

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told AFP Friday that efforts to cap climate warming at 1.5 Celsius above pre-industrial level are failing, as the UN prepared to host a climate week event alongside its annual diplomatic gathering.

The climate goals for 2035 of the countries that signed the Paris Agreement, also known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), were initially expected several months ago.

However, uncertainties related to geopolitical tensions and trade rivalries have slowed the process. "We are on the verge of this objective collapsing," he told AFP.

"We absolutely need countries to come... with climate action plans that are fully aligned with 1.5 degrees (Celsius), that cover the whole of their economies and the whole of their greenhouse gas emissions," he said.

"It is essential that we have a drastic reduction of emissions in the next few years if you want to keep the 1.5 degrees Celsius limit alive."

Less than two months before the COP30



meeting in Brazil, dozens of countries have been slow to announce their plans – particularly China and the European Union, powers considered pivotal for the future of climate diplomacy.

Efforts to combat the impact of man-made global warming have taken a back seat to myriad crises in recent years that have included the coronavirus pandemic and several wars, with Guterres seeking to reignite focus on the issue. The UN hopes that the climate summit co-chaired on Wednesday by Guterres will be an opportunity to breathe life into efforts ahead of COP30.

Containing global warming to 1.5 Celsius compared to the pre-industrial era is the most ambitious goal of the 2015 Paris Agreement. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts a 50:50 chance that the climate will have warmed by an average of 1.5C by 2030-2035.

Scientists emphasise the importance of containing global warming as each fraction of a degree increase further increases risks such as heat waves or destruction of marine life.



This photograph shows shoes laid out on Place Kleber symbolising Palestinians killed during Israel's offensive on the Gaza Strip, in Strasbourg, eastern France, yesterday, as part of a symbolic action named "Operation Shoes – Lives, not just numbers!" by rights activists.

PHOTO: AFP

Israel boycott calls spread as celebs, artists speak out

AFP, Paris

What we are witnessing in Gaza is horrendous. It is the worst level of death and destruction that I've seen in my time as secretary-general, probably my life, and the suffering of the Palestinian people cannot be described – famine, total lack of effective healthcare, people living without adequate shelters in huge concentration areas.

Antonia Guterres
UN chief

Einbinder, spoke about Gaza, echoing similar statements at the Venice Film Festival earlier this month.

On Thursday, British trip-hop pioneers Massive Attack announced they were joining a



music collective called "No Music for Genocide" that will see artists try to block the streaming of their songs in Israel.

Elsewhere, Israel faces being boycotted at the Eurovision song contest, authors have signed open letters, while Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez is leading a push to exclude the country from sports events.

Israeli conductor Ilan Volkov announced last week at a concert in Britain that he would no longer

perform in his home country.

"I think we are seeing a situation which is comparable to the boycott movement against apartheid South Africa," Hakan Thorn, a Swedish academic at the University of Gothenburg who wrote a book on the South Africa boycott movement.

"There was definitely a shift in the spring of this year when the world saw the images of the famine in Gaza," added the sociologist.

The international boycott of South Africa's white supremacist government began in earnest in the early 1960s after a massacre of black protesters by police in the Sharpeville township.

It culminated with artists and sports teams refusing to play there, with boycott busters such as Queen or Frank Sinatra facing widespread public criticism.

"The history of the Holocaust and criticism of the pro-Palestinian movement for being antisemitic has been a serious obstacle to a broader mobilisation against what Israel is doing right now," explained Thorn.

Trump's \$15b lawsuit against NYT scrapped

AFP, Miami

A federal judge has tossed out US President Donald Trump's \$15 billion defamation lawsuit against The New York Times.

District Judge Steven Merryday said Trump's complaint, as submitted, was "improper and impermissible" and he gave his lawyers 28 days to resubmit it "in a professional and dignified manner."

In a statement on X, a Times spokesperson said the newspaper welcomes "the judge's quick ruling."

Trump filed the lawsuit against the Times on Monday, adding to his growing list of legal attacks on news organizations he accuses of bias against him.

Cyberattack hits Europe's airports

AFP, London

Major European airports, including Brussels, Berlin and London's Heathrow, were hit by a cyberattack yesterday on check-in systems that caused cancellations and long delays for many passengers.

At least three busy European air hubs warned of flight delays and cancellations.

At least 10 flights were cancelled out of Brussels Airport and another 17 delayed by over an hour after the system was hit by a "cyberattack" late Friday, the airport said.

According to the BBC, aviation watchdog Eurocontrol said airlines had been asked to cancel half their flights to and from Brussels between 0400 GMT on Saturday and 0200 GMT on Sunday because of the attack.

London's Heathrow Airport – the busiest in Europe – said its check-in and boarding systems were hit by a "technical issue" that "may cause delays for departing passengers".

The Berlin Airport website read that "due to a technical issue at a system provider operating across Europe, there are longer waiting times at check-in."

Cyberattacks and tech outages have disrupted airports around the world in recent years, from Japan to Germany, as air travel increasingly relies on online, interconnected systems. The aviation sector saw a 600 percent increase in cyberattacks from 2024 to 2025, according to a report.



Zelensky to meet Trump next week as war rages on

AFP, Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he would meet US counterpart Donald Trump on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly next week as Russia intensified strikes across his country.

Russia carried out one of its largest aerial attacks overnight, firing 40 missiles and some 580 drones at Ukraine in a barrage that killed at least three people and wounded dozens, Zelensky said yesterday.

A Ukrainian strike, meanwhile, killed four people in Russia's southwestern Samara region, local governor said, in one of the deadliest Ukrainian retaliatory strikes on Russia since Moscow launched its invasion in 2022.

Zelensky said he would hold a meeting with the President of the United States, adding he would discuss security guarantees for Ukraine and sanctions on Russia during the talks with Trump.

Ukraine has insisted on Western-backed security guarantees to prevent future Russian attacks. Russian

Russia slams UN vote to reimpose Iran sanctions

AFP, Moscow

Russia yesterday slammed the UN Security Council vote to reimpose economic sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme and warned of a risk of an "escalation of tensions".

The Russian side has repeatedly pointed out the provocative and illegal nature of the actions of the European countries participating in the JCPOA, the Russian foreign ministry said in a statement.

Britain, France and Germany were among the parties to a 2015 deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) that gave Iran relief from UN sanctions in return for UN-monitored restrictions on its nuclear activities.

The countries say Iran has reneged on its commitments under the deal which has been effectively moribund since US pulled out in 2018 during Trump's first term.

The Security Council voted Friday to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran.

"These actions have nothing to do with diplomacy and lead exclusively to a further escalation of tensions surrounding the Iranian nuclear program," the Russian ministry said.

In August, Moscow warned that the reimposition of sanctions against Iran risked "irreparable consequences".

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়

সেবা শাখা

বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা

www: mofood.gov.bd

তারিখ: ২ আগস্ট ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ

ঠিকানা: ১৭ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫ ইঞ্চার্ট

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ের দাগুরিক প্রয়োজনে ব্যবহারের নিমিত্ত প্রকৃত আমদানীকারকের নিকট হতে কম্পিউটার প্রিন্টারের অরিজিনাল টোনার (কালি) চলতি ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থ বছরের জন্য ফ্রেমওয়ার্ক চুক্তির আওতায় কার্যের নিমিত্ত সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়োগের জন্য সীলনোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহরণ করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্র দাখিলের সময় দরপত্রের সাথে চলতি অর্থবছরের দ্বিতীয় টোনারে, ভ্যাট সনদপত্র, জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র, টি এই এন এন স্যার্টায়িফিড অন্তর্দিশ, ব্যাংক বঙ্গলতার সনদপত্র (Bank Solvency), প্রকৃত আমদানীকারকের স্বপক্ষে প্রয়োক এবং টেক্সার সিডিউলে বর্ণিত শর্তাবলী ও চাইদার আলোকে প্রযোজনীয় কাগজপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।

ক্রনং	দরপত্রের নাম	বিজ্ঞাতি বিবরণ
১	খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়	খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়
২	একজেলি	-ট্রি-
৩	প্রক্রিয় এন টি টি নাম	-ট্রি-
৪	প্রক্রিয় এন টি টি কোড	১৪৮০১০১-৩২৫৫১০১-কম্পিউটার সামগ্রী
৫	দরপত্র নং	১৩.০০.০০০.০০০.০০১.০০.০০১.২৪.৫০
৬	তারিখ	১৭/০৮/২০২৫ খ্রি
৭	সংগ্রহ পক্ষতি	ড্যুক্ট দরপত্র
৮	বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	রাজবংশ খাত
৯	দরপত্রের সিডিউল বিজ্ঞয়ের শেষ তারিখ	০৮/১০/২০২৫ খ্রি
১০	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	০৯/১০/২০২৫ তারিখ দুপুর ২.০০ টা পর্যন্ত
১১	দরপত্র মোদার তারিখ ও সময়	০৯/১০/২০২৫ তারিখ দুপুর ২.৩০ টা
১২	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞাপন অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, ভবন নং-৪, কক্ষ নং-১২১, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
১৩	দরপত্র প্রাইভেক্ট অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানা	খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, ভবন নং-১২১, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
১৪	দরপত্র দোলার দস্তর	ডিপ্সটিচ (সেবা) এর দস্তর, কক্ষ নং-১১৬, ভবন নং-৪, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
১৫	দরপত্র দাতাদের যোগাযোগ	প্রপ-২০০৮ অধ্যায়ী এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের জন্য প্রনীত দরপত্রে বর্তিত প্রতিবেদন আমদানীকারক হতে হবে।
১৬	দরপত্রে বর্তিত মালামালের সংশ্লিষ্ট বর্ণনা	কম্পিউটার প্রিন্টার/ফটোকপি মেশিনের ঠিকানা (কালি)
১৭	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা অফিসে দোকান।
১৮	লট নং-১	মন্ত্রণালয়ের দাগুরিক কাজে ব্যবহারের জন্য কম্পিউটার প্রিন্টার/ফটোকপি মেশিনের ঠিকানা (কালি)।
১৯	টেক্সার সিডিউলটি	১০,০০০/- (দশ হাজার) টাকা মাত্র।
২০	দরপত্র আন্তর্কারী কর্মকর্তার নাম, পদবী ঠিকানা ও টেলিফোন নম্বর	আরিফুল ইসলাম, উপসচিব (সেবা), ভবন নং-৪, কক্ষ নং-১১৬, খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা। ফোন নং-০২-৫৫০০২১৫০২১ (অফিস)
২১	১। অন্যান্য শর্তাদি সিডিউলে বর্ণিত রয়েছে; ২। সকল দরপত্র বাতিল/গ্রহণ কর্মসূল সত্ত্বা কর্তৃক সংরক্ষিত।	

Al

১৭-০৮-২০২৫
আরিফুল ইসলাম
উপসচিব (অতিরিক্ত দায়িত্ব)
+৮৮০২৫৫১০০২১৫ (ফোন)
+৮৮০২৯৫১০২০২৪ (ফার্ম)
dsservice@mo

Shun all flawed development plans

Govt must reassess move to expand Ctg-Cox's Bazar highway through wildlife sanctuary

The ongoing conflict over the expansion of the Chattogram-Cox's Bazar highway through the Chunati Wildlife Sanctuary reveals a deep-seated disconnect within the government agencies. The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) is reportedly pushing a plan that, in the name of development, would inflict irreversible damage on one of the country's most vital ecosystems. This short-sighted approach must be re-evaluated.

