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Justice eludes women, children as trials drag on

Experts warn delays are letting offenders walk free

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Fatema Akter (pseudonym) was just five when she was raped by her neighbour in Dhaka's Khilgaon. After her 20-year fight for justice, the trial has ended -- not with accountability but with the man's acquittal.

On July 21 this year, the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal 3 cleared him of the charges, citing insufficient evidence.

Case documents show her mother heard her scream from the neighbour's house around 6:00pm on February 9, 2004. Rushing inside, she found the child in a pool of blood. Locals caught the perpetrator and handed him over to police.

A case was filed with Khilgaon Police Station that night, and charges were framed on May 18, 2004.

In the meantime, Fatema grew up to be 25, carrying the trauma of a crime the courts ultimately left unpunished.

She is one of thousands of survivors whose quest for justice remains stalled, as conviction rates for crimes against women and children continue to be among the lowest in the justice system.

Police Headquarters data show that in the first eight months of this year, just 0.52 percent of child-related cases and 2.61 percent of women-related cases ended in conviction. Conviction rates for child-related cases were 0.48 percent and 0.73 percent in 2023 and 2024 respectively, while women-related cases had a 5.06 percent conviction rate in 2023 and 5.85 in 2024.

For perspective, the conviction rate for cases across the board was 28 percent in December 2023.

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CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN	CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN
2025 (JAN-AUG)	
0.52%	Conviction 2.61% ,
0.30%	Punishment 1.44%
2024	
0.73%	Conviction 5.85%
0.52%	Punishment 4.63%
2023	
0.48%	Conviction 5.06%
0.32%	Punishment 3.58%



Displaced Palestinians, fleeing northern Gaza due to an Israeli military operation and evacuation order, rest on their way to southern territories in the central Gaza Strip, yesterday. The Israeli military yesterday said that 700,000 Palestinians have fled Gaza City since late August, as it presses an air and ground assault on the urban centre. At least 46 Palestinians were killed in Israeli strikes yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

CEC rules out PR system without legal change

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin said yesterday that the next general election cannot be held under a proportional representation system unless the law is amended to allow it.

"The election will be held according to the procedures outlined in the RPO [Representation of the People Order]. The PR system isn't included there," he said at a press briefing at the EC office.

"If the RPO is amended or replaced, then maybe. But without changing the law, I can't proceed," he added.

In reply to a question about whether it would be possible to hold the election in February if the law is changed, he said, "I don't want to respond to hypothetical questions."

Referring to the ongoing political agitation over PR, he said, "Let the issue be settled. They [politicians] will understand whether it's feasible for us or not."

Currently, Bangladesh uses the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system, where the candidate with the highest votes in a constituency wins. Under PR, parliamentary seats are distributed proportionally to the total votes each party receives.

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'Delhi didn't like what our students did'

Yunus says bilateral ties also being affected by Hasina, Saarc issues

UNB, Dhaka



India has not been able to accept the change in Bangladesh because it "did not like" what the students did during the uprising last year, said Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus.

He said India's hosting of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who created all sorts of problems in the country and killed young people, is not helping bilateral ties between the neighbours.

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PHOTO: AZAHLA UDDIN

A solar-powered pump house now irrigates hundreds of bighas of farmland in the Hard Barendra region of Rajshahi. With uninterrupted water supply from this system, farmers can harvest paddy up to four times a year -- a sharp rise from just once annually in the past. The photo was taken yesterday in Godagari upazila's Kalipur.

Country sees rise in HIV infections, deaths

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

In contrast to the global decline in HIV infections and deaths, Bangladesh is witnessing a troubling rise in both cases and fatalities -- a trend that has raised public health concerns.

The country recorded 1,438 cases of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and 326 deaths from HIV infections last year. The numbers show a marked increase from 2023, when 1,276 people tested positive for the virus and 266 died, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) data.

In the first six months of this year, 882 HIV-positive cases were reported, indicating a further rise in infections, said a DGHS official, adding that data on HIV-related deaths in 2025 is yet to be compiled.

HIV attacks the body's immune

YEAR	HIV CASES	DEATH DATA
2025 (till June)	882	Not available
2024	1,438	326
2023	1,276	266
2022	947	232
2021	729	205
2020	658	141
2010	343	37
2005	193	30
2000	31	1

system, weakening its ability to fight infections and diseases, and if left untreated, can lead to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Attributing the rise in infections to increased testing, health officials said around 23 percent of those potentially living with HIV remain

unaware of their health status.

They fear that a lack of funding for preventive services could result in a further increase in the positivity rate and make it more difficult for the country to achieve the target of eliminating AIDS by 2030.

The expiry of a government programme in June last year caused serious disruptions to preventive services -- such as the distribution of condoms, needles, and syringes among key populations, including people who inject drugs, female sex workers and transgender individuals, noted officials.

Altogether, these groups comprise 3.22 lakh people and accounted for half of the HIV cases last year.

In Bangladesh, the first HIV case was detected in 1989. The total

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MY DHAKA

DHAKA AT DAWN

Borrowed hours of a restless city

NUSRATH JAHAN

There is a Dhaka most people never meet. A city wrapped in pale light, where the air feels gentler, where time seems to pause before its daily sprint. Dhaka at dawn is not the usual picture to complain about, nor the one you brace yourself for every weekday -- it is something else altogether, fleeting and almost secret.

If you happen to wake before the city does, you'll notice the silence first. It's not the stillness of midnight -- the cars are still honking, and the night air still carries a buzz of gatherings. The familiar roar of traffic is absent, and suddenly, the roads stretch out wider than usual; un hurried, like an empty theatre waiting for actors to arrive.

Flyovers that are usually burdened with endless cars and buses stand empty, their expanse startling in its openness.

What makes these early hours so different from night time is not the absence of traffic -- but the presence of light. At night, Dhaka may be quieter, but it never truly rests. But with the first rays of sunlight, the calmness spreads like a blanket over



the city.

Only a handful of people claim this hour.

The early risers, walking briskly in parks or running along empty sidewalks, seem to belong to

a different city altogether. They breathe in cleaner air, watch the sky shift from charcoal to rose gold, and carry on their morning rituals while the rest of Dhaka sleeps. There are tea stalls too -- though far rarer now

-- whose kettles rattle before sunrise, offering warmth in tiny glasses to rickshaw pullers who begin their day early, or to old men who gather for a few moments of conversation before the noise swallows everything.

A streetlamp flickers off, a shopkeeper yawns as he rolls up his shutters, a rider pedals through the quiet streets with a bag that is soon to be filled with packages awaiting delivery. Even the stray dogs seem calmer at this hour, stretched out

lazily on sidewalks, unbothered by the absence of people to chase.

And then, of course, there are the night guards -- figures who belong to both night and day but not quite in the ways we notice.

You'll often find them pacing slowly outside gates, wrapped in shawls during winter, or leaning on their sticks in the humid stillness of summer. By dawn, their eyes carry the fatigue of sleepless hours, but also a strange calmness that only comes from keeping watch while the city rests. Some sit on rickety chairs sipping the first tea of the day, others hum softly to themselves to stay awake, their shadows long and solitary under fading streetlights.

As joggers begin to arrive and shutters creak open, they stand as quiet sentinels of the in-between hour -- reminders that while most of Dhaka sleeps, someone has been awake all along, guarding its silence. It is as if the city exhales before the day's demands begin. And then the city starts to wake up. The same roads that feel wide and generous at six, shrink beneath traffic by eight; the crisp air thickens with heat and dust in hours. But isn't that the magic of it all? A fleeting gift for walkers, runners, tea drinkers, and newspaper boys -- a quiet inheritance most of us overlook, as though Dhaka's most delicate secret hides in plain sight.

Justice eludes women, children as trials drag on

FROM PAGE 1

The partial 2025 data on convictions in women and children repression cases already point to a decline. The figures underscore how thousands of cases remain stuck in investigation or trial, often ending in acquittals or out-of-court settlements.

Md Sazzad Hossain, public prosecutor of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal 3, said victim families' reluctance to pursue trials is a major reason for delays -- which ultimately leads to fewer convictions.

"Witnesses move away, forget details, or stop showing up when a case drags on for eight or 10 years. Doctors retire, complainants remarry, and families no longer want to revisit the past. Defence lawyers then argue there is no ground for conviction, and the court is left with no option but to acquit."

He said police delays in submitting charge sheets and producing witnesses further weaken cases. According to the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act 2000, charge sheets must be submitted within 60 days and trials completed within 180 days.

Sazzad added that when families cooperate and cases are supported by medical evidence and consistent witnesses -- especially in child victim cases -- convictions are usually secured and acquittals are rare.

According to PHQ data, in the first eight months of this year, 2,698 cases were filed over child rape, murder, abduction, and torture, naming 5,048 accused. Only 14 cases produced conviction, while just 15 of the accused were punished.

In 2024, a total of 2,996 cases were filed, resulting in 22 convictions.



PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED



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CEC rules out PR

FROM PAGE 1

CEC Nasir's comments came amid a division between parties over the PR issue.

Most political parties at National Consensus Commission meetings backed a 100 member upper house elected through PR, but the BNP and like-minded groups filed a note of dissent, arguing the chamber should reflect seat shares in the lower house.

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday reiterated the party's opposition, calling PR a recipe for "permanent restlessness" that would destabilise Bangladesh.

Speaking at a seminar at the Supreme Court Auditorium, he said governments under PR often took a year to form, only to collapse within months. "The purpose of PR is not just to increase seats but to create frequent instability. The groups who want the country to stay in uncertainty all the time will benefit from this," he said.