The RHD's proposal to widen a 63km section of the highway into a six-lane behemoth is a direct threat to the sanctuary, which is home to 372 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians, including several endangered species. It also serves as a crucial elephant corridor. Forest officials and environmentalists rightly warn that a wider road will make it "nearly impossible" for wild animals to cross, leading to a surge in roadkill and permanent habitat fragmentation. The existing two-lane highway, along with the recently constructed Chattogram-Cox's Bazar railway line, already poses a mortal danger to wildlife. An expanded highway will amplify this peril.

While we recognise the project's aim to accommodate rising traffic and leverage the Matarbari Deep Sea Port, this also embodies the fallacy of choice that prioritises economic progress at the expense of ecological integrity. Such pursuits cannot be used as an excuse to neglect critical conservation needs. The Forest Department's recommendation to build a 10km flyover over the sanctuary, along with additional overpasses and underpasses, is seemingly a responsible path forward. While RHD officials deem this financially unviable, their alternative—a mere 700-metre flyover and a few scattered underpasses—is a woefully inadequate compromise that will do little to mitigate the harm the project would cause.

The government's previous actions, such as revoking the protected status of forestland for the railway line and felling 240,000 trees as part of that undertaking, already set a dangerous precedent. The promise of "sufficient" underpasses for the railway was broken, with only three structures built, one of which remains unusable. This record of negligence and unfulfilled promises shows a tendency to place infrastructure projects above the protection of natural heritage. The RHD must not be allowed to repeat this mistake.

The delay in a survey by the Japan International Cooperation Agency due to a lack of consensus provides a useful window of opportunity. Rather than simply haggling over the length of a flyover, all stakeholders—RHD, the Forest Department, and international partners—must re-evaluate the project in its entirety. An alternative route or plan of action should be seriously considered as a way to achieve connectivity goals without sacrificing the sanctuary.

The government must make genuine efforts to protect the Chunati Wildlife Sanctuary. The survival of Asian elephants and other endangered species in this region depends on the government making the right choice. True progress is not measured by the number of lanes on a highway, but by our ability to coexist with nature. This is not just a plea for elephants, though that is vital; it is a call to preserve the ecological foundation upon which our future depends.

Reopen Osmani Udyan to the public

Complete the remaining work as soon as possible

It is deeply disappointing to witness the fate of Dhaka's Osmani Udyan that has remained inaccessible to the public for nearly eight years. Once a refuge for residents seeking relief from the city's chaos, this vital green space has been caught in a cycle of mismanagement and inefficiency with the Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) missing numerous deadlines to complete its renovation. Although 92 percent of the work is said to be done, construction has remained stalled since June 30 last year, when the latest deadline expired. The question is: why is there no urgency to complete the remaining work? In a city where parks and green spaces are becoming scarce, depriving residents like this is totally unacceptable.

Reportedly, the DSCC began the renovation work of the 29-acre park in 2017. Originally slated for completion in 2018, the project was halted for nearly two years after the first contractor was removed for allegedly breaching contract terms. Since then, the DSCC has repeatedly extended deadlines—to June 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022—without delivering results. Even after new contractors were appointed in September 2023 and an additional Tk 61 crore was added to the already hefty budget of Tk 86 crore, the finishing work is still pending. According to one urban planner, the park could have been reopened long ago if the city corporation had real accountability.

Dhaka is already starved of public spaces with its parks, playgrounds, and green spaces fast disappearing due to neglect and unplanned urban expansion. The protracted closure of Shishu Park, a recreational hub for children in the capital, is another example of inefficiency and mismanagement. This park has remained closed since January 2019, and the authorities have yet to provide clear updates on the renovation progress. Both the Osmani Udyan and Shishu Park are meant to serve as affordable, accessible breathing spaces for families and children, yet they remain unusable. The destruction of Panthakunja Park by the Dhaka Elevated Expressway Authority is yet another example of how the city's green spaces are being sacrificed for one reason or another.

We, therefore, urge the authorities to take immediate measures to complete the remaining work of Osmani Udyan and open it to the public. At the same time, the government must investigate the causes of repeated delays in the work and hold those responsible to account, so that such failures are not repeated in future projects. Going forward, all urban development initiatives must adhere to clear timelines, effective supervision, and prioritise public welfare.

EDITORIAL

HC RULING ON HATIRJHEEL-PANTHAKUNJA

Time to restore Dhaka's green spaces

Amirul Rajiv and Naim Ul Hasan
are coordinators at the Bangladesh Tree Protection Movement.

AMIRUL RAJIV and
NAIM UL HASAN

One of the defining features of the previous developmental regime was its pursuit of unnecessary or ill-conceived projects that risked becoming burdens in the future. There are numerous examples of such projects. A number of them were highlighted in the white paper on the state of Bangladesh's economy prepared by the interim government earlier in its tenure. But sadly, it has failed to take any initiative to address this issue. On the contrary, instead of reviewing the projects or exposing any shady contracts with foreign governments, it has kept doubling down on them. One such case saw the government resume work on the FDC-to-Palashi extension of the Dhaka elevated expressway through the Hatirjheel Lake and Panthakunja Park, despite warnings from experts, widespread public outcry, numerous letters, and 168 days of sit-ins by members of the Bangladesh Tree Protection Movement.

Against this backdrop, the High Court on September 10, following a writ petition, issued a stay order restraining the government from carrying out any construction work at Panthakunja Park and Hatirjheel Lake. It also directed the relevant authorities to open the park for public use and restore Hatirjheel's original waterbody from Moghbazar to the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (FDC) premises. Later, on September 16, the Supreme Court chamber judge upheld the High Court's order for the time being and asked the government to file a leave-to-appeal petition if it wished to challenge the decision.

This being the situation, let us take a look at some aspects of the project to understand how things came to this point.

The Awami League government initiated the elevated expressway project in 2011, and its deadline has since been pushed back repeatedly. The main design has also undergone several changes due to poor coordination among various government agencies, including the

two Dhaka city corporations, RAJUK, and the Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority. In 2021, the FDC-to-Palashi ramp was added under the Support to Dhaka Elevated Expressway PPP Project. The main idea behind the expressway was to allow commuters to bypass Dhaka's notoriously congested traffic through a circular route. But repeated design changes resulted in several ramps being placed inside the city itself, including the FDC-to-Palashi one, making things worse for the city dwellers.

Between 2023 and 2024, more than 10 acres of Hatirjheel Lake were filled to construct the ramp, according to a report published in October last

Division of the Supreme Court had already ruled any construction on Hatirjheel waterbody illegal while ruling against the BGMEA building in 2017. The expressway extension project also violates several laws and guidelines, including the Detailed Area Plan finalised in 2022, which prohibited filling any waterbody in the metropolitan region, and the Playground, Open Space, Park, and Natural Water Reservoir Conservation Act, 2000, which forbids altering the nature of waterbodies. The government entities responsible for protecting these spaces and waterbodies were unable to act due to the direct involvement of the Prime

institutions. Having an exit for high-speed vehicles from the expressway on such a sensitive, narrow road raises a serious safety question, and the impact on the environment of those institutions could be significant. Experts frequently highlight Dhaka's earthquake risks and lack of preparedness in this regard. Building a flyover on these narrow roads will undoubtedly increase the danger in the event of fire, earthquake, or any other disaster for the residents of Kathalganj and Kalabagan areas.

There is another legal issue with Panthakunja Park. In 2015, after the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) filed a writ petition challenging the construction of a Secondary Transfer Station (for waste management) at Panthakunja Park, a division bench of the High Court ruled in BELA's favour, declaring the STS construction illegal. It also directed that the park be protected and maintained as an "open space," in accordance with the city's master plan. Despite these clear instructions, the interim authorities destroyed the lush green park and continued work on the extension. No environmental clearance certificate was taken for this construction work either, according to a letter from the Department of Environment, issued after an RTI request filed by the Bangladesh Tree Protection Movement.

This tendency to overlook court directives, legal prohibitions, or public concerns was understandable under an autocratic regime. But following the bloody uprising of July 2024, there was hope that the rule of law would be upheld and that the interim government would break the cycle of disrespect shown towards the courts by the previous regime. Yet, to our surprise, this government seems to be following the same path. The government must remember that its duty is to listen to the people, not the other way round. We sincerely hope it will respect the court orders, and immediately halt construction of the elevated expressway from FDC to Palashi. The restoration work for Panthakunja and Hatirjheel should also start immediately to protect the local biodiversity, bird nesting areas, and the city's ever diminishing green spaces.



The government has already cut down nearly 2,000 trees of 40 different species in Panthakunja Park.

PHOTO: TANJIMUL TUHIN

year. The report also cited locals who claimed that waterlogging problems had worsened as a result. While reviewing the project documents, an astonishing detail came to light—the originally planned route for the expressway ran just behind the Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel and the surrounding commercial area; but then the design was changed, shifting it from the commercial zone to a highly dense residential area that also houses several schools and colleges. And the consultant responsible for this change was also the consultant for the Sonargaon hotel extension project. This is a clear case of conflict of interest, and a blatant attempt to put the interests of private commercial entities over those of the public.

It can be recalled that the Appellate

Minister's Office (PMO) under the previous autocratic regime. But what's stopping the present administration from suspending this work?

The damage has already been substantial. In December 2024, the government cut down nearly 2,000 trees of 40 different species in Panthakunja Park, one of the few remaining green open spaces in one of the busiest parts of the city. The plan was to build a ramp at the already overburdened Karwan Bazar intersection and a flyover along the narrow roads of Hatirpool, Kataon, and Nilkhel, which would land at the Palashi intersection. If we consider the exit point of the flyover, on one side is Dhaka University, directly ahead is BUET, and on the other side are Eden College and several other educational

At 80, the UN is fighting for relevance



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DANIEL WARNER

Amid the furore over Charlie Kirk's assassination, Russia's threatening drones in Poland, and Israel's now-confirmed genocide in Gaza and aggression against its neighbours, is it worth marking the United Nations' 80th anniversary? Counterintuitively, this may be precisely the right moment.

Calls for ceasefires and peaceful solutions to inter-state conflicts echo US calls for depolarisation and dialogue. The UN's failures to secure international peace and security mirror US domestic failures to nurture civilised dialogue and uphold full human rights for all. At best, the UN's 80th anniversary serves as a reminder of values beyond misplaced nationalism, tribal fidelity and wanton violence. The organisation should take pride in having outlasted the League of Nations—only 26 years—but also recognise that, as turning 80 is critical for individuals, this anniversary is critical for the UN's continuing relevance.

The UN's 80th anniversary has prompted efforts to revitalise the organisation. The UN80 Initiative, launched in early 2025, is less a triumphal celebration of reaching 80 than a serious attempt to overhaul an organisation seemingly in intensive care. Institutions, like individuals, require constant re-energising, and 80 is a pivotal moment. Officially, according to a March 2025 UN press release, "the UN80 Initiative builds on ongoing efforts, including the Pact for the Future and UN 2.0, which aim to update the UN's structures, priorities, and operations for the 21st century." The initiative "seeks to

develop proposals in three key areas," Secretary-General António Guterres stated, "identifying efficiencies and improvements, reviewing the implementation of mandates from Member States, and a strategic review of deeper, more structural changes and programme realignment."

As with any enterprise, public or private, the UN's reworking begins with finances. The organisation faces a mounting liquidity crisis. "For at least the past seven years, the UN has faced a liquidity crisis because not all Member States pay in full, and many also do not pay on time," Guterres explained. As of March 11, 2025, the press release noted, "only 75 of the 193 Member States have paid their assessed contributions in full towards the \$3.72 billion 2025 budget for the Organisation."

Shorts of funds and struggling to deliver on its primary function of securing peace and security in the Middle East and Ukraine, why should the UN not go the way of its short-lived predecessor, the League of Nations?

A premature announcement of the UN's death
Not everything about turning 80 is negative. In an interview, Georges Abi-Saab—eminent legal scholar, former professor and judge, and confidant of UN secretaries general—offered three optimistic insights:

First, the UN remains the only universal forum for the collective will of the international community.

observed. For instance, the veto-bound Security Council (SC) nevertheless managed to condemn the recent strike on Qatar's capital, Doha—even if it did not mention Israel. All 15 SC members agreed. Workarounds to SC deadlock exist, Abi-Saab noted, citing the General Assembly's "Uniting for Peace" Resolution as described by Richard Falk in an interview with Daniel Falcone. Under that precedent, Israel has until September 18, 2025, to comply with the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territory, dismantle settlements and evacuate settlers. Should Israel fail to comply—as seems likely—the General Assembly could implement several measures based on historical precedent. It could, for example, deploy a UN peacekeeping or civilian protection force. The organisation currently deploys some 60,000 peacekeepers worldwide.

Second, the UN successes extend beyond peace and security. "Discussion of the United Nations' successes and failures should not be confined to peace and security," Abi-Saab emphasised. "Attention should also be given to its lateral, specialised agencies, such as those dealing with the environment." Recently, the World Trade Organization (WTO) celebrated the entry into force of a trade deal curbing subsidies for harmful fishing. At least two-thirds of member states had to ratify the deal for it to take effect—an important victory for environmental protection and multilateralism. (Abi-Saab is a former president of the WTO Appellate Body's Dispute Settlement Organ.)

Third, the resistance to anti-multilateralism exists. "There are signs of resistance to Donald Trump's anti-multilateralism—evidence of a coalition of the willing to counter him," Abi-Saab explained. He added that the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is not an alternative multilateral structure to the UN. China seeks smooth external state relations within the UN system while resisting domestic criticisms from bodies like the UN Human Rights Council. According to Abi-Saab, the SCO's goal is to create an alternative multilateral payment system outside the dollar, not to supplant the United Nations itself.

UN and US renewal?
Is the UN's inability to implement many of its guiding principles akin to failures within the United States itself? Where is the sense of community or common good—erga omnes—internationally and domestically? While renewed populism, nationalism and isolationism hamper international cooperation, the assassination of Charlie Kirk reflects a parallel lack of serious dialogue across the US political spectrum. The similarities between blocked international cooperation and US political polarisation are hard to miss. Negotiation and compromise are as essential between states as they are between individuals.

Speaking at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1863, following one of the American Civil War's bloodiest battles, President Abraham Lincoln envisioned US renewal. "Four score and seven years" after the country's founding, Lincoln referred to a "government of the people, by the people, for the people." The Preamble of the United Nations Charter begins, "We the Peoples of the United Nations." Lincoln emphasised people; the UN begins with people. If Lincoln could speak of "a new birth of freedom" some 80 years after the nation was "brought forth" by the Founding Fathers, the UN80 Initiative seeks a similar rebirth for the only universal intergovernmental organisation. When Lincoln declared that "the government...shall not perish from the earth," could the same be said of the United Nations? In only 57 countries and regions worldwide do people enjoy a life expectancy above 80. Will the UN achieve such longevity, as well as relevance, beyond its 80th year?

Can the July Charter override the constitution?

Proposal for a Constitutional Order revives debate over extra-constitutional authority



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SANGITA GAZI

The July Charter has placed Bangladesh in the midst of a constitutional conundrum: can an arrangement born outside the constitution, grounded in political consensus rather than a popular mandate, be said to carry the force of the nation's supreme law? Anchored in Section 22 of the July Declaration, the charter purports to advance core reforms of state institutions through "lawful means". The central issue, however, is what those "lawful means" entail, and whether they can be squared with the constitution's own framework of legitimacy.

A group of legal experts has proposed a possible roadmap to resolve the deadlock. They contend that the interim government can enact a Constitutional Order pursuant to Section 22 of the July Declaration, incorporating core reforms from the charter, which would take effect immediately. Subsequently, the constitutional order could be subjected to a referendum, conducted concurrently with the upcoming general election. Finally, should the referendum endorse the order, the reforms would gain retroactive legitimacy from the date of their enactment. According to a report, the National Consensus Commission (NCC) has recently forwarded this suggestion during talks with political parties.

However, this roadmap raises more constitutional questions than it answers.

Political opinions on the legitimisation and implementation of the charter also remain as fractured as before. The Jamaat-e-Islami, for instance, has backed the proposal of a constitutional order but insisted on a referendum before the polls, rather than on election day as suggested by the NCC, while Article 106 of the constitution could provide ancillary support for judicial determination of its validity. The National Citizen Party favours a constituent assembly through which the interim government could start implementing the reforms, which might also function alongside the next parliament.

The BNP has rejected the new proposal, warning that it could create "constitutional disorder". No such change should occur without an elected parliament, it insists, although it has softened its opposition to ordinance-led amendments and now seeks the Supreme Court's view on whether a Special Constitutional Order could serve as the vehicle. The BNP further warns that tying the July Charter to an election-day referendum would reinstate Article 142, reopening the door to constitutional

amendments by referendum on core issues. The prevailing deadlock may prompt judicial scrutiny of the proposed constitutional order. The juxtaposition here is strikingly vivid: the current administration is being expected to elevate a constitutional order above the constitution itself, even as it invokes Article 106 to infuse it with constitutional validity. In other words, those sworn to uphold the constitution are seeking a means to circumvent it. This scenario is less a matter of constitutional theory than a tangled assemblage of constitutional precepts—an ad hoc construction masquerading as legal necessity.

This scenario inevitably evokes *State v Dosso* (1958) in which Pakistan's Supreme Court, invoking Hans Kelsen's "revolutionary legality" concept, redescribed martial law as a "new legal order"—a precedent that undermined constitutional supremacy until repudiated in *Asma Jilani* (1972). Challenging constitutional issues were often ducked by the judiciary, labelling them "political." In *Dulichand*, the Appellate Division also avoided ruling on the validity of Yahya Khan's martial law, only to denounce him as a usurper later. After independence, Bangladesh also suffered in *Dosso*'s shadow. Post-1975, the *Halima Khatun* and *Joyal Abedin* cases upheld martial law proclamations, effectively ousting judicial

Bangladesh's courts have been here before. In the Fifth Amendment case, the judiciary called itself the "only guardian" of the constitution and struck down martial law decrees.

The Seventh Amendment case warned against leaving even the "last traces of extra-constitutional ambition." Articles 7A and 7B were written precisely to prevent history from repeating itself. To legitimise the July Charter through such a process would not only betray precedent; it would render those hard-won safeguards little more than ornamentation.

review and subordinating the constitution to extra-constitutional authority. In *Ehtaeshamuddin*, the court went further, ruling that the constitution remained

subservient even after its revival. In short, legality was not merely suspended; it was surrendered.

The legality of extra-constitutional rule came into sharp focus again in 2005 in *Italian Marble Works Ltd. v Government of Bangladesh*. In a didactic yet searing tone, the High Court dissected Pakistan's judicial surrender in *Dosso*. It rebuked political elites, depicting them as complicit in "treachery,"

rejected such shortcuts to rewriting the fundamental law. Article 7 declares the constitution supreme; anything inconsistent with it is void. Article 142 prescribes the only amendment route—through parliament. Even parliament itself is checked by the basic structure doctrine. If an elected legislature cannot dismantle the core of the constitution, the notion that an unelected interim body can do so is—to put it plainly—

the constitution and periodically measured through elections. A constitutional order that asserts the power to amend the constitution through unelected means undermines this principle. And when abrogation of the nation's supreme law is permitted, it does not bring stability; it instead erodes the safeguards the constitution was designed to uphold.

For the judiciary, this situation constitutes



FILE VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

"mishaps," and even "acts of treason." The question was finally put to rest in the Fifth and Seventh Amendment cases, which upheld the High Court's ruling and reaffirmed that the constitution—the embodiment of the sovereign will of the people—is the supreme law of the land. Any legislation or action that contravenes it is null and void; furthermore, the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary—three foundational branches of a state—are obligated to function within its parameters.

With the talk of adopting the July Charter and Declaration, the spectre of extra-constitutional legality has re-emerged. For those committed to constitutional democracy, it is exasperating. Bangladesh's judiciary now faces a familiar, wearying choice: repeat *Dosso*'s surrender, or finally uphold constitutional supremacy as affirmed in the Fifth and Seventh Amendment cases.

Authority is being sought through a constitutional order under the July Charter, but Bangladesh's jurisprudence has long

constitutional alchemy of the most dubious sort.

Bangladesh's courts have been here before. In the Fifth Amendment case, the judiciary called itself the "only guardian" of the constitution and struck down martial law decrees. The Seventh Amendment case warned against leaving even the "last traces of extra-constitutional ambition." Articles 7A and 7B were written precisely to prevent history from repeating itself. To legitimise the July Charter through such a process would not only betray precedent; it would render those hard-won safeguards little more than ornamentation.

Constitutionalism transcends mere legal formalities. It mandates that power be bounded, accountable, and anchored in the sovereign will of the people. The defenders of the July Charter may cast its supremacy over the constitution as an expression of the "people's will," deriving its authority from the July uprising. But in a constitutional democracy, the people's will is embodied in

a bitter irony: the very bench sworn to uphold the constitution now risks binding itself in subservience to an extra-constitutional command. In deciding the charter, the court would be determining the validity of its own existence. But constitutional supremacy demands confronting that paradox head-on. Legitimacy cannot spring from illegitimacy, and no doctrine of necessity can justify survival at the constitution's expense.