He added that the constitution clearly mandates direct voting for public representatives. Salahuddin also criticised surveys on PR, saying many respondents did not understand the system. He warned PR could produce "another fascist or weak government like Sheikh Hasina's".

The Jamaat-e-Islami and six other parties -- Islami Andolan Bangladesh, Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, Khelafat Majlis, Nezame Islam Party, Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan, and Jatiya Ganatantrik Party (Jagpa) -- have staged protests since September 18 demanding the PR system. They also announced fresh district- and upazila-level programmes for today.

The National Citizen Party supports PR for an upper house of parliament.

Despite the debate, Nasir said the EC was preparing in full swing to hold the next polls in February. "We will not favour anyone. We will work with complete neutrality. We will ensure measures so that no one can play foul," he said.

On talks with all registered parties, including the Jatiya Party amid a call to ban it, he said the discussions with the parties would take place in the late phases of discussions. "There is ongoing political debate. Let's see how things evolve. Please wait a little."

About the NCP's demand that the party be given the "Shapla" (Water Lily) symbol, the CEC said Mahmudur Rahman Manna-led Nagorik Oikya had previously applied for the same symbol.

"There was no discussion then. I don't understand why there is so much talk about it now," he said, adding that the matter would be decided collectively in the commission.

He also said they were yet to finalise the number of new political parties for registration.

The EC had begun steps to ensure expatriate Bangladeshis' voting rights through postal ballots, he added.

'Delhi didn't like what our students did'

FROM PAGE 1

"And that creates a lot of tension between India and Bangladesh. Also, lots of fake news is coming from the other side. This is a very bad thing," Yunus said at an event on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The event, arranged by Asia Society and the Asia Society Policy Institute in New York on Wednesday, was moderated by Dr Kyung wha Kang, president and CEO of Asia Society. He flagged a piece of fake news claiming that the youth who brought about change in Bangladesh are Taliban. "They even said I'm a Taliban too. I don't have a beard. I just left it at home," he quipped.

Talking about the regional economy, the chief adviser said cooperation is key to development.

Yunus said SAARC is supposed to be a bloc of very close family members, and the idea was born in Bangladesh.

"You can invest in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is going to invest in your territory. That's the whole idea of SAARC," he said. "All of us benefit from that... This is what we should be doing. We have problems with India right now because they did not like what the students have done."

Yunus said SAARC's idea was to bring all the countries in South Asia together so that young people can get in touch with each other.

He said it is important that they visit each other, make friends, study in colleges and universities across the region, and do business.

The chief adviser said, "Our history gave us the opportunity to make that happen, but somehow it didn't fit into the politics of some one country, so it had to stop. We feel very sorry for that."

However, Yunus said Dhaka is willing to make SAARC work. "We want to make sure that we open it up and bring people together. That is the only way to solve our issues."

While acknowledging limitations, he said a country's economic activities can extend beyond its boundaries and benefit the region.

"Look, Bangladesh's economy is defined by the boundaries of Bangladesh... This is a very narrow way of looking at yourself," Prof Yunus said.

"I said, why don't you look at neighbours, like Nepal, Bhutan, and also the seven states of India. In the eastern part of Bangladesh, there are seven states that don't have any access to the ocean. These are landlocked regions," he said, hinting at possible fields of cooperation.

On Asean membership, the chief adviser said Bangladesh can become an informal member of the bloc, and there is a provision supporting it.

"We can do that. Asean would be a good place to go, and you can build it up with regional harmony and regional interconnectivity," he said.

However, he acknowledged the challenges. "It is not easy to get everybody's 'yes' right away, particularly Myanmar, which has a problem with the Rohingyas."

"So they may not come forward, but we'll work on it. We don't see this will start a permanent trouble between Myanmar and Bangladesh," he said.

Yunus said they will have a good relationship with Myanmar. "Having this kind of conflict with each other doesn't help anybody. So, we have to resolve that."

He hoped that Rohingyas would be able to go back to their homes, businesses, and professions in Myanmar.

Rice goes out, yaba comes in

FROM PAGE 12

them. Some unscrupulous people here, driven by profit, are bringing yaba from the AA.

According to official data, 98 lakh yaba pills and 40kgs of crystal meth were seized in 2024. In the first four months of 2025 alone, 53 lakh yaba pills and 2kgs of crystal meth have been recovered.

Since August, Coast Guard operations in the waters off Saint Martin's, Cox's Bazar, Kutubdia, Chattogram's Banskhali, Patenga and Halishahar have led to around 67 arrests. Goods seized during the raids included cement, construction materials, potatoes, lentils, garlic and medicines, along with yaba consignments.

Coast Guard officials said traffickers admitted to trading essential goods with the AA for drugs but often pretend they were captured. "They secretly return and hand over narcotics to local dealers. Several such networks are involved," they said in a statement.

Country sees rise in HIV infections, deaths

FROM PAGE 1

number of HIV-positive cases stood at 12,422 till last year. Of them, 2,412 died.

DECLINING GLOBALLY BUT RISING IN BANGLADESH

The detection of the first HIV case in the US in 1981 prompted a global public health response.

Efforts of communities and governments brought down HIV infections by 40 percent and AIDS-related deaths by 56 percent globally since 2010, according to UNAIDS Global AIDS Update 2025.

The global number of HIV infections was 29 lakh and AIDS-related deaths 18 lakh in 2000. The numbers declined to 13 lakh and 6.3 lakh respectively last year, shows UNAIDS report.

But the caseload and deaths saw a gradual rise in Bangladesh over the last few decades, said officials of National Tuberculosis, Leprosy, and AIDS/STD Programme (TB-L & ASP) under the DGHS.

According to UNAIDS's target set in 2014, 95 percent of people living with HIV are supposed to know their status by 2030.

SERVICES DISRUPTED

As the time frame for the TB-L & ASP ended in June last year, DGHS now has to rely on foreign donors to continue tests and medication for HIV patients at dedicated centres.

However, the preventive services are seeing disruptions due to a

shortage of funds, a DGHS official said, adding that key populations remain out of coverage in 25 districts.

When asked, Zubaida Nasreen, deputy director of the AIDS/STD Programme, said there is a gap between the actual number of HIV-positive people and those who are potentially living with HIV.

"These people were always there, but a rise in testing is now making them visible," Zubaida, also the immediate past line director of the TB-L and ASP Programme, told The Daily Star on September 25.

Replying to a question, she said the expiry of the programme caused some disruptions in preventive services, but it would be inaccurate to claim that 25 districts are without coverage.

A development project proposal prepared by the DGHS now awaits approval. Once approved, preventive services will be provided seamlessly, she added.

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DHAKA

Separate SC secretariat nearing completion

Says chief justice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed yesterday said the long-awaited move to establish a separate Supreme Court secretariat is nearing completion to ensure judicial autonomy.

"We are now moving towards ending dual administration over postings, transfers, and discipline of lower court judges. This will enshrine true autonomy, a long overdue structural correction," he said while addressing a regional seminar on "Judicial Independence and Efficiency in Bangladesh" in Barishal.

Marking the first anniversary of his reform roadmap, the chief justice

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

'A guiding light for business and economy'

Speakers pay tribute to Samson H Chowdhury on his 100th birth anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Business leaders, economists, academics and civil society members yesterday paid tribute to late industrialist and Square Group founder Samson H Chowdhury on his 100th birth anniversary, hailing him as a pioneer of Bangladesh's industrial sector, a builder of institutions and a role model for future generations.

At a memorial service at St Mary's Cathedral in Dhaka, speakers remembered him as a man of honesty, perseverance and inclusiveness whose contributions to pharmaceuticals, healthcare and social causes remain significant in Bangladesh's history.

Samson H Chowdhury was not just an example but an ideal. If we follow his values, we can take Bangladesh forward.



MAHBUBUR RAHMAN
President of International Chamber of Commerce Bangladesh

"Samson Chowdhury was not just an example but an ideal. If we follow his values, we can take Bangladesh forward," said Mahbubur Rahman, president of International Chamber of Commerce Bangladesh.

"Chowdhury, along with his family, built Square into one of the country's leading conglomerates, setting high standards in pharmaceuticals, textiles and other industries," he added.

Abdul Muktadir, chairman of Incepta Pharmaceuticals, described him as a guiding force in the industry and a mentor known for his problem-solving approach.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



Multiple slow-moving vans plying the Dhaka-Aricha highway in direct violation of traffic rules. One van is carrying bags of grain, while the other two are loaded with steel rods protruding from the front and back, posing risk of an accident at any moment. The photo was taken recently in the Hemayetpur area of Savar upazila.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Ensure women, youth participation in politics

Speakers urge parties at CGS discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political parties must ensure greater participation of women and youths in the political process, including nominations in the upcoming national election, for the country's progress, speakers said at a roundtable yesterday.

They noted that although women and youths have been active in various movements, their decision-making roles within parties remain minimal.

The discussion, "Inclusive Politics: Women and Youth's Pathways to Leadership," was organised by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) in partnership with the Netherlands Embassy at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies in Dhaka.

Speakers said youth involvement is vital for building future leadership, while women's involvement is essential for their political empowerment.

Sushashone Jonno Nagorik Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said, "The ball is in the court of political parties to ensure inclusivity."

Investing more in women, ending their deprivation, and creating more opportunities for them are imperative for the country's progress, said Badiul, also a member of National Consensus Commission.

Netherlands Ambassador to Bangladesh Joris van Bommel

said, "Inclusive politics is part of a mature democracy."