Bangladesh's constitutional framework now stands at a crossroads. The judiciary may choose to cloak the July Charter in the language of "necessity" or "political question," echoing *Dosso*'s surrender. Alternatively, it may adhere to its own precedents in the Fifth and Seventh Amendment cases. To validate the charter this way would risk normalising what the constitution forbids and undoing the safeguards built to prevent repetition of the past. The path the court chooses will decide whether Bangladesh learns from *Dosso* or repeats it.

Myanmar's Kachin State: The new geopolitical flashpoint in China's backyard



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SAYEED AHMED

Most ordinary Americans would hardly know of Myanmar, or Burma, as the US calls it, let alone Kachin, Myanmar's northernmost state, which borders China to the north and east and India to the northwest. Yet, this remote region was once a crucial battleground for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the predecessor of today's CIA, during the Second World War. Maverick OSS pilots flew countless daring missions from their Manipur base in Northeast India, ferrying men and arms to support Allied forces engaged in fierce jungle battles against the Japanese onslaught.

OSS operatives were young and inexperienced; many had only ever seen jungles in films. Some Kachin people, then largely illiterate, had never seen a wheel. The hosts tutored the newcomers in jungle survival and, in turn, learnt modern warfare. Those US veterans are mostly gone now, and it all happened a long time ago and far away—but the bond lingers. One surviving member of the Kachin Rangers, as the indigenous troops were known, said: "It is my duty to help because the Americans liberated us from the Japanese and the British colonials."

Later, after Mao Zedong's takeover of China in 1949, Li Mi, a Chinese Kuomintang (KMT) general, moved into Myanmar with about 1,500 soldiers. The CIA armed and trained them to continue fighting against communist China, but that effort eventually



VISUAL: STAR

failed. Nonetheless, Myanmar remained on Washington's radar.

The country has since endured the world's longest-running civil war, with numerous Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) fighting the government—the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) among the most prominent. In October 2024, the KIA captured two key mining towns, Chipwi and Pangwa, sitting

atop some of the world's richest deposits of rare earth elements. The KIA effectively cut off China's secure access to these minerals in Beijing's strategic backyard. Chinese imports of rare earth compounds from Myanmar fell sharply by 89 percent by February 2025 compared with the year before.

This turn of events is deeply significant considering the KIA's composition and leadership. It is mainly a Christian force in

For Washington, the Kachin situation offers several strategic advantages. Supporting groups that can disrupt Chinese access to critical minerals aligns with broader American goals of diversifying supply chains away from Chinese control.

difficult choices about how far it is willing to go to protect its interests.

For Washington, the Kachin situation offers several strategic advantages. Supporting groups that can disrupt Chinese access to critical minerals aligns with broader American goals of diversifying supply chains away from Chinese control. It also demonstrates that China's sphere of influence is not as secure as it appears, potentially encouraging other regional actors to resist Beijing's pressure.

The risks are equally significant. A confrontation with Chinese interests in what Beijing considers its backyard could escalate tensions between the world's two largest economies. Myanmar's ethnic conflicts are notoriously complex and long running—the last thing US needs is to be drawn into another prolonged commitment in a region it does not fully understand.

The Kachin situation reveals a broader truth about great power competition in the 21st century. Traditional tools such as sanctions and diplomatic pressure have limited effectiveness when target countries can find alternative partners and supply routes. Instead, influence increasingly flows through relationships with non-state actors who control territory and resources.

The historical parallels are striking but not deterministic. The CIA's Cold War support for KMT forces in Myanmar's borderlands created decades of instability and drug trafficking that still affect the region today. Whether Washington's current engagement with the KIA will follow a similar path remains unclear.

Myanmar has long been a simmering battleground for rivalry between dominant world powers. This time, Beijing has much at stake. So does Washington, for it may offer considerable leverage in the existential rare earth battle.

a Buddhist-majority country, led by people whose grandparents fought alongside US soldiers against a common enemy. The Baptist faith, brought by US missionaries in the 1870s and reinforced during the anti-Japanese resistance, remains central to Kachin identity. For Beijing, this presents a challenge beyond mere territorial control: it is dealing with a population with deep cultural and historical ties to the West—something

China loathes.

It is against this backdrop that the US envoy in Myanmar, Susan Stevenson, visited the KIA-controlled area in August—a significant diplomatic signal given that Washington downgraded relations with Myanmar after the 2021 military coup.

The timing could hardly be worse for China. Beijing has spent billions building oil and gas pipelines from Myanmar's ports to mitigate the risk of shipping through the Malacca Strait, which the US Navy could block in any future conflict. Myanmar's resources and geographic location have been central to China's strategy of reducing its reliance on sea routes controlled by US allies.

But now EAOs control most of Myanmar's borderlands, and the military junta that China had supported is rapidly losing ground. The KIA alone claims to have captured over 70 military installations in just two months of 2024. Myanmar is fracturing into self-governing territories, and China is discovering that its client state is not as dependable as it once seemed.

The implications extend far beyond mining rights. Recent reporting (mid-2025) documents that Chinese-backed militias now guard new rare earth facilities in eastern Myanmar, signalling how seriously Beijing takes the threat. If the KIA continues to defy Chinese pressure—and it has indicated plans to escalate conflicts—Beijing may face



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

I dedicate this award to Iresh Zaker and Ome

SARAF AHMED ZIBON

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Director-turned-actor Saraf Ahmed Zibon, celebrated for his comedic performances, has added another accolade to his career. He won Best Supporting Actor (Male) in the Popular Category at the Blender's Choice-The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2024 for his role in Kajal Arefin Ome's web film *Osomoy*.

Known for his witty humour, Zibon delivered a lighthearted acceptance speech that delighted the audience. He recalled the innovative teaser of his directorial debut *Chokkor 302*, where Mosharraf Karim told him he could not act.

"I really don't know how to act. These are not my words but Mosharraf Karim's," Zibon

laughed, adding, "However, I don't know how but the audience still watches my work and appreciates it, which, again, are his words, not mine."

Zibon also acknowledged his co-star and fellow nominee Iresh Zaker, whose comic pairing with him in *Osomoy* was especially loved by fans. "I want to dedicate this award to Iresh Zaker and Kajal Arefin Ome," he said.

The actor first gained popularity through Ome's hit series *Bachelor Point* and was also seen in *Female 4* and *Hotel Relax*. His much-talked-about directorial debut film *Chokkor 302*, released on Eid-ul-Fitr this year, featured Mosharraf Karim in the lead role alongside Reekita Nondine Shimu, Tareen Jahan, Moushumi Nag, Intekhab Dinar, Rawnak Hasan, and Sumon Anowar.

'Jaya Aar Sharmin' set for Chorki release on September 25

Director Piplu R Khan's pandemic-era drama *Jaya Aar Sharmin* will stream on Chorki from 12:01 am on September 25. Starring Jaya Ahsan and Mohsina Akter, the film follows an actress and her house help, whose fragile bond deepens and strains as they remain confined within a single home during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Originally released in theatres last May, the production also features a guest appearance by Tanjim Saiyara Totini. Piplu co-wrote the story, screenplay, and dialogue with Nusrat Islam Mati.

Jaya recalled the stripped-down shoot as "real and honest," while Mohsina praised the director's openness to improvisation and reflected on the pandemic's lessons about life and relationships.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF CHORKI

NEWS

Pakistani court
indicts man over
teenage influencer
killing

AFP, Islamabad

A man accused of shooting dead a 17-year-old TikTok star at her home in Pakistan after she had repeatedly rejected his advances was formally indicted Saturday, an AFP reporter in court saw.

Sana Yousaf's murder in June drew nationwide condemnation and reignited debate over women's safety, after some online comments -- alongside condolences -- blamed her for her own death.

The 22-year-old accused, Umar Hayat, pleaded not guilty in Islamabad's district court Saturday.

"All the allegations made against me are baseless and false," the accused told Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka.

Yousaf had racked up more than a million followers on social media accounts, including TikTok, where she shared videos of her favourite cafes, skincare products, and traditional outfits.

TikTok is wildly popular in Pakistan, in part because of its accessibility to a population with low literacy levels.

Women have found both an audience and income on the app, which is rare in a country where fewer than a quarter of women participate in the formal economy.

Police described the killing as a "gruesome and cold-blooded murder," alleging Hayat killed Yousaf after she repeatedly rejected his proposals.

Some comments in social media posts sharing the news of Yousaf's murder suggested it was justified in a society where honour codes dictate how women should behave.

"You reap what you sow," said one comment.

Violence against women is pervasive in Pakistan, according to the country's Human Rights Commission, and cases of women being attacked after rejecting marriage proposals are not uncommon.

RU suspends 'ward quota' amid student protests

FROM PAGE 12

Meanwhile, RU teachers, officers, and staff associations announced a full-day work abstention today to protest the alleged attack on teachers during a scuffle with students.

Prof Abdul Alim, president of the RU Nationalist Teachers' Forum, confirmed the development during a press conference in front of the Senate Bhaban following a meeting. They also demanded punishment for the attackers.

Students began yesterday's protests by setting tyres on fire in front of the university's administrative building at around 2:30pm.

Later, around 3:30pm, they surrounded VC Saleh Hasan Naqib's residence. But left the place after a

NCP-backed student group eyes reforms

FROM PAGE 12

meeting on the matter is expected by Monday, he told this newspaper.

According to sources, the NCP reviewed the Ducusu debacle at an executive council meeting, where leaders admitted BGCS had yet to establish itself as a strong organisation. They cited internal divisions and the absence of hall-level committees as major reasons for the defeat.

Mojumder acknowledged that stronger support from the NCP might have changed the outcome. Still, he noted, BGCS-backed candidates managed to win the vice-president post in two halls and the general secretary post in four halls at Ducusu.

However, in the central Ducusu election on September 9, BGCS failed to secure any of the 28 posts, while in Jucusu its candidates won only two out of 25. BGCS's Ducusu VP candidate Abdul Kader got 1,103 votes and GS candidate Mojumder received 2,131, both finishing fifth.

The polls also laid bare divisions within BGCS, with five leaders separately contesting for the assistant general secretary post. Among them,

Ashrefa Khatun secured 900 votes, while others drew between 300 and 3,000. After the defeat, leader Hasibul Islam, who ran for AGS, resigned from the organisation.

NCP insiders said BGCS's failure to attract non-residential students' votes and the lack of visible party backing undermined the student body.

"In Ducusu, Jamaat worked for Shibir internally while BNP worked for Chhatra Dal, but we could not do the same for Ganatantrik Chhatra Sangsad, nor openly declare it as our official student wing," said a central NCP leader.

Some fear the crushing defeat could impact NCP's national politics. But the party's Member Secretary Akther Hossen dismissed such concerns.

"As a new organisation, BGCS has not yet built an organisational base, which was reflected in the Ducusu results. But the Ducusu election is not the final destination. With stronger ideological and organisational foundations, they will do better in the future," he told this newspaper.

Saif, Hridoy power Tigers

FROM PAGE 12

Saif was the main aggressor in the Powerplay. Playing only his 10th T20I and his first major tournament, the right-hander showed composure and variety -- using his feet against pacers, timing shots with a twist of the wrist, and lofting spinners inside out.

Saif's 59 run second-wicket stand with Litton Das steadied the chase after the early dismissal of Tanzid Hasan Tamim in the first over. Litton, though less aggressive, kept the scoreboard moving with a 16-ball 23 before falling to Wanindu Hasaranga in the seventh over. In the process,

Litton surpassed Shakib Al Hasan to become Bangladesh's highest run-scorer in T20Is. He now has 2556 runs in 114 games, five more than Shakib's tally in 129 matches.

Saif and Hridoy then put on another brisk 54-run partnership for the third wicket before Saif was dismissed by Hasaranga. Hridoy, who struck two sixes and four boundaries, fell in the penultimate over, having all but sealed the win.

Jaker added two boundaries, including one in the final over, but his dismissal created last-minute jitters reminiscent of Bangladesh's infamous

Govt plans sweeping overhaul of NHRC

FROM PAGE 12

investigating officers given the same powers as an officer in charge of a police station.

Investigating officers will be directly answerable to only the NHRC. They cannot belong to the same organisation as the accused. They can summon and interrogate any individual, regardless of position, but arresting a civil servant or law enforcer will require a warrant from the NHRC or tribunal concerned.

NHRC-appointed investigators can produce the accused before a magistrate to record confessional statements under section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The draft allows victims, eyewitnesses, or others with credible information to file complaints with the NHRC, or with an OC or magistrate. The latter two must log a complaint as a general diary and forward it to the NHRC within 24 hours.

To aid prosecution, tribunals are proposed in every division -- or even every district -- headed by judicial magistrates. Tribunals will not require permission from the government or any other body to accept NHRC cases.

The commission and tribunals may also order the government to take interim action against any accused individual during investigations, with mandatory compliance.

The draft ordinance further tasks the NHRC with representing victims as legal counsel.

To safeguard independence, the NHRC is being given full financial autonomy. Its budget will be pre-fixed, beyond government discretion, and it will decide its own expenditures. It may also set up a fund to receive donations and grants.

Appointments will also be

'Taylor Swift: The Official Release Party of a Showgirl' set for three-day theatrical run

Taylor Swift is turning her latest album launch into a cinematic event. To celebrate the release of her 12th studio album, *The Life of a Showgirl*, the pop superstar has announced a three-day theatre experience titled *Taylor Swift: The Official Release Party of a Showgirl*. The screenings begin on October 3, the same day her album releases, and will run through October 5 across theatres in the United States.

AMC Theatres is leading the rollout, with Cinemark also offering both standard and Cinemark XD formats. Tickets are already available online and high demand is expected.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?



'The Human Voice'

Ninad x Alliance Française de Dhaka stage Jean Cocteau's 1930 classic *The Human Voice*, a one-act monodrama tracing a woman's final, heartbreaking phone call with a lover who is leaving her. Performed by Sadika Swarna, this immersive production invites audiences to arrive early and experience the sound-sensitive staging.

DATE: THURSDAY-SATURDAY | 9-11 OCTOBER, 2025

TIME: OCT 9-7PM; OCT 10 & 11-3PM TO 7PM

VENUE: ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE DHAKA, 26 MIRPUR ROAD, DHANMONDI

one-run loss to India in the 2016 T20 World Cup. To the relief of the fans, nothing of the sort was repeated, as Nasum Ahmed hurried for a single just after Mahedi's dismissal to ensure the Tigers get over the line.

Shamim Hossain also remained unbeaten after a crucial 14 off 12 balls at the death.

Meanwhile, with the ball, left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman stood out, picking up three wickets for just 20 runs in his four overs. He also equalled Shakib's record as Bangladesh's leading wicket-taker in T20Is, with 149 scalps in 117 matches.

Commission insiders say the body has not been included in manpower expansion discussions.

Meanwhile, members of the soon-to-be dissolved Enforced Disappearance Inquiry Commission warned that the death penalty provision for enforced disappearances also complicates prosecution and may hinder convictions. The commission had been consulted extensively during the ordinance drafting.

Shibir's wins in Ducusu, Jucusu

FROM PAGE 12

Many sacrificed their lives. In exchange for their sacrifices, today we have the opportunity to work in a free and independent environment. We must not boast in overexcitement. We must remain humble. We must be servants of the people," he said.

The day-long programme, presided over by Jamaat's Central Women's Division Secretary Nurunnisa Siddika, featured a keynote on "Political Situation and the National Election 2026", presented by the party's Secretary General, Mia Golam Porwar.

NEWS

EBL organises Sky Academic Awards



CITY DESK

Eastern Bank PLC (EBL) has organised the Sky Academic Awards 2025 to celebrate and recognise the outstanding academic achievements of 20 students in the SSC 2025 examinations under Dhaka Education Board.

The award ceremony was held at the bank's head office in Dhaka on September 18, said a press release.

Each of the students who demonstrated exceptional performance received a certificate of excellence along with a pre-loaded complimentary prepaid card as a special gift from EBL.

The prepaid cards not only serve as a meaningful token of appreciation but also help introduce these young achievers to modern banking solutions, encouraging them to embark on their digital financial journey at an early stage. Iqbal Mohasin, director, FID, Bangladesh Bank; Ashish Chakraborty, director, and Tawfiq Imam, head of products, Visa (Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan); EBL Managing Director Al Reza Iftekhar, Additional Managing Director and COO Osman Ershad Faiz, and Deputy Managing Director and Head of Retail and SME Banking M Khorshed Anowar were present on the occasion.

2 bridges collapse

FROM PAGE 4

produce, while traders cannot move goods to markets. Many locals are now risking their safety by attempting to cross the broken bridge on foot.

Earlier, another bridge over the Bhairab river in Monohorpur village, near Ilisher Jol field, was washed away by strong currents on Wednesday night.

Jibannagar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Al Amin visited both sites yesterday along with Upazila Engineer Ashraful Islam, local representatives and

political leaders.

"The heavy current in Bhairab river caused the collapse of the bridge in Monohorpur. Later, the bridge in Santoshpur also fell. These bridges are very important to the people of this area," the UNO told reporters.

"We have discussed with the relevant authorities about rebuilding them. Alternative routes will be arranged soon, and we are also considering temporary measures for people's movement in the meantime," he added.

Discrepancies exist between field reports and official data, but the trend is alarming nevertheless, he added.

Researcher Maha

Mirza said, "The interim government has completely failed to prevent extremist attacks or mob violence against religious minority communities, shrines, and ordinary people."

"The current situation is even more frightening than under the previous fascist government. People are living in fear. Attacks are getting normalised. It was the government's responsibility to ensure such incidents would not recur. Instead, the government remains silent and allows them to happen," she said.

Artist Arup Rahee said, "As part of imperialist and

colonialist forces, while traders cannot move goods to markets. Many locals are now risking their safety by attempting to cross the broken bridge on foot. Earlier, another bridge over the Bhairab river in Monohorpur village, near Ilisher Jol field, was washed away by strong currents on Wednesday night. Jibannagar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Al Amin visited both sites yesterday along with Upazila Engineer Ashraful Islam, local representatives and

liveability."

Prof Shayer Ghafur of Buet said while a foreign company is involved in the project, local corruption created opportunities for them to "commit the misdeed". Prof Cittara Nasreen of Dhaka University said squeezing a "sensitive area like the DU campus" through such projects is "very alarming".

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়

সেবা শাখা

বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা

www: mofood.gov.bd

নম্বর: ১৩.০০.০০০০.০০০.০১৩.০৭.০০০২.২৪.৫০৮

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়ের দাঙ্গুরিক কাজে ব্যবহারের প্রয়োজনে অন্যান্য মনিহারি ও ব্যবহার্য সামগ্রি চলতি ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থ বছরের জন্য ফ্রেমওয়ার্ক রেনোভেশন সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান নিয়োগের জন্য সীলমোহরকৃত খাদ্য দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্র দাঙ্গুরের সময় দরপত্রের সাথে চলতি দরপত্রে প্রেত লাইসেন্স, ভ্যাট সনদপত্র এবং টি আই এন এর সতার্যাত অনুলিপি, জাতীয় পরিবাস পর্যবেক্ষণ সতার্যাত অনুলিপি এবং বাকে শচ্ছলতার সনদপত্র এবং টেক্সার সিডিউলে বর্ণিত শর্তবন্ধী ও চাহিদার আলোকে প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।

ক্রমাংক	দঙ্গুরের নাম	বিজ্ঞপ্তির বিবরণ
১	খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়	খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়
২	এজেন্টসি	-
৩	প্রক্রিউরিং এন টি টি নাম	-
৪	প্রক্রিউরিং এন টি টি কেড	১৪৮০১০১-৩২৫৫-৩২৫৫১০৫-অন্যান্য মনিহারি
৫	দরপত্র নং	১৩.০০.০০০০.০০০.০১৩.০৭.০০০২.২৪.৫০৮
৬	তারিখ	১৫/০৯/২০২৫ খ্রি
৭	সংগ্রহ পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ফ্রেমওয়ার্ক)
৮	বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	রাজস্ব খাদ্য
৯	দরপত্রের সিডিউল বিজ্ঞপ্তির শেষ তারিখ	০৮/১০/২০২৫ খ্রি
১০	দরপত্রে দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	০৯/১০/২০২৫ তারিখ দুপুর ২.০০ টা পর্যন্ত
১১	দরপত্র দোলার তারিখ ও সময়	০৯/১০/২০২৫ তারিখ দুপুর ২.৩০ ঘটকায়
১২	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির কাজের নাম ও ঠিকানা	খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, ভবন নং-১২১, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
১৩	দরপত্র প্রাপ্তিকারী অধিসেবের নাম ও ঠিকানা	খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, ভবন নং-৪, কক্ষ নং-১২১, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
১৪	দরপত্র দোলার দণ্ডনি	উপসচিব (সেবা) এর দঙ্গুর, ভবন নং-৪, কক্ষ নং-১১৬, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা
১৫	দরপত্র দাতাদের যোগাযোগ	PPR-২০১০ অন্যান্য এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের জন্য প্রযোজ্য দরপত্রে বর্ণিত শর্তবন্ধী
১৬	দরপত্রে বর্ণিত মালামালের সংশ্লিষ্ট বর্ণনা	অন্যান্য মনিহারি ও ব্যবহার্য সামগ্রি
১৭	দরপত্র সিডিউলের মুল্য	৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা অফেরের যোগ্য
১৮	লট নং-১	মন্ত্রণালয়ের দাঙ্গুরিক কাজে ব্যবহারের জন্য অন্যান্য মনিহারি ও ব্যবহার্য সামগ্রি
১৯	টেক্সার সিকিউরিটি	১০,০০০/- (দশ হাজার) টাকা মাত্র
২০	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম, পদবী	আরিফুল ইসলাম, উপসচিব (সেবা), ভবন নং-৪, কক্ষ নং-১১৬, খাদ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা। ফোন নং-০২-৫৫১০০২২১ (অফিস)
২১	১। অন্যান্য শর্তদি সিডিউলে বর্ণিত রয়েছে;	
	২। সকল দরপত্র বাতিল/প্রাপ্ত ক্ষমতা সংযোজন সত্ত্ব কর্তৃক সংরক্ষিত	

তারিখ: ২ আগস্ট ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ
তারিখ: ১৭ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

Fahim stresses accountability

FROM PAGE 3

"After one year of struggle by general students, we are finally having an election. For many of us, this will be our first-ever vote, and that makes us all the more excited," said Reza, a student of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

Asked why he was contesting from the Shibir-backed panel, Reza said, "For 15 years, Shibir was denied democratic space. After August 5, students had the chance to observe what this organisation is about. They uphold the spirit of the July uprising, organised programmes, and have shown their honesty and skilled leadership. I believe working with them will benefit the campus."