Saying Bangladesh is passing through a "time of transition", he called for inclusivity, genuine dialogue, and removing barriers to youth participation.

He said genuine dialogue that incorporates diverse voices -- including youths, women, and marginalised groups -- will help Bangladesh move forward.

The ball is in the court of political parties to ensure inclusivity. Investing more in women, ending their deprivation, and creating more opportunities for them are imperative for the country's progress.

BADIUL ALAM MAJUMDAR
Member, National Consensus Commission

BNP Media Cell Convener Zahir Uddin Swapn said combining the courage of youths with the wisdom of senior politicians could make parties more inclusive.

CGS President Zillur Rahman said the July uprising opened a new opportunity for youth, though few have yet seized it.

Former ambassador Nasim Ferdous said political parties must not only include more women but also uphold their dignity, which is crucial for their advancement.

She suggested strengthening various leadership training programmes for the youth to create future leaders.

Prof Tania Haque of Women and Gender Studies at Dhaka University said a "hegemonic muscular power" is creating a barrier to women's political participation.

Hema Chakma, a member of Dhaka University Central Students' Union, said character assassination and cyberbullying are obstacles for women to get involved in politics.

National Citizen Party Joint Convener Khaled Saifullah echoed her, saying there has been a "smear campaign" against young political leaders and activists to belittle them.

Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Rasheda Imam said bullying and character assassination against women continue due to a lack of strict law enforcement.

She said the lack of family support is also holding women back from political participation.

Former lawmaker Nazmul Haque Prodhan, Jatiya Party General Secretary Shameem Haider Patwary, Gonoforum Acting President Subrata Chowdhury, and Gono Odhikar Parishad General Secretary Rashed Khan also spoke, among others.



While children play inside Kalabagan Shishu Park, trash collectors dump and sort waste on the street outside before moving it to a garbage depot next to the field, exposing them to foul odour and pollution in one of the capital's few leisure spaces.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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Tarique to return within weeks to lead BNP: Zahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



BNP Standing Committee member AZM Zahid Hossain yesterday said Tarique Rahman, the party's acting chairman, will return to Bangladesh within weeks to lead BNP's election process and the "final stage of restoring democracy".

He was speaking to reporters after placing wreaths at the grave of late president Ziaur Rahman in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar.

Responding to a question on the party's election strategy, Zahid said BNP leaders and activists are actively campaigning across the country with Tarique Rahman's 31-point programme.

TIB slams govt's 'unusually large' UNGA delegation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has expressed deep disappointment over the interim government's continuation of the practice of the fallen authoritarian regime of sending "unusually large delegation" to the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The anti graft watchdog termed the practice an "embarrassing record", usually followed either by major powers such as the United States, Russia, or China to ensure broad diplomatic influence, or by countries like Nigeria where good governance is lacking.

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Seek Interpol red notices against S Alam, 2 brothers Court asks ACC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission to issue a red alert through Interpol against S Alam Group Chairman Mohammad Saiful Alam and his two brothers in a case filed over acquiring Tk 104.20 crore by corrupt means. The two brothers are Abdus Samad and Mohammad Abdullah Hasan.

ACC Deputy Director Tahsin Munabil Haq submitted an application to Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court in this regard.

He said S Alam and his two brothers created a fake company named AM Trading, through which they prepared and used forged documents. They allegedly misappropriated Tk 104.20 crore in the name of loans. They also laundered and transferred this amount, converting it into Tk 340 crore, in favour of S Alam Super Edible Oil.

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29 Bangladeshis deported from 3 EU countries

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 29 Bangladeshis deported from Italy, Greece and Cyprus for illegal stay and alleged involvement in crimes were flown back to Dhaka yesterday.

Of the returnees, 16 came from Italy, nine from Greece and four from Cyprus. None of them had legal documents to stay in those countries, The Daily Star has learnt from immigration officials.

Another 13 Bangladeshis will be deported from the three countries, according to foreign ministry officials.

Under the Frontex-European Union Reintegration Programme, a BRAC team provided post-arrival support at the airport. Each returnee was given Tk 29,140 (EUR 205) in cash, food and assistance to contact their families.

"People must avoid irregular migration, particularly via sea routes through the Mediterranean, where Bangladesh ranks first globally for such attempts – this is a national shame," said Shariful Hasan, associate director of BRAC's Migration and Youth Platform.

Among yesterday's returnees was Hasan Khan from Dohar, who went to Greece five years ago. Speaking to this newspaper, he said he had spent Tk 10.5 lakh to brokers for a risky journey through the Mediterranean.

"I just managed to pay back my debt and am now deported back to my home country – I do not know what to do now."

Hundreds of Bangladeshis have been deported from the US, Libya and now Europe over the past one and a half years, according to official data. At least 187 Bangladeshis were sent back from the US between 2024 and September this year.

On August 2, a US C-17 military aircraft deported 39 Bangladeshis, including one woman. On June 8, a chartered flight brought back 42, while between March 6 and April 21, multiple flights deported another 34.

On August 21, some 174 Bangladeshis also returned from Libya after failing to reach Europe through the Mediterranean.

Man killed by mob over theft charges

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A man was allegedly killed by a mob in Abhaynagar upazila of Jashore early yesterday on suspicion of "stealing fish".

The deceased is Nasib Talukder, 50, a resident of Gopinathpur village. "Nasib's body bore multiple stab injuries. A case was filed today with the police station against 20-30 unidentified people," said KM Robiul Islam, officer-in-charge of Abhaynagar Police Station.

Three persons were detained for interrogation, he added.

Quoting witnesses, OC Robiul said Nasib entered a fish enclosure in Nolamara area around 3:45am when locals spotted him. They chased him down and attacked him with sharp weapons, leaving him dead on the spot. Police recovered the body and sent it to Jashore General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

A guiding light for business

FROM PAGE 3
Recalling their years together at the Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries, he said,

"Chowdhury never asked others to draft solutions – he would sit down himself and work with us until a decision was finalised."

Former Bangladesh Bank governor Mohammed Farashuddin called Chowdhury a "guiding light" in business and the economy.

He recalled seeking his advice when the banking sector faced rampant loan defaults in the 1990s, crediting him for crucial support in establishing the Central Depository System

(CDS). "He was a man of extraordinary humanity and inclusiveness, who embraced people of all backgrounds," Farashuddin said.

Writer and researcher Denish Dilip Datta shared lesser-known stories, including Chowdhury's brief service in the Royal Indian Navy and his resilience during setbacks.

He noted that Square Hospital, now a leading healthcare institution, was originally planned as a hotel project before Chowdhury transformed the idea.

Former caretaker government adviser Rasheeda K Chowdhury remembered him as a pioneering entrepreneur with strong family values. "Beyond his achievements, what inspired me most was the way he honoured his wife and family," she said.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman Chowdhury's

role as a founding trustee of TIB in 1996 and later as its board chair in 2004. "With his passing, Bangladesh's anti-corruption movement lost a guardian," he said.

At the family gathering, Sanchia Chowdhury, his granddaughter, remembered him as a disciplined man who guided the younger generation with wisdom and attention to detail.

His son Tapan Chowdhury described him as a man of faith, integrity and dedication whose contributions will remain unforgettable.

PRAYER TIMING
SEPTEMBER 26

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:35 12:30 4:15 6:00 7:30
JAMAT 5:10 1:15 4:30 6:05 8:00

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Women in the hills need greater safety

Arrest and punish the perpetrators of the Khagrachhari gang rape

We are outraged by the recent gang rape of an Indigenous girl in Khagrachhari. According to the survivor's father, his daughter, a class-eight student, used to attend private tutoring every evening and would return home by 9pm. However, on September 23, when she did not return at the usual time, her family went to the tutor's house to look for her, only to learn that the tutoring had ended as scheduled. Later, with help from local residents, they began searching the surrounding area and eventually found the girl bruised and unconscious in a crop field. This incident underscores the vulnerability of young girls and women of Indigenous communities in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

While women and girls across the country are increasingly facing insecurity and violence, those from Indigenous communities remain especially vulnerable due to their identities and the complex local politics at play. In the CHT, sexual violence against women and girls is reportedly often weaponised as a tool to further marginalise Indigenous communities and facilitate land grabbing. The non-Indigenous identity of the perpetrators is also a well-known fact in these incidents. Over the past year, numerous cases of violence against women, including rape, have been reported, yet justice has rarely been served. In June, for instance, the rape of a 14-year-old girl in the same district brought people to the streets. While some arrests were made in the case, the momentum quickly faded as protests subsided.

Political and rights organisations who are now holding protests across the CHT, demanding justice for the recent rape survivor in Khagrachhari, point out that rape, torture, and persecution have become routine due to a culture of impunity. Focusing on the overall lack of security for women in the hills, they are saying that crimes like rape are on the rise mostly because justice has not been served in previous incidents. They also point out that the non-implementation of the CHT Peace Accord is another key reason for the unchecked rise in violent crimes. These grievances are quite legitimate and should be addressed properly.

As regards the Khagrachhari case, we call on the authorities to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation and ensure immediate arrest of those involved. The perpetrators of this heinous crime must be brought to justice. Only by delivering swift justice can we hope to end the cycle of such crimes against Indigenous women and girls and restore a sense of safety in the region.

The Rohingya need more than aid

Leaders must move beyond rhetoric, ensure political solutions to end the crisis

The tragic saga of the Rohingya people stranded in Bangladesh, now in its eighth year, has been defined as much by an extraordinary humanitarian response as by a glaring political failure. While the international community has mobilised aid on an unprecedented scale to sustain over a million refugees, a new report from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reiterates what has long been clear to us: that charity alone is not a solution. The crisis requires a political resolution, and the voices of the Rohingya themselves must guide the way.