"Our panel also includes those injured in the July uprising and students from minority groups... Together, we represent almost all sorts of students on our campus."

Reza outlined his

priorities if elected: ensuring regular Rucusu polls by including them in the academic calendar; addressing student concerns on accommodation, food, healthcare, transport, and research; and introducing subsidies in canteens.

He also promised safe drinking water, more research funding, reduced fees, better library facilities, and improved campus healthcare.

"We will ensure that cultural and social organisations can operate spontaneously. We want shuttle or e-car systems for commuting and a campus where women can move safely, 24/7," he added.

Reza emphasised accountability as his top priority.

"We will introduce a system for students to evaluate teachers. The administration must also be accountable. As Rucusu representatives, we ourselves will publish

regular updates so students can monitor our progress transparently."

On his chances, Reza said, "After Shibir's massive victories in Ducusu and Jucusu, the Rucusu polls are a challenge for us. But if students trust us, we can bring meaningful changes for a better campus."

Despite high enthusiasm, he alleged that a section of teachers and groups were trying to obstruct the polls.

"We see this as a conspiracy. But we, the students, will resist. No one can stop the Rucusu election," he said.

Bribery

FROM PAGE 4

Deputy Commissioner Dr Mohammad Shahid Uddin Chowdhury, during a views exchange meeting with journalists recently, said irregularities in the land acquisition section will be looked into with due seriousness.

"I have already discussed the issue with the ADC (revenue). Action will be taken," he assured.

Asked, Patuakhali EPZ Project Director Md Shafiqul Islam, said, "We have already transferred all land acquisition funds to the DC Office. Disbursement of compensation is their responsibility. If there is any irregularity, I am not aware of it."

She said a project to establish National Cellular and Molecular Research Center was taken long ago to improve medical research but the project could not progress due to different problems.

She sought government intervention for taking the project forward.

Prof Nazmul Hossain, director general of the

Tasin pushes for 10-year academic

FROM PAGE 3

individuals. We study with taxpayers' money but fail to give back to the country," she said.

Citing a large gap between education and employment, Tasin said her candidacy was motivated by the need to improve both the environment and the quality of education at RU.

"As a student of the Institute of Education and Research, I have several concrete plans. I want to reduce the gap between studies and employability."

Tasin, a former

coordinator of Students

Against Discrimination,

stressed that she was running as an independent candidate without political ambitions.

Her panel, she pointed

out, includes diverse

voices -- three indigenous

DHAKA SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21, 2025

ASHWIN 6, 1432 BS

The Daily Star

9

engaging for students."

She also promised to address students' basic needs, including food, transport, healthcare, and safety, and to work from the root level to resolve issues.

"RU already has a 50-year infrastructural plan but no academic roadmap. What we are studying now is not aligned with global standards, and that leaves graduates struggling. A long-term academic plan will guide teaching and learning here," she said.

She also vowed to give priority to research.

"Research is the lifeblood of a university. Yet only 2-3 percent of RU's budget is allocated for it, and even that is often used by teachers for promotions rather than innovation. I

will work on making the process fairer and more

engaged for students."

She is reportedly the first woman to contest for Rucusu's VP post. Asked about it, she said, "I was surprised to learn that no woman had ever contested for this top post. But I do not want to be known as a female or male candidate. I am known for my work, and that is how I want to remain."

Allocate more budget for medical

FROM PAGE 3

Directorate General of Medical Education, said data and research carried out in Western countries are often used in Bangladesh without knowing whether they are suitable for the local population.

So, more research focusing on local issues and context needs to be conducted, he added.

She added that the main problem for the project is the land, as the area has been encroached upon by a group, and urged the authorities to first clear it.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Dhaka (Revenue Section)

Cholera kills more people for second consecutive year, while prevention and treatment available

Cholera deaths have surged for the second consecutive year, with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) reporting a 5% rise in cases and a 50% increase in deaths in 2024 compared to 2023. Over 6,000 people died from this preventable and treatable disease, which continues to spread due to factors like conflict, climate change, population displacement, and poor water, sanitation, and hygiene infrastructure.

Sixty countries reported cholera cases in 2024, up from 45 the previous year, with Africa, the Middle East, and Asia accounting for 98% of cases. Twelve countries saw outbreaks of over 10,000 cases, including several experiencing large outbreaks for the first time. The case fatality rate in Africa rose from 1.4% to 1.9%, highlighting the fragility of health systems and limited access to treatment. A quarter of deaths occurred outside health facilities.

To combat cholera, access to clean water, sanitation, hygiene, accurate information, and rapid treatment are essential. New cholera vaccines, such as Euvichol-S®, have been added to the global stockpile, but high demand has created supply shortages. In 2024, 40 million doses were approved for emergency use, but demand continues to outstrip supply.

The global cholera crisis persists into 2025, with 31 countries reporting outbreaks. WHO assesses the global risk from cholera as very high and is responding with urgency to reduce deaths and contain outbreaks in countries around the world. WHO continues to support countries through strengthened public health surveillance, case management, and prevention measures; provision of essential medical supplies; coordination of field deployments with partners; and support for risk communication and community engagement.

SOURCE: WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION



Essential health screenings for those over 60: A GUIDE TO HEALTHY AGEING

STAR HEALTH DESK

Reaching your 60s is a milestone, but it is also a time to focus more on your health. Regular screenings can help detect potential issues early, allowing for better management and prevention of serious conditions. Here is a guide to essential health checkups for those over 60 that can keep you active, independent, and healthy for years to come.

1. Blood pressure check: High blood pressure often has no symptoms but can lead to heart disease, stroke, and kidney damage. It is recommended to check your blood pressure annually, or more frequently if readings are elevated or if you have other risk factors like diabetes or a family history of hypertension.

2. Colorectal cancer screening: Colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable cancers when detected early. Screening for those over 60 is crucial. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends starting at age 45 and continuing through 75. Common screening methods include colonoscopies every 10 years or annual stool tests.

3. Prostate cancer (for men): Prostate cancer is common in older men. Men aged 55 to 69 should discuss

the benefits and risks of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing with their doctor. Routine screening is not typically recommended for those over 70 unless there are specific concerns.

4. Breast cancer (for women): For women, regular mammograms are essential as breast cancer risk increases with age. The American Cancer Society recommends mammograms every 1-2 years for women between 40 and 50, depending on personal and family history. Your doctor will guide you on when to start and how often to get screened.

5. Bone health: Osteoporosis makes bones fragile, increasing fracture risk. Women over 65 should have bone density tests to check for osteoporosis. If you have risk factors such as a family history of fractures, earlier testing may be necessary.

6. Eye and hearing tests: Vision issues like cataracts and macular degeneration become more common with age. Regular eye exams help preserve vision and detect problems early. Similarly, hearing loss affects many older adults, often without noticeable symptoms. A hearing test can ensure you do not miss out on important conversations or sounds.

7. Cholesterol and blood sugar screenings: High cholesterol and blood sugar are major risk factors for heart disease and diabetes. Regular screenings help detect these conditions early. Cholesterol should be checked at least once every 5 years, while blood sugar levels should be monitored to catch diabetes early, particularly if you have risk factors.

8. Thyroid function test: Thyroid problems, such as hypothyroidism, can affect metabolism, mood, and energy levels. A thyroid function test can help identify any issues, especially if you experience symptoms like fatigue or unexplained weight changes.

9. Hepatitis C screening: Hepatitis C is a liver infection that can go undiagnosed for years. A simple blood test can detect the virus early, preventing liver damage and other complications.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle: While screenings are essential, maintaining a healthy lifestyle is just as important. Eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, and managing stress help you stay healthy as you age. Avoid smoking and limit alcohol intake, and make sure to get enough sleep.

BOOSTING WORKPLACE WELLBEING Simple steps for a healthier, happier workforce

Creating a healthy and positive work environment is essential for maintaining both productivity and mental health. With nearly 60% of the global population engaged in work, the workplace often becomes a major part of our daily lives. Ensuring that it is a place where individuals feel supported and valued can make all the difference in mental wellbeing.

For employees, small changes can have a big impact. Prioritising self-care is key: take regular breaks to avoid burnout, ensure you're getting enough sleep, and nourish your body with a healthy diet. Learning how to set boundaries—like finishing on time and saying no when your plate is full—can help prevent work from overwhelming personal life. Strengthening relationships with colleagues by building supportive connections at work also fosters a positive atmosphere. Establishing a clear end-of-day routine signals the end of work and helps you mentally switch off.

On the other hand, employers play a crucial role in fostering a mentally healthy workplace. Providing access to mental health resources, offering flexibility, and creating a culture of openness where employees feel comfortable discussing their wellbeing can make all the difference.

By prioritising mental health, both individually and as a team, we can create a workplace where everyone thrives—mentally, emotionally, and professionally.



PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS

Timely screening, modern treatment, and a message of hope

DR ARUNANGSHU DAS

September is prostate cancer awareness month. Every year, this month is observed worldwide to raise awareness about prostate cancer and its treatment. According to the World Health Organisation, around 2,500 men in Bangladesh are newly diagnosed with prostate cancer each year, and approximately 1,500 die from it. The risk increases significantly after the age of 50. In Bangladesh too, cases are being detected more frequently. Importantly, when diagnosed at an early stage, prostate cancer is highly controllable, and patients can continue to live normal lives.

WHO ARE AT RISK?

» Men above the age of 50
» Those with a family history of prostate cancer
» Men of African or Asian descent face relatively higher risk
» Obesity, high-fat diet, and sedentary lifestyle

Why screening matters

Prostate cancer often develops silently, showing no symptoms in the early stages, which makes regular screening vital. The two main methods for detecting prostate cancer are the PSA (prostate-specific antigen) blood test and the digital rectal examination (DRE). The PSA test measures the level of a protein that may be elevated in the presence of cancer, while the DRE allows the doctor to physically check for irregularities in the prostate.

In the UK, men should start screening at age 50 if they are at average risk. However, those with a family history of prostate cancer should begin screening earlier, typically at age 45, to ensure early detection. Early diagnosis increases the chances of successful treatment, making these screenings a crucial part of men's health from middle age onwards.

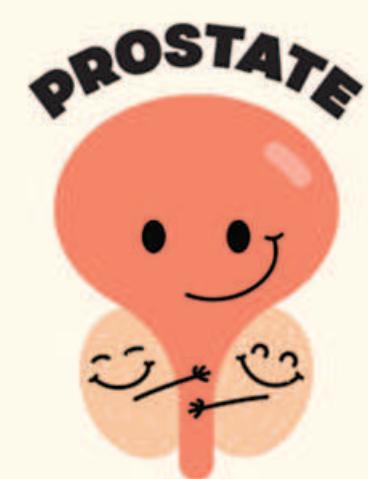
Benefit of screening: It allows

cancer to be detected at an early stage, when treatment is most effective.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Early stage – often no symptoms, but may include:

» Difficulty starting urination
» Weak urine stream
» Frequent urge to urinate, especially at night
» Interrupted urination
» Dribbling after urination



CANCER AWARENESS

Advanced stage – symptoms may include:

» Blood in urine
» Blood in semen
» Pain or burning during urination
» Pain in the pelvis or lower back
» Bone pain (if cancer spreads to bones)
» Breathing difficulty (if spread to lungs)
» Weight loss, loss of appetite
» Unusual fatigue or weakness

HOW PROSTATE CANCER IS DIAGNOSED

Diagnosis usually involves several steps:

» Digital Rectal Examination (DRE): the doctor examines the

prostate through the rectum.

» PSA blood test: measures PSA level in blood

» Imaging tests: such as transrectal ultrasound (TRUS), MRI, or PSMA PET-CT

» Prostate biopsy: TRUS or MRI-guided tissue sampling, which confirms the diagnosis

ADVANCES IN TREATMENT

Prostate cancer treatment today is no longer limited to surgery or long-term radiotherapy.

Robotic surgery

» High precision, minimally invasive
» Faster recovery, fewer complications
» Early return to normal life
» SBRT (Stereotactic Body Radiotherapy)
» Completed in just a few sessions (usually 5)
» Delivers radiation precisely to cancer cells
» Shorter duration, fewer side effects, excellent outcomes
» Hormone therapy and modern chemotherapy
» Effective options for patients with advanced disease

WORLD CLASS TREATMENT NOW IN BANGLADESH

Many still believe advanced treatment requires going abroad. In reality, leading cancer centres in Bangladesh now offer modern SBRT radiotherapy, advanced chemotherapy, and immunotherapy. Patients can receive world-class care without leaving the country.

September, observed globally as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, reminds us all:

» Stay aware and undergo regular health checkups
» Begin treatment promptly if detected early
» Remain hopeful—because modern prostate cancer treatment is already available here in Bangladesh.

The writer is a consultant at the Square Cancer Centre.

Expanding access to safe sanitation

The Daily Star (TDS): What strategies does LIXIL use to ensure WASH products reach even the most remote and vulnerable households?

Rashedul Alam Sarker (RAS): LIXIL Corporation, a Japanese MNC, present in more than 150 countries, is committed to making affordable WASH products accessible to everyone by working with a wide network of partners. In Bangladesh, its long-standing collaboration with RFL has built a strong retail and supply chain that delivers products even to remote areas. Partnerships with organisations such as iDE Bangladesh have also supported local entrepreneurs, from latrine producers to sales agents, by helping make sanitation businesses profitable. These efforts have created an effective ecosystem for expanding access to WASH products across the country.

TDS: Affordability is a big challenge for low-income families. How does LIXIL keep its sanitation and hygiene solutions both affordable and high quality?

RAS: SATO products, part of LIXIL's range, are designed to meet the sanitation needs of households in off-grid settings. They use gravity-powered systems, making them simple, durable, water-efficient, practical and affordable. Made from high-quality plastic, they are easy to transport, install and maintain, helping reduce overall costs. Local manufacturing also ensures they remain accessible to low-income families while maintaining quality.

TDS: How does LIXIL collaborate with entrepreneurs, service providers, and retailers to improve access, installation, and maintenance of sanitation products?

RAS: Through its local partners, LIXIL has built a strong sanitation ecosystem in Bangladesh. Entrepreneurs and retailers, many with over a decade of experience selling these products, are well aware of their benefits and social impact. LIXIL provides training, installation tools and promotional support while also gathering feedback to refine its products and help local businesses grow. In



public health, while introducing new gender-inclusive sanitation solutions.

TDS: How does LIXIL's partnership approach and product innovation help address the unique cultural, environmental, and climate challenges in Bangladesh to accelerate progress toward SDG 6?

RAS: LIXIL works with partners in Bangladesh to improve sanitation and hygiene while advancing SDG 6. Through collaborations with NGOs such as iDE, it gathers consumer insights to design

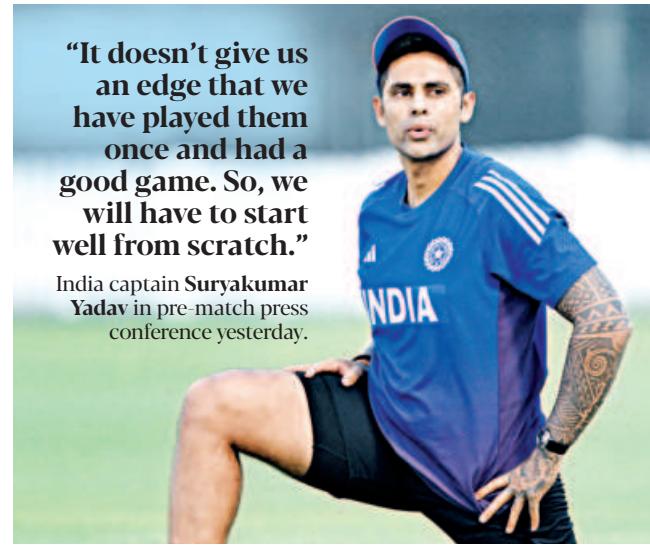
climate-resilient, affordable, relevant SATO products for households, schools and workplaces. Supply is supported by global manufacturing hubs and trusted local producers, while demand is built through awareness initiatives with governments and NGOs.

LIXIL also trains masons, plumbers and retailers to strengthen local capacity and ensure long-term product use. Partnering with corporations across sectors, it integrates sanitation into supply chains, supporting ESG objectives and expanding access to safely managed solutions nationwide.

TDS: Partnerships often speed up progress. How is LIXIL working with iDE and others to integrate WASH with nutrition and public health initiatives in Bangladesh?

RAS: Bangladesh was the first country to introduce SATO products in 2012, with iDE Bangladesh supporting demand generation. Operations now cover production, distribution, installation and maintenance, all sourced locally. iDE has been key to this success through innovative sanitation marketing and sales, and in 2024 the partnership was extended to accelerate access in rural areas. Together, they are also developing programmes that link WASH with nutrition and

This content has been published under 'Catalyzing Markets' – a media campaign jointly initiated by iDE and The Daily Star. This interview is conducted by Md. Zahidur Rabbi
iDE, a global nonprofit organisation in 12 countries since 1984, drives poverty reduction through market-driven solutions in Bangladesh, scaling agriculture, WASH, climate resilience, clean energy, and women's empowerment.



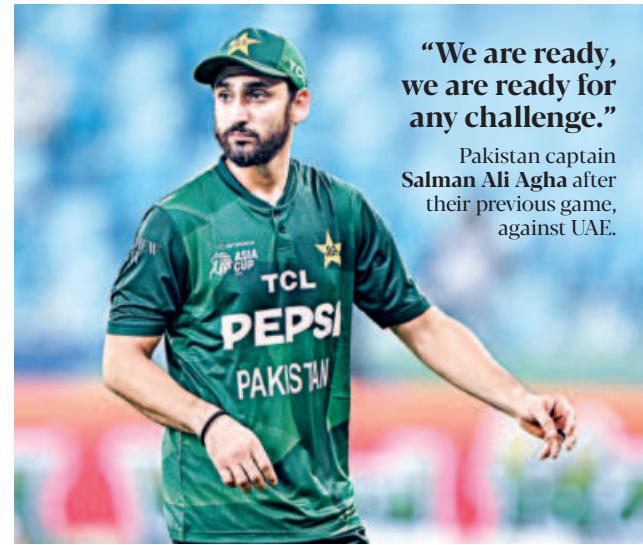
"It doesn't give us an edge that we have played them once and had a good game. So, we will have to start well from scratch."

India captain Suryakumar Yadav in pre-match press conference yesterday.

India have had the upper hand in T20Is against Pakistan, winning 11 of their 14 encounters. However, Pakistan's three wins include two in Dubai.

In the Asia Cup, the two sides have faced each other 20 times. India have come out on top 11 times, Pakistan have won six, and three matches were abandoned because of bad weather.

Pakistan's most recent Asia Cup win over India was in the 2022 edition, which was played in the 20-over format in the UAE.



"We are ready, we are ready for any challenge."

Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha after their previous game, against UAE.

Cricket caught behind in rhetoric

EKUSH TAPADER FROM DUBAI

A simple gesture of formality withheld can snowball into a storm, and India captain Suryakumar Yadav is learning that lesson the hard way in the ongoing Asia Cup.

As eternal rivals India and Pakistan are set for a rematch after a week in their first Super Four fixture, what should have been about the talking points related to strengths and weaknesses and key matchups has instead been hijacked by the nagging question: will India will again refuse to shake hands post-match and, in the broad spectrum, will politics again overshadow play?

The outside noise after the two teams' group stage game has become so overwhelming that Yadav admits he feels like switching off his phone just to get some rest. However, it is apparently not an option, as between games he has to attend official engagements where the Pakistan-related questions -- often little to do with

cricket -- always find their way into the room.

The non-handshake saga has turned so sensitive that even former India captains are treading carefully. Sunil Gavaskar, when asked during Thursday's Afghanistan-Sri Lanka match, dodged it entirely: "Look, any comment on this right now is risky."

Sourav Ganguly's response was equally telling. Although he made it clear he did not approve of the move, he stopped short of criticism: "The team did what they thought was best. I don't have a comment on this."

Cricket and politics keep getting entangled like stubborn weeds, and it is cricket that loses the most. Ganguly added a reminder that reached far beyond the boundary ropes: "This [mixing of politics with sport] should not happen... Other sports don't see it this much, but in cricket, it happens more."

In their previous meet, the gulf in

class was clear, continuing the trend in recent years; the rivalry felt far from being fierce, as India outclassed Pakistan by a staggering seven-wicket margin. A Bangladesh supporter observed recently, "Tickets for the India-Pakistan match are still widely available, but tickets for Bangladesh-Sri Lanka [match yesterday] already sold out."

On the rivalry, the India skipper himself brushed it off with almost theatrical dismissal. "I don't know what rivalry you people are talking about," said Yadav in yesterday's pre-match presser.

Hot favourites India barely broke a sweat in their previous game. Against Oman, Jasprit Bumrah was rested, part-timers bowled, Yadav refused to bat -- almost a glorified practice match. Pakistan, by contrast, enter the Super Four under pressure; their batting unit under scrutiny, and pride dented by defeat to India.