The OHCHR study, based on interviews with 125 Rohingya men and women, cuts through the geopolitical inertia to reveal a simple truth. The refugees' desire is not to reside indefinitely in camps, but to return home to Myanmar. This aspiration hinges on obtaining full citizenship, recognition of their Rohingya identity, and guarantees of equal rights, education, and freedom of movement. For them, justice means land restitution, compensation, and accountability for past crimes. The international community has been painfully slow to deliver on these core demands, however.

This is further complicated by the deeply fraught situation on the ground. The OHCHR report highlights a deep distrust of the Arakan Army (AA), an armed group that has gained significant territorial control in Rakhine State. The majority of respondents, comprising over 70 percent, fear the group is seeking to "erase" the Rohingya from Arakan. That's a major obstacle to any repatriation efforts. The ongoing conflict between the Arakan Army and Myanmar's military junta also creates a security vacuum that leaves the Rohingya trapped between hostile forces. Rohingya respondents have, therefore, called for active leadership from the UN, regional powers, and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to pressure Myanmar's political actors so as to provide guarantees for any repatriation agreement. Their plea for self-determination extends to a clear demand for direct engagement with educated Rohingya representatives, signalling their belief that a new leadership is needed to navigate their future.

As the international community convenes for a high-level conference on the crisis at the UN Headquarters in New York on September 30, the findings of this report must serve as a wake-up call. The focus must shift from a purely humanitarian approach to a political one, which addresses the root causes of the crisis—the ingrained racism and religious intolerance that 65 percent of the respondents cited. The call for UN peacekeeping missions or internationally protected safe zones in key townships like Maungdaw and Buthidaung shows that physical security is the first precondition for any return.

The time is overdue for the UN and regional powers to move beyond rhetoric and provide the political pressure, security guarantees, and platforms for dialogue that will enable a truly voluntary, safe, and dignified return. The future of the Rohingya cannot remain confined to aid dependency; it must be anchored in the restoration of their rights, recognition of their identity, and the ability to live safely and with dignity in Myanmar.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

First televised US presidential debate

On this day in 1960, the first in a series of historic televised debates (seen by some 85 to 120 million viewers) between US presidential candidates John F. Kennedy and Vice President Richard M. Nixon was broadcast.

EDITORIAL

Limiting majority power requires a watchdog, not bicameralism

Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem
is research director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD).

Rukaiya Islam
is programme associate (research) at the CPD.

KHONDAKER GOLAM MOAZZEM and RUKAIYA ISLAM

Following the ouster of the Awami League government in August 2024, the interim government established a number of reform commissions with a key focus being on remaking the political system. Bicameralism, proportional representation, and non-partisan constitutional appointments were among the formal recommendations. However, whether these prescriptions can pierce the entrenched dominance of the executive or disrupt the winner-takes-all culture of Bangladesh's politics remains a question. This article discusses whether creating an upper house in parliament would ensure accountability of the majority party or, in other words, whether it would create checks and balances in legislative, executive, and judicial processes.

Creating a second chamber in parliament to diffuse power, introducing proportional representation to prevent winner-takes-all outcomes, and establishing non-partisan appointment mechanisms to strengthen oversight are largely visionary proposals. Since institutions are mostly politically captured, bicameralism risks becoming a vehicle to reward party loyalists rather than enhance accountability, as it expands offices and seats without curbing entrenched executive dominance. Without mechanisms for independent oversight and enforcement, the proposals, even if accepted, offer limited potential to improve parliamentary scrutiny or restrain majoritarian excesses.

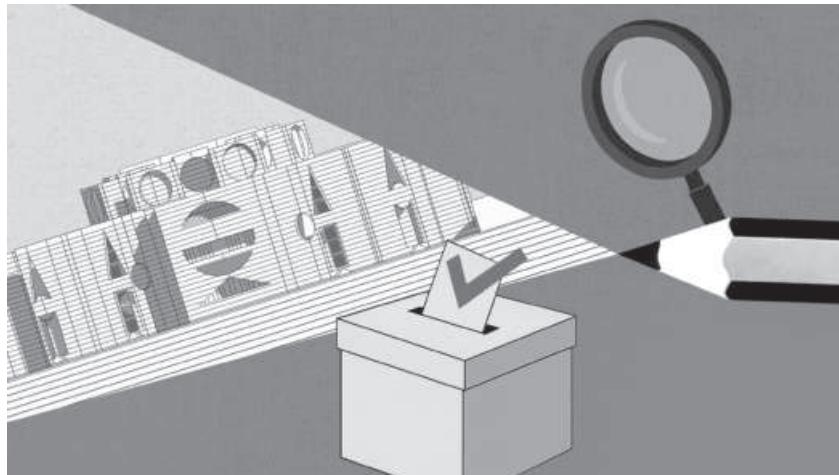
Bangladesh faces a complex political reality in which polarised politics and a dominant majority party undermine the independence of the legislature, while opposition participation remains inconsistent due to boycotts and structural barriers. Although committees and procedural checks exist, they still lack the capacity and enforcement power to function effectively. In this context, bicameralism or proportional representation are unlikely to succeed without independent enforcement mechanisms.

Therefore, Bangladesh needs an out-of-the-box solution to ensure sustainable accountability practices given the prevailing political reality. The Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) has recently conducted a study on parliamentary reform and proposed an independent parliamentary commission for democracy, legislative, executive, and legal affairs. Unlike ad hoc reforms, this

would stand alongside parliament as an impartial watchdog, offering expertise, scrutiny, and balance where political actors themselves refuse to do so.

Establishing a commission for oversight

The Jatiya Sangsad, in principle, holds extensive powers over legislation, finance, and oversight. In practice, these powers are heavily curtailed by majority-party dominance. Parliamentary committee leadership is mostly partisan, proceedings



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

are hurried, and opposition MPs face systemic barriers. Budgetary oversight is superficial. Audits are delayed, and recommendations ignored. Even procedural reforms, such as referring bills to committees after the first reading, have not been translated into substantial scrutiny. Parliament is structurally incapable of holding the majority party accountable.

A dedicated commission may give parliament the oversight it lacks. It could review bills before introduction to ensure they follow the constitution, serve public interests, and respect democratic principles. It could also monitor laws after they are passed, identify gaps, and suggest corrections. Committees would gain research and advice to strengthen scrutiny. Budget oversight would become meaningful, as financial committees gain the tools to spot irregularities and demand transparency. Most importantly, by promoting pluralism, the parliamentary commission could encourage opposition participation, reduce boycotts and walkouts, and push for genuine cross-party cooperation. Without such a body, accountability would remain mostly a promise.

through financial autonomy. It would be provided with a separate budget free from executive manipulation, and through transparent reporting, its findings would be made public to enable citizen oversight and media scrutiny. Additionally, consultative engagement with civil society, academic experts, and the private sector would ensure any recommendations are grounded in empirical realities, while a dedicated secretariat would support research, documentation, and coordination, allowing commissioners to focus on substantive evaluation. This structure positions the commission not merely as an advisory entity but as a credible oversight institution where expert neutrality and evidence-based analysis can influence parliamentary practice and curb executive overreach.

A case study from Europe

The CPD proposes taking lessons from the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, also called the European Commission for Democracy through Law. It was established in 1990 to strengthen democratic institutions, promote the rule of law, and support member states in upholding

constitutional norms. Its success rests on three pillars: independence, expertise, and functional flexibility. Members are experts in law, political science, and human rights, serving in a personal capacity rather than as political appointees, thus ensuring impartiality.

The commission provides pre-legislative reviews, advises on constitutional amendments, drafts guidelines, evaluates the functioning of democratic institutions, and supports citizen participation in governance. Its opinions cover legislative, constitutional, and administrative matters.

It holds four plenary sessions per year, appoints rapporteurs for country-specific opinions, and engages with governmental bodies, civil society, and academic experts. Reports are confidential until adopted, ensuring candid evaluation, and once finalised, they are published to maintain transparency. A secretariat supports its operations, providing technical assistance, drafting documents, and facilitating research.

Over decades, the Venice Commission has thus become a trusted arbiter of democratic reform, mediating political disputes, strengthening parliamentary procedures, and promoting judicial and institutional independence across Europe and beyond.

The lesson for Bangladesh is clear: combine structural independence, technical capacity, and impartial authority for real accountability. Without these, parliament remains a symbolic body, incapable of challenging the executive, scrutinising legislation, or enforcing transparency.

An independent commission, as the CPD proposes, could address the root problem: it could inject impartial expertise, pre-legislative and post-legislative scrutiny, and technical capacity into the system. It could strengthen the architecture of accountability itself. With independence, expertise, structural safeguards, and operational capacity, it could provide the much-needed oversight.

If Bangladesh is serious about ensuring accountability of the majority party, strengthening parliamentary scrutiny, and safeguarding democratic legitimacy, it cannot rely on symbolic reforms or additional chambers alone. It must build institutions capable of functioning independently, impartially, and effectively. Without such a commission, the promise of accountability will remain aspirational, and the cycle of fragile parliamentary governance will continue. Finally, Bangladesh needs an independent mechanism that can hold the majority party accountable, not just another chamber in parliament. Anything less will be political theatre, not democracy.

Rohingya crisis: Refugees without a country, a world without excuse



Shabira Sultana
is humanitarian policy activist.

SHABIRA SULTANA

Bangladesh cannot carry this weight alone. Hosting over one million Rohingya refugees is not a bilateral matter. It is a regional crisis and a global issue.

This is a tragedy Bangladesh did not invite. Families fled to save their lives, crossing forests, rivers, and rough roads. Days passed without food. Children sobbed until their voices faded. Mothers gave the last drops of water to their babies. The pain of hunger became a dull, constant ache. Yet they kept walking, because they knew turning back meant death.

They did not become refugees by choice. Their villages were burned, women and girls were raped, and men were tortured and killed. Generation-old homes were erased. This brutal reality is something I have listened to in the voices of Rohingya people—young and old, women and adolescent girls speaking in Cox's Bazar and on different international platforms. Their stories are heart-wrenching. Each has lost a loved one. Each carries

invisible scars.

I remember a young Rohingya man in the camps once asking, "Where do I belong? In Rakhine, they say I do not belong there. Here, I am only a refugee. Why am I stateless? I wanted to be a computer engineer. Now I survive as a volunteer. I want to thrive." This struggle echoes among thousands, struggling to cope with grief and helplessness in the nooks and alleys of the camps in Cox's Bazar.

This sense of helplessness has only deepened over time. Eight years have passed, and the population has grown to over a million. Since January 2024 alone, 150,000 more have arrived, living in camps with the bare minimum. Space is shrinking and resources are stretched, yet many remain unregistered. Amidst this, the Rohingya people are not allowed to work, and children and youth have no access to formal education. Their potential remains locked away.

In the face of this locked potential, experts speak of "self-reliance," but

what does that mean without a real plan? Bangladesh cannot shoulder this alone. Donors, the United Nations, the international community, and regional leaders must design and finance a model that benefits both the displaced Rohingya population and host communities.

While such a model is crucial for survival, the ultimate goal of repatriation remains a distant dream. Without citizenship, rights, and security, a safe return is impossible. The question is, who will create the necessary conditions? Experts, humanitarians, and policymakers discuss the need for a durable solution, but the Rohingya refugees speak of only one thing: going home.

This singular focus on home is a constant, powerful reminder for those of us on the ground. Every day, I see people working tirelessly to support the Rohingya refugees. We feel their pain, yet we cannot truly experience it. We do not sleep in crowded, makeshift shelters, and our children are not out of school. Fire and violence do not burn down our homes every year. Only they know how it feels to live with that loss and uncertainty every day—to wake each morning with no country to call home, to carry memories of terror while facing a future with no clear path.

This profound uncertainty is now compounded by a harsh financial reality, as resources are shrinking sharply, adding more challenges to the

lives of both camp dwellers and hosts. It is estimated that over \$5.9 billion in aid has flowed since 2017, while Bangladesh has also spent nearly \$568 million of its own.

These staggering figures underscore why this burden is not Bangladesh's alone to bear; it is a shared responsibility. Without continued support, the situation will worsen—already cramped shelters will become more crowded, food security will become a bigger concern, and stretched services will deepen suffering and frustration. That is why we humanitarians must commit to more than delivering aid. We must invest efforts in amplifying refugee voices, push for lasting solutions, and stand with them until they can return home safely and with dignity.

To achieve this, regional leaders, donors, and the international community must also act now to share the responsibility, provide sustainable support, and ensure that refugees can survive today while building a path toward safety, dignity, and an eventual return to their homeland. If the world waits or fails to ensure justice, despair will deepen and frustration will grow.

And that helps no nation. The Rohingya refugees deserve to return home safely and with dignity. They deserve the birthright of citizenship in Myanmar. Until that day, the region, the world, and host states must stand with them.

AI risks in Bangladesh's elections: A reality check



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MAKSUDA AZIZ

In recent days, my social media feeds have been filled with high-definition images of women in saris. At first, they seemed ordinary, but my journalistic instinct said otherwise. Most of these women are not the "dolled-up" type, nor was it a festive season. As an AI researcher, I recognised the trend as synthetic. The images looked strikingly real, and what surprised me most was how quickly prompts spread through comments and captions—AI knowledge shared in real time.

This comes just as the Election Commission, in early September, issued guidelines ahead of February's parliamentary polls, which included banning the misuse of AI in campaigns and banning posters. Together, they show that social media will be the main political arena, raising the question: what happens when AI becomes the weapon of choice inside it?

September also marks the 13th anniversary of the Ramu attack. On September 29, 2012, a fake Facebook post triggered violence in Cox's Bazar, where 12 Buddhist temples and more than 50, mostly belonging to the Buddhist community, were destroyed. Thirteen years later, justice has still not been served. That tragedy began with a single fabricated image, long before AI was part of the story. Today, the risks are far greater. In 2012, Bangladesh had 30 million internet users. Now, according to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), the number has soared to nearly 136 million. With smartphones everywhere, it takes only a few prompts to generate photos, videos, or audio, and spreading them is effortless.

Synthetic content at scale, detection in doubt

Last summer, at the New York University Journalism Institute, I mapped market-available AI tools. Many cost as little as \$20 to \$40 a month, and many more can be accessed for free simply by rotating email addresses. I identified 40 dedicated audio tools alone—text to audio, audio to audio, voice cloning, background noise removal, even noise replacement. And that was just audio. Add to that the countless tools for generating photos, videos, avatars, where you can upload a photo and prompt it to speak any words you want. The barrier is so low that even my ten-year-old can prompt with ease and get results.

But recognising AI-generated content is no one-click fix. We spent three months testing detection tools. Whether audio, video or photo, the results were inconclusive. Even faculty at the Poynter Institute, when consulted, could not offer optimism.

Detection tools do exist, but none are foolproof. For instance, Google's SynthID helps users identify AI-generated content. SynthID uses an invisible watermarking system to embed signals inside pixels of AI-generated content—images, audio, video, even text—which survive cropping or compression. Yet, SynthID is not widely available; applying for access can mean waiting up to a year.

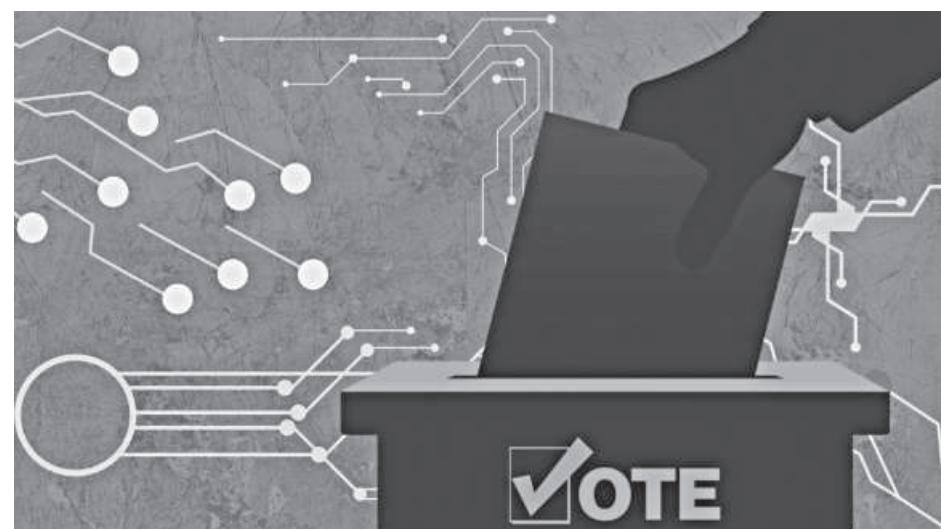
Other industry efforts have also emerged. In 2019, Adobe, The New York Times Company, and Twitter launched the Content Authenticity Initiative. By 2021, it had evolved into the Coalition for Content Provenance and Authenticity (C2PA), joined by Microsoft, the BBC, Intel, and others. Their aim is

not to "detect" AI but to make provenance transparent—embedding metadata into files to show who created them, how they were edited, and whether AI was involved. If such metadata were made mandatory, audiences could more easily identify synthetic content.

For now, however, these "content credentials" remain optional. No country has yet mandated their use across all forms of content. The European Union has taken a

deep roots in the creator economy make regulation even harder.

The Ramu example remains instructive. A fake profile was enough to incite communal violence. Creating one requires little more than an email. Authorities have minimal control. Removing incendiary content is slow and tangled. By May 2025, Facebook had over 67 million users in Bangladesh—an enormous challenge for any commission that hopes to



VISUAL: MONOROM POLOK

first step with its new AI Act, which requires AI-generated or manipulated content to be clearly labelled, and obliges general-purpose AI models to disclose provenance information about their training data. This makes the EU the first major jurisdiction to begin turning provenance standards into legal obligations. Still, consumers cannot rely on provenance as a guaranteed safeguard, since metadata can be removed or altered.

In early September, the Bangladesh Election Commission banned the misuse of AI in the February polls and tightened penalties for online defamation. Candidates must now submit their names, account IDs and other identifying information for their campaign and party-related social media. Yet, algorithms are not so simple, and AI's

monitor content in real time.

Social media algorithms also do not surface these risks quickly. A Cornell University study in 2023 found that harmful posts often circulate for long stretches inside echo chambers before reaching opponents. By then, the momentum is already set, sometimes enough to spill into the streets.

Meanwhile, the creator economy thrives on AI. Platforms need scale, and AI delivers scale instantly. Algorithms are tuned not to suppress but to amplify. Every reaction, like or dislike, boosts visibility. More reactions mean more views, and more views mean more revenue. The creator economy is about \$250 billion today—almost half of Bangladesh's 2024 GDP, which was around \$450 billion, and could become \$480 billion by 2027. For the

sake of this business, platforms have shown little willingness to restrain creators—not for the US, and certainly not for Bangladesh.

What Bangladesh can learn from other countries

Before we consider what Bangladesh can learn from others, it is important to note what it cannot. In the US, lawmakers recently passed the Take It Down Act, 2025, requiring platforms to remove non-consensual intimate images, including AI generated deepfakes, within 48 hours. This was achievable largely because most major platforms are headquartered in the US and fall under its jurisdiction. Bangladesh is not in that position. Past attempts to pressure platforms here have instead resulted in temporary shutdowns of Facebook or the wider internet—moves that backfired politically and eroded public trust. Clearly, Bangladesh cannot simply replicate another country's solution.

We have a unique political position right now, unlike any previous year. Past contests were dominated by one party or alliance; this time, the field is fragmented. In such a volatile environment, even a single provocative post could ignite conflict, making the Election Commission's hope of controlling candidates' social media footprint unrealistic. If AI is misused, it will spread far beyond central leaders, weaponised by party actors across the country, even against rivals within the same party. The fallout could be sweeping and unpredictable.

Amid these circumstances, Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin has said Bangladesh is seeking Canada's help in curbing AI misuse, which is a commendable step. Canada's approach combines public awareness, clear voter guidelines, MoUs with platforms such as Meta and Google, and technical monitoring cells. Whether such a broad effort can be replicated in Bangladesh is uncertain. However, if ethics education, awareness and law enforcement can be brought together, the country may yet steer through this perilous election with its democracy intact. Why not begin now, by preparing citizens to question and spot a fake before the damage is already done?

THREE YEARS OF MARRAKESH TREATY

Why hasn't life changed for the visually impaired?



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AYON DEBNATH

The third anniversary of Bangladesh's accession to the Marrakesh Treaty on September 26 is a pivotal moment to reflect on the progress and challenges in improving access to literature for persons with print and visual disabilities. Three years ago, Bangladesh took a historic step by joining the treaty and signing a promise to combat the pervasive "book famine"—a severe shortage of published works in accessible formats such as Braille, audio books, and digital text. However, progress remains frustratingly slow for a majority of the visually impaired and print-disabled individuals in Bangladesh.

The Marrakesh Treaty, administered by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), was created to ease copyright barriers that prevented the production and international sharing of accessible format books for people with print disabilities. Print disabilities cover a range of conditions, including blindness, low vision, and physical or perceptual impairments that make reading traditional printed text impossible or very difficult. By allowing authorised entities to reproduce and distribute printed works in formats such as Braille, large print, and accessible digital files without copyright infringement, the treaty holds the promise of opening the literary world to millions previously excluded.

Bangladesh's accession to the treaty in 2022 triggered widespread optimism among organisations advocating for the rights of the visually impaired, such as the Visually Impaired People's Society (VIPS). The ratification was seen as a landmark step toward fulfilling commitments to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals

related to inclusive education.

However, we are yet to realise the practical benefits of the Marrakesh Treaty. The critical legal framework for implementation, namely the amendment of the Copyright Act, 2000, has faced significant delays. Without these legislative changes, organisations and individuals remain in a legal limbo, legally unable to produce or import accessible books. This gap prevents the treaty's provisions from translating into meaningful access to educational and literary resources.

Bangladesh's 2020 National Blindness Survey reported approximately 1.43 million people with visual impairment. For this large population, accessible literature is not merely an academic concern but a gateway to education, employment, and social inclusion. Yet, the "book famine" continues, exacerbated by limited public awareness, media neglect, and insufficient government action to prioritise disability rights.

The challenge extends beyond legal formalities. Awareness about the treaty among policymakers, publishers, and the general public is minimal. Mainstream media coverage has been sparse, contributing to a lack of public pressure on authorities. Moreover, infrastructure for producing accessible materials—including trained personnel, technology, and funding—remains inadequate.

This neglect stems from a broader societal apathy toward the rights and needs of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh. Without comprehensive awareness campaigns and government-led initiatives, the treaty's potential remains underutilised. Empowering persons with disabilities requires not just legislative compliance but active engagement with community

technology providers.

Bangladesh has a strategic opportunity ahead of it to refocus on disability inclusion. Amendment of the Copyright Act to incorporate the treaty's exemptions and protections was an essential first step. However, effective implementation demands governmental commitment to resource allocation and

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partnerships with civil society and international entities. Establishing accessible libraries, ICT labs, and multimedia platforms for distributed accessible resources would significantly enhance capacity. Raising public awareness through media and outreach campaigns will foster societal acceptance and support.

Though focused on literary access, the Marrakesh Treaty holds wider implications for Bangladesh's development. Expanding access to knowledge and education empowers persons with disabilities to participate more comprehensively in the workforce and civic life, thus contributing to a more inclusive, knowledge-based economy. This fosters innovation, diversity, and economic growth—goals aligned with Bangladesh's development.

The treaty also promotes transparency and accountability. Accessible legal and governmental materials enable citizens with print disabilities to engage in informed civic participation, promoting democratic inclusivity. Equally important, the increased visibility and empowerment of persons with print disabilities challenge societal stigma, fostering respect for diversity and human rights.

(EAA) 2025 offers valuable lessons for Bangladesh and underscores the global trend toward comprehensive accessibility legislation. The EAA, which became legally binding on June 28, harmonises minimum accessibility standards across EU member states for products and services critical to people with disabilities, including digital content, e-books, smartphones, websites, banking services, and public transport.

The EAA specifically mandates that digital publications be accessible, addressing the core barrier of inaccessible reading materials faced by people with print disabilities.

By setting common standards, the EAA enables innovation and market access while ensuring people with disabilities can independently use technology and digital content.

Importantly, the EAA complements the Marrakesh Treaty by not only mandating accessible content but also requiring businesses to design products and services with accessibility integrated from the outset. This combined approach addresses both the supply and availability of accessible materials, tackling the historic "book famine" from multiple angles.

Bangladesh must break free from

the inertia and fulfil the treaty's transformative promise, investing in accessible infrastructure and raising widespread awareness. Engagement with people with print disabilities, their representative organisations, publishers, and printing presses must be central to this process. Their voices and experiences will provide critical insights that can guide policy, legal reform, and service delivery to meet real needs effectively. Furthermore, Bangladesh should broaden its perspective by considering advances such as the EAA to build an inclusive society with full participation for all citizens.



ESSENTIAL DRUGS COMPANY LIMITED
395-397, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208

INTERNATIONAL PRESS TENDER NOTICE

EDCL invite an International Press Tender for Importation of following Raw Material for Khulna Essential Latex Plant (KELP) on C&F© Chittagong by Sea basis:-

S.L No.	Tender No. Date	Name of the Item	Cost of Tender Schedule
01.	IMP/RM/KELP/06/ 2025-2026 Dated :25/09/2025	Raw Material for Male Latex Condom: 01.Silicone Oil (Poly Dimethyl Siloxane) (Details as per Tender Schedule)	Tk. 1500.00/set Equivalent to US\$ 13.00 Non-refundable

0

Tender schedule will be sold from the Accounts Department of Essential Drugs Company Limited, Dhaka on payment as stated above during office hours on all working days (except Friday, Saturday and Govt. Holidays). No tender schedule will be sold on the opening date of the tender.

The Tender will be accompanied by a amount of Earnest Money @ 1% of that quoted value in the form of Bank Draft/Pay order from any schedule Bank of Bangladesh in favour of "Essential Drugs Company Ltd" without which the Tender will be considered as non-responsive. The interested bidder may drop their offer along with the relevant papers to the tender box kept at the purchase department of EDCL, Dhaka till 11.00 AM on 20.10.2025, which will be opened on same day at 11.30 AM in presence of the bidders /their representatives (if any).

EDCL authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

N.B: This Information is also available at our Website: www.edcl.gov.bd

Deputy General Manager (CC),
Procurement Deptt.
For: Managing Director.



Mahtim Shakib



Emon Chowdhury



Sanzida Mahmood Nandita



Sadat Hossain

PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Ministry of Cultural Affairs to stage 'Sharadiya Cultural Festival'

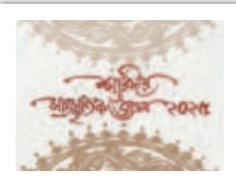
The Ministry of Cultural Affairs will host a two-day *Sharadiya Cultural Festival* on September 30 and October 1, organised by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

The festival will open on September 30 at Suhrawardy Udyan with the jatra *Mahishasura Mardini, Devi Durga*, staged by the Mata Majulika Dharmiyo Natya Sangstha and featuring Palakar Ujjal Kumar Byapari.

The closing day at Shilpakala's Nandan stage will begin with a *Manglik Nritya*, followed by *Shyama Sangeet*, patriotic songs, and solo performances by Anima Rai, Deblina Sur Dola, Ritupratim, and Sinti Saha.

Cultural Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki will inaugurate the event, with closing remarks from cultural figures including Tapan Chandra Majumdar.

All programmes are free and open to the public, celebrating the age-old traditions of Durga Puja.



The song that took home all MUSICAL AWARDS

SHARMIN JOYA

Music often serves as a form of therapy, and when it comes from a film, it carries an even deeper power, bridging the audience with the characters and their stories, enhancing the emotional flow. *Megh Balika* from the Shihab Shaheen directorial web film *Kacher Manush Dure Thuiya* is one such song that beautifully captures this essence.

The track *Megh Balika* stands out as a true musical gem, beautifully penned by Sadat Hossain, enchantingly composed by Emon Chowdhury, and brought to life through the soulful voices of two remarkable contemporary artists, Mahtim Shakib and Sanzida Mahmood Nandita. Its impact was further celebrated at this year's Blender's Choice-The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards, where the entire team behind the track was honoured with wins across four categories.

Sadat Hossain shared, "I have often asked myself—do I really want to write songs? Eventually, I realised, yes, I do. But along with that comes another wish: the emotions with which I write a song must also be reflected through its melody, music, and vocals. Yet, most of the time, I am held back by a sense of hesitation. What if the lyrics—or my emotions—do not receive the proper treatment? As a result, I never really wrote many songs. Even when people encouraged me to, I never showed much interest."

"The truth is, I don't usually write songs—I write poetry. And when a poem transforms into a song that touches people's hearts, that is the greatest reward a writer can receive. The Daily Star OTT Awards felt like the formal recognition of that reward. With both the jury's decision and the audience's votes, when the song was honoured as the Best Song of the Year, it undoubtedly

became a very special achievement."

Emon Chowdhury, the composer behind the song, said, "*Megh Balika* holds a special place in my heart for several reasons. This marked my first collaboration with Shihab *bhai*, and on top of that, Sadat *bhai* is one of my most favourite lyricists and writers—I've always been a huge admirer of his work. I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the chance to set his words to music. It's also quite rare that all the core members of a song—the lyricist, singers, and composer—are recognised at such a prestigious award show."

Sanzida Mahmood Nandita has a bittersweet memory of the song. "I was really devastated at that time, because just two weeks before I recorded the track, my father passed away. I also had a feeling that I couldn't do justice to the song—it's such a beautiful piece. But then again, somehow the outcome brought me so much love from the

people, and that means a lot." want to express my gratitude for considering my voice for the song. And I'd like to mention that Shihab Shaheen *bhai* directed the film amazingly!

Mahtim Shakib has won The Daily Star OTT award twice—last year for *Pakhi Pakhi Mon* from *Unish20* and this year for *Megh Balika*. He said, "The Daily Star OTT awards are the epitome of digital recognition, so receiving it twice is truly special. Although I couldn't be on stage either time, I deeply cherish the honor. *Megh Balika* is very close to my heart, and working with Emon *da* and Shihab *bhai* on such a well-received project was an absolute pleasure. Even in Australia, people praised the song and shared their stories with me, which felt amazing."

While all the participants of the songs are doing an amazing job in their careers, this awards surely will elevate their pathways in the industry.

NEWS

We aim to be a key bridge between Saarc

FROM PAGE 2

The two leaders addressed the protracted Rohingya crisis and the importance of increased international funding to support over one million refugees currently hosted by Bangladesh.

They also discussed regional connectivity, particularly Bangladesh's strategic role in allowing landlocked Nepal and Bhutan, as well as India's northeastern states, access to the Chittagong Port.

During the meeting with Yunus, Pakistan PM Sharif invited the chief adviser to visit his country before the conclusion of the interim government's tenure, said a press release of chief adviser's press wing yesterday.

Yunus shared that Bangladesh is on course to hold its general election in February and expressed hope that the major political reforms proposed by 11 national commissions would lead to meaningful political transformation.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister's Office of Pakistan in a statement said the meeting was held in a cordial and

friendly atmosphere, reflecting the mutual commitment of both countries to work together for the well-being of their people and stability of South Asia.

BUSINESS FORUM

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on Wednesday proposed the establishment of an Italy-Bangladesh Business Forum aimed at promoting Italian investment in Bangladesh, while meeting with Yunus on the sidelines of the UNGA.

Yunus welcomed the initiative. They also discussed a possible visit by Meloni to Bangladesh in December.

Meloni expressed Italy's willingness to engage constructively with Dhaka to ensure safe migration pathways that would benefit both nations.

In another development, Kosovo President Vjosa Osmani met Yunus the same day and proposed the signing of several trade and economic agreements with Bangladesh, specifically in the textile sector.

Seeking stronger global cooperation at a programme, Yunus yesterday called for giving the young people their rightful stake, safe space, and role in decision-making.

In response, the chief adviser said the interim government has already adopted a zero-tolerance policy towards human trafficking and has implemented several initiatives to ensure safer migration routes for

Bangladeshi citizens. "We need more global efforts to prevent human smuggling."

Yunus urged increased international support for over one million Rohingya refugees currently sheltered in Bangladesh.

In response, Meloni pledged to send a high-level delegation to next week's international conference on the crisis at UN headquarters.

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Seeking stronger global cooperation at a programme, Yunus yesterday called for giving the young people their rightful stake, safe space, and role in decision-making.

During a meeting with Dutch PM Dick Schoof, the chief adviser sought the country's cooperation in water management, ocean research, and establishing cold storage facilities to help preserve perishable agricultural products during harvest seasons.

and approving lethal weapons. On July 20, 2024, he allegedly endorsed Hasina's strategies in a phone conversation.

The seventh charge alleged that on August 4, 2024, Inu, during another phone conversation with Hasina, approved curfew and gunfire orders, and instructed his party leaders to execute the plans.

Prosecutor Mizanul Islam read out the charges. The prosecution also played before the tribunal two phone call recordings between Hasina and Inu.

Bangladesh reeling at 29 for three in 5.1 overs, a position from which they never recovered.

Nurul Hasan Sohan, one of three changes in the lineup, hobbled to his 16 off 21, while Jaker Ali made just five off nine and Towhid Hridoy scored five off 10. Shamsim Hossain top-scored with 30 off 25. But the Tigers ultimately faltered, ending their campaign with another painful defeat.

Even so, the batters' collapse while chasing such a small target remains inexcusable. In-form opener Saif Hassan looked steady until a leading edge off Haris Rauf dismissed him for 18 off 15. His departure left

What will sting Bangladesh most is the chance they squandered to bowl Pakistan out for far less—three dropped catches allowed their opponents to rebuild and gain momentum.

Even so, the batters' collapse while chasing such a small target remains inexcusable. In-form opener Saif Hassan looked steady until a leading edge off Haris Rauf dismissed him for 18 off 15. His departure left

Bangladesh crash out of Asia Cup

FROM PAGE 12

Charge 2 stated that an alliance meeting chaired by deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina at the Ganabhaban on July 19, 2024 approved curfew, "shoot-at-sight" orders, and nationwide army deployment to crush the student-led movement. As JSD chief, Inu was accused of endorsing and supporting these measures.

The third and eighth charges involve Kushtia, from where Inu was elected MP. He allegedly instructed the then Kushtia superintendent of

police to prepare a list of protesters, leading to the killing of six people and injuries to many others.

On alleged orders from Hasina, Inu, and AL leader Mahbubul Alam Hanif, ruling party and alliance activists, with police support, opened fire in Kushtia.

The fourth charge said Inu maintained regular contact with Hasina, instigating and assisting her plans to crush the protests. These included surrounding demonstrators, deploying paratroopers, using helicopters for shooting and bombing,

and approving lethal weapons. On July 20, 2024, he allegedly endorsed Hasina's strategies in a phone conversation.

He added that the perpetrators came to Kashiganj Bazar from Dhaka that morning after receiving a tip that "a madman was roaming the market". They chased Halim for a long time before capturing him and cutting his hair, ignoring locals who tried to intervene.

Halim, who visited Halim's house yesterday, said the incident left the elderly man humiliated and shaken.

"Since that day, he lives in constant fear and avoids leaving home."

Halim's son Habibur Rahman said the family remains in deep distress. "We demand proper investigation and strict punishment of those responsible."

Eyewitness Hasibur Rahman Jewel confirmed that he and others saw three men cutting Halim's hair while one of them filmed the incident.

ORGANISED CAMPAIGN

While trying to identify those who forcibly cut Halim's hair, The Daily Star found a Facebook page named "Human Service Bangladesh", which regularly posts videos of similar things being done to people who live outside "the conventional lifestyle".

ASK demanded that the perpetrators be identified, arrested and prosecuted swiftly, and urged the government to ensure that no such incident occurs in the future.

Journalist Imran Hossain of The Business Standard wrote on Facebook that two of the men involved in the Mymensingh incident are Mufti Shohrab Hossain Ashrafi and Afsar, both residents of Dhaka Udyan in Mohammadpur. This newspaper could not reach the two for comments despite

No role for Hamas in future state

FROM PAGE 12

delegates watching the video.

He distanced himself from the October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas—the deadliest ever on Israel—as well as frequent accusations by Israel's supporters that the Palestinians are denying the rights of Jews.

"Despite all that our people have suffered, we reject what Hamas carried out on October 7—actions that targeted Israeli civilians and took them hostage—because these actions do not represent the Palestinian people, nor do they represent their just struggle for freedom and independence," Abbas said.

"We reject confusing the solidarity with the Palestinian cause and the issue of antisemitism, which is something that we reject based on our values and

principles," he said.

Abbas also called the nearly two-year Israeli assault in Gaza "one of the most horrific chapters of humanitarian tragedy of the 20th and 21st century"—by implication putting it alongside the Holocaust.

Abbas called for an interim committee led by the Palestinian Authority to be put in charge temporarily of Gaza, of which Hamas took control in 2007.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a statement on Wednesday, said that the recognition of the State of Palestine by Western countries "does not oblige Israel in any way," reiterating that "there will be no Palestinian state."

US President Donald Trump has

staunly backed Netanyahu in rejecting statehood and has stood by him as Israel expands attacks across the region, including to Qatar and Iran.

But French President Emmanuel Macron, despite his disagreements with Trump on statehood, said Wednesday that the US leader joined him in opposing annexation.

"What President Trump told me yesterday was that the Europeans and Americans have the same position," Macron said in an interview with France 24 and Radio France Internationale.

Steve Witkoff, Trump's golfing friend turned roving global negotiator, said that Trump in a separate meeting with a group of leaders of Arab and Islamic nations presented a 21-point plan for ending the war.

Outrage grows over shaving of fakir's hair

FROM PAGE 12

Halim, a devotee of Hazrat Shahjalal (RA) and Hazrat Shah Paran (RA) and follower of the Naqshbandi order, had been keeping his matted hair for 37 years. "Once a farmer, he now leads a quiet spiritual life."

He added that the perpetrators came to Kashiganj Bazar from Dhaka that morning after receiving a tip that "a madman was roaming the market". They chased Halim for a long time before capturing him and cutting his hair, ignoring locals who tried to intervene.

Mahbubur said he was inspired by Indian Facebook content and began cutting people's hair in 2022. He formed a team at the end of 2023 and launched his Facebook page in August 2024.

He claimed to have cut the hair and beards of over 500 "helpless" people to "make them clean and tidy" and to have reunited 25-26 missing people with their families.

Mahbubur added that he self-funds these operations within Dhaka but receives sponsorship from expatriates when travelling outside the capital.

OUTRAGE

Rights body Ain o Salish Kendra termed the act "inhumane, unlawful, and a blatant violation of the constitution and human rights".

In a statement, it said the assault violated articles 31, 32 and 35 of the constitution, which guarantee dignity, liberty and protection against cruel and degrading treatment.

ASK demanded that the perpetrators be identified, arrested and prosecuted swiftly, and urged the government to ensure that no such incident occurs in the future.

The Mymensingh Baul Association and Mymensingh Cultural Society condemned the assault and demanded exemplary punishment, while Khalilur Rahman Chishti, president of

Bangladesh Sufism Unity Council, also called for justice.

Baul singer Shofi Mondol said, "They're catching pedestrians, shaming them, cutting off their hair and beards that took years to grow. I too have long hair and beard, so I understand the pain these ascetics are going through. I don't know what benefit they get from hurting people."

"There are many ascetics in Bangladesh who quietly dedicate themselves to the Creator... Religion should be for serving humanity, never for hurting it. When we see this cruelty, it feels like religion itself no longer exists."

He also questioned why the government has not taken action. "A few people are committing this sinful act in the name of earning reward."

Supreme Court lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua called the act a "serious violation of fundamental rights".

"In the name of social work, they are invading people's personal space. Who gave them that authority? Living as one chooses, so long as one is not breaking the law, is a constitutional right. Even the state cannot dictate how a fakir, a Baul or a Baul should live."

He added that the government has a constitutional duty under Article 27 to protect every citizen equally. "Bauls are having their hair cut off, shrines are being vandalised, and the state is silently watching. The local administration is responsible, and the social welfare ministry has shown no initiative."

The Daily Star Bangla reporter Sharif M Shafique, Mymensingh correspondent Aminul Islam, and Cumilla correspondent Khalid Bin Nazrul contributed to this report.

NEWS

7 yrs on, CDA township project yet to take off

Fatehabad sees rise of unauthorised buildings amid approval freeze

SIFAYET ULLAH, City

The Chattogram Development Authority's (CDA) residential project in West Chararkul of Fatehabad has seen at least six buildings constructed since its launch in 2016, but none has design approval from the authority.

Similarly, hundreds of buildings in adjoining areas have also been built without approved designs over the years.

This stems from a longstanding restriction imposed by CDA as part of its plan to develop a township in Fatehabad. The ban has halted all design approvals for new constructions, leaving residents and landowners in limbo.

CDA first unveiled the township plan in 2007 over 4,700 acres between Chattogram Cantonment and Chittagong University in South Pahartali.

Under the Detailed Area Plan of 2013, the project was expanded to 7,000 acres, with implementation scheduled for July that year and completion by June 2018.

But progress stalled.

"The area has over 100 plots. The buildings that have been constructed so far could not be approved. The rest remain vacant as approvals are still on hold," said developer Mohammad Nurul Absar.



In localities like Chowdhury Hat, Borodighirpar and West Amanbazar, landowners have gone ahead with unauthorised construction out of desperation.

Abdul Hamid of West Amanbazar said he built a four-storey building in 2019 without permission.

"I contacted several CDA officers, but they told me that plan approval is halted," he said.

Mohammed Solaiman of Chowdhury Hat shared a similar story. "I waited nearly five years for approval. Eventually, I was left with no choice but to build without it," he said.

A CDA superintendent engineer, seeking a n o n y m i t y , said the project faltered when land compensation was increased from the mouza rate to three times higher.

"At that rate, developing a housing project in Fatehabad became financially unfeasible, as plots could not be sold at a price high enough to cover the cost," he said.

CDA Chairman Nurul Karim said a committee has been formed to revise the project in line with residents' demands. "The committee has already started field work. We hope they will provide a solution to this longstanding problem," he added.

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CDA Chairman Nurul Karim said a committee has been formed to revise the project in line with residents' demands. "The committee has already started field work. We hope they will provide a solution to this longstanding problem," he added.



Workers in Khulna mixing stone and bitumen on top of a pickup truck, with black smoke from the burners polluting the surrounding environment. Such scenes are common during road repairs in villages and pose a constant threat to the natural greenery of the countryside. The photo was taken in the Sajira area yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Potters struggling to stay afloat

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Pottery artisans in the southern region are struggling to sustain their craft as rising production costs force them to scale back output.

In Bakerganj upazila's Niamati union, Maheshpur and nearby Rammagar and Dhalnagar villages – home to more than 150 pottery families – artisans have been producing traditional clay items such as pitchers, cooking pots, bowls, yoghurt jars, mosquito coil stands and water pots for generations.

But over the last two years, they have been able to produce barely half of the required items due to a lack of capital.

Artisans explained that the price of a boatload of clay (about 100 mounds), once Tk 3,000 two years ago, has now risen to Tk 4,000. Adding labour, wood and firing costs, total expenses reach Tk 11,000 to 12,000 per batch. Yet wholesale buyers rarely pay more than Tk 20,000 for the finished goods.

While costs have gone up by 20-25 percent, sale prices have increased by only around 5

percent, leaving potters unable to cover expenses.

Wholesale trader Madhusudan Paul of Maheshpur said he once sent trollers with pottery worth Tk 7-10 lakh to Dhaka every month. "Now I send one shipment every three months. Even after we pay advances, artisans



struggle to supply the goods because of the soaring costs," he said.

Artisan Juvraj Paul noted that while production costs rose sharply, prices of pottery items increased by only Tk 2-5 each. Another potter, Rupak Pal of Koloskathi village, said,

"Clay, labour, wood and paint – everything has become more expensive. Demand has fallen further because prices had to be raised slightly."

Bauphal Pottery Association President Bishweshwar Paul said the rising costs and falling demand have badly affected artisans.

According to the group Mridhishilpi Sammelan O Sammanana, which works for potters' welfare, about 1,200 pottery families live across six southern districts. "Most of them have reduced production, while many have abandoned the craft altogether," said member secretary Tomal Roy.

Artisans such as Rani Bala Pal of Maheshpur said many rely on loans from local NGOs with high interest rates and weekly instalments. "Without low-interest government loans, we cannot survive in this trade," she said.

Nazrul Islam, deputy general manager of BSCIC, said low-interest entrepreneurial loans are available for potters. "But many are not aware of these facilities. Since we do not have monitoring offices at the upazila level, outreach remains limited," he added.

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তারিখ: ১৮/০৯/২০২৫

e-Auction বিজ্ঞপ্তি

পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, ঢাকা (সেন্ট্রাল) দপ্তরের আওতাধীন নিয়ন্ত্রিত নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি ওয়েব লিঙ্ক <https://auction.powergrid.gov.bd>-এ পোওয়া যাবে।

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১১২	জিএমডি, ঢাকা-সেন্ট্রাল দপ্তরের আওতাধীন রামপুরা ২৩০ কেডি, মানিকনগর ২৩০ ও ১৩২ কেডি, গুলশান ১৩২ কেডি এবং ক্যান্টনমেন্ট ১৩২ কেডি প্রিতি প্রিতি উপকেন্দ্র সমূহের ক্ষাপ ও পুরাতন অবস্থার যোগাযোগ মালামাল সমূহ (যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে) e- auction পদ্ধতিতে নিলামকরণ।	১৯-১০-২০২৫ খ্রি, বিকাল ০৮:০০ টা।

আগ্রহী প্রতিনিধিত্বকারীরা <https://auction.powergrid.gov.bd> সাইটের মাধ্যমে নিলামে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

প্রকোশলী মোঃ তাজেদুল ইসলাম
নির্বাচী প্রকোশলী, জিএমডি, ঢাকা (সেন্ট্রাল)

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
Supporting Implementation of the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (SIMCBP)
Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY)
Paribahan Pool Bhaban (7th Floor), Room No. 810, Secretariat Link Road, Dhaka
<https://mowca.gov.bd>

Re-Tender Notice

Invitation for Re-Tender for Hiring of Vehicles for SIMCBP

Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
2	Agency	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
3	Procuring entity name	Supporting Implementation of the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (SIMCBP) / Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project
4	Procuring entity code	Not used at present
5	Procuring entity district	Dhaka