Outside the nets at the ICC Academy,

fans surround their bus offering advice. Shaheen Afridi and others walk in with heads down and ears closed, with or without headphones. Another defeat, however, could turn those words from murmurs to roars.

The non-handshake fiasco itself dragged right into Pakistan's final group match, against hosts UAE. They even threatened a boycott unless match referee Andy Pycroft was removed. The game began an hour late -- an unprecedented event, given the context. And resuming their stance, the men in green went on to boycott yesterday's pre-match press conference.

At the Dubai International Cricket Stadium tonight, it thus remains to be seen whether cricket can express its typical glorious nature on one of the biggest stages, or whether every ball must carry the weight of unwanted, unspoken agendas.

What to WATCH

TEN CRICKET
England vs Ireland
3rd T20I
Live from 6:30 pm
T SPORTS, NAGORIK TV
Asia Cup T20

India vs Pakistan
Live from 8:30 pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1
English Premier League
Arsenal vs Man City
Live from 9:30 pm



PHOTO: BFF

A Bangladesh player attempts in vain as his Iranian counterpart takes a shot at goal during their first Group G fixture of the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Qualifiers in Kuantan, Malaysia yesterday. Although Bangladesh initially kept the defending champions at bay till the ninth minute, once the first goal was scored, the floodgates opened, culminating in a 12-0 defeat for Bangladesh in their first-ever international futsal match.



Bangladesh players celebrate their come-from-behind 2-1 victory over hosts Maldives in the ongoing Commonwealth Beach Handball Championship in Kulhudhuffushi yesterday, sealing their place in the semifinals with a game still to play in the six-team tournament. Earlier, Bangladesh had defeated India 2-1 and South Africa in straight sets, 2-0, before losing to Sri Lanka 2-0, with Khokon Molla starring in all three wins so far.

PHOTO: HANDBALL MALDIVES

Salma breaks new ground as selector

SPORTS REPORTER

Former Bangladesh skipper Salma Khatun has called time on a trailblazing career as a cricketer and is set to embark on a brand new challenge as the first-ever female selector of the national women's team.

The 34-year-old confirmed the development to The Daily Star on Saturday, adding that the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Aminul Islam Bulbul and women's wing chairman Nazmul Abedeen Fahim informed her after the board of directors meeting.

Salma is expected to join Sazzad Ahmed Shipon in the two-person selection panel and begin her duties on October 1.

"I will no longer play. I have already informed it," Salma said, adding that she will try to uphold fairness as selector.

"There will be competition and obstacles in every job. Amidst all of

it, I will try my best to remain fair. Can't guarantee that I won't make any mistakes, but I will always try to ensure that everything happens in a fair manner," she added.

Salma, who last featured for Mohammmedan Sporting Club in this year's Women's Dhaka Premier League and finished as the second highest wicket-taker with 18 scalps, is a key figure in the country's women's cricket.

She had led the Tigresses in both their inaugural WODI and WT20I matches in 2011 and 2012 respectively. The all-rounder represented Bangladesh in 46 WODIs and 95 WT20Is and scored over 1000 runs and picked up 136 wickets across formats.

She lost her place in the WODI meeting.

side in 2022 after the New Zealand tour and last played a WT20I against India in Mirpur in 2023.

BCB's media committee chairman Iftekhar Rahman Mithu termed Salma's appointment as "revolutionary".

"I think this is a revolutionary decision by our president, as having someone like Salma involved will provide great support for women's cricket," Mithu told reporters in Mirpur after the board of directors meeting.

Meanwhile, the BCB also appointed former Bangladesh pacer Hasibul Hossain Shanto in the men's team's selection panel. Shanto will join as the third selector alongside Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu and Abdur Razzak.



Ryan Gravenberch celebrates with Mohamed Salah and Conor Bradley after scoring Liverpool's opener in a 2-1 Merseyside derby win over Everton at Anfield yesterday. Hugo Ekitike doubled the lead before Idrissa Gueye's reply set up a tense finish, but Arne Slot's men held firm to stay perfect in the Premier League with five wins in five matches.

IFIC

গ্রাহক হই শক্তি
সাফল্য হই সাহস
যাত্রা দুর্নিবার

প্রায় অর্ধশতকের ব্যাংকিং সেবার পথচলায়
আমরা মেঘেছি অনন্য সব অর্জন

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লাগী কষী

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ASIA CUP 2025 Saif, Hridoy power Tigers to a winning start in super 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Quickfire fifties from opener Saif Hassan and Towhid Hridoy helped Bangladesh get off to a winning start in the Super Four stage of the Asia Cup with a four-wicket win over Sri Lanka at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Opting to field, Bangladesh bowlers faced pressure early and late in the innings as Sri Lanka all-rounder Dasun Shanaka blasted an unbeaten 64 off 37 balls, featuring three fours and six sixes, to guide his side to a challenging 168 for seven.

In reply, Saif's career-best 61 off 45 balls and a 37-ball 58 from Hridoy, who bounced back after a lean spell of no fifty-plus score in his last 15 innings, laid the platform for a comfortable chase, but Bangladesh still endured a tense finish. They lost Jaker Ali (9 off 4) and Mahedi Hasan (0 off 2) in the final over when just five runs were needed.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

UNGA SESSION Yunus leaves for NY tonight

UNB, Dhaka



Chiefe Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus is scheduled to leave Dhaka for New York late Sunday night to attend the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, where he will deliver his official statement and hold a series of high-level meetings on the sidelines.

He is travelling to the US by a commercial flight.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, BNP leader Humayun Kabir, Nayeb-e-Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami Syed Abdullah Muhammad Taher and National Citizen Party leader Akther Hossen will be part of the Bangladesh delegation to the UNGA at the invitation of the chief adviser.

At the General Debate (September 23-27 and 29), the annual meeting of heads of state and government at the beginning of the General Assembly session, world leaders will make statements outlining their positions and priorities in the context of complex and interconnected global challenges, officials said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

NCP-backed student group eyes reforms after DU, JU debacles

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Following its heavy defeats in Ducusu and Jucsu polls, Bangladesh Gonotriti Chhatra Sangsad (BGCS), the student group backed by the National Citizen Party, is preparing for a major organisational overhaul to rebuild and regain strength.

Senior leaders of both organisations said the reforms may include a leadership shake-up, reduction in organisational posts, and even a possible name change, as the NCP seeks to clarify its affiliation with BGCS.

Launched on February 26 as an independent student body with a section of former leaders from Students Against Discrimination, the platform that spearheaded the July uprising, BGCS has remained active on several campuses.

But its poor performance in the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) and Jahangirnagar University Central Students' Union (Jucsu) elections has prompted top leaders to rethink its structure.

A senior NCP leader, requesting anonymity, said the party failed to clearly establish its ideological link with BGCS.

"The student wing has fallen behind because we could not assert our affiliation fully, unlike Jamaat and BNP. Now we want to clarify this relationship by defining the concept of dependency, which is why reforms are under discussion," he told The Daily Star.

Abu Baker Mojumder, central convener of BGCS, confirmed that discussions are underway on renaming and restructuring in consultation with NCP. A general



Eight-year-old Samira lies in bed at Mugda Medical College Hospital yesterday as her worried mother, Malancha, holds the IV tube to ensure the saline drips properly. Samira, from the Basabo Buddhist Temple area, was admitted last Wednesday after being diagnosed with dengue. Till Friday, the DGHS recorded 147 dengue deaths and 40,709 cases so far this year. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Govt plans sweeping overhaul of NHRC

Draft ordinance empowers the rights watchdog to probe members of disciplined forces

NHRC DRAFT LAW

- ⦿ Commission can also issue search warrants, authorise arrests.
- ⦿ Will have pre-fixed budget and power to raise funds.
- ⦿ New appointment process designed to ensure independence.
- ⦿ Can act as victims' counsel, take complaints, compel govt action.
- ⦿ Must file reports on deadline; tribunals to finish trials in 120 days.

mandates of the commission, while the enforced disappearance law sets out the rights commission's specific role in combating enforced disappearance," said Sazzad Hussain, a member of the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances.

Additionally, a separate draft ordinance on the prevention of enforced disappearance -- recently approved in principle by the cabinet -- also gives the NHRC broad powers.

The NHRC ordinance defines the formation and

to identify secret detention centres and take legal action. It may issue search warrants to inspect such centres, jails, or other premises for persons believed to have been forcibly disappeared.

The rights commission may authorise law enforcers or its officers to make arrests, with

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Shibir's wins in Ducusu, Jucsu to influence national polls
Says Jamaat ameer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday said Islami Chhatra Shibir's victory in the Ducusu and Jucsu elections will influence the upcoming national election.

"Many have been impressed by this victory. We hope to contest all 300 seats in the upcoming election with those who like and love us and those whom we like and love," he said.

"To secure victory in that election, I call upon everyone to extend all kinds of help and cooperation, including financial sacrifices," he added.

Shafiqur was addressing the central women's division Majlis-e-Shura session of Jamaat, held at the Al-Falah auditorium in Moghbazar, Dhaka, as the chief guest.

"Our leaders endured the Awami fascist government's imprisonments and repression with patience.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Stay united, follow party decisions
Tarique asks BNP activists

UNB, DHAKA

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday urged party leaders and activists to stay united, follow the party's decisions and prevent anyone from using the party for personal benefit to secure victory in the upcoming election.



"Can we today, from this council, take two pledges? One -- at any cost we will stand united behind the party decisions and two -- we will never allow anyone to use the party for personal gain. Let us take these two vows together," he said.

The BNP leader made the remarks while virtually speaking from London at the triennial council of the Kishoreganj district unit BNP.

Party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir inaugurated the council.

Tarique also said if the party can maintain ironclad unity until February, the people's verdict will go in favour of the sheaf of paddy, the election symbol of BNP.

"What matters most to BNP is people, people and the people of Bangladesh. We must always stay with the people and we must also keep the people with us," he said.

The BNP leader said the people of Bangladesh have struggled together for the past 16 years against an autocratic regime to regain their voting and other political and democratic rights and their movement

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

RU suspends 'ward quota' amid student protests

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University authorities have suspended their decision to reinstate the "ward quota" following a day-long protest on campus by students demanding its abolition.

The announcement was made on the university's verified Facebook page around 1:00am today.

"Amid ongoing unrest at Rajshahi University, admissions under institutional privileges have been suspended. In view of the situation, an emergency syndicate meeting has been convened for September 21 [today]," read the post.

Protests erupted on campus yesterday as students demanded the abolition of the ward quota -- a provision allowing admission privileges for children of the university's teachers and staffers.

Under this quota privilege, a maximum of two students per department may be admitted, subject to certain conditions.

Just before the announcement, students began a sit-in outside the vice chancellor's residence at 11:00pm last night, which continued till the writing of this report at 1:00am today.

The protesters escalated their demonstration, following a scuffle between students and teachers, officials, and staff in the afternoon.

They also surrounded the Juberi Bhawan on the campus and confined teachers and the pro-vice-chancellor.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

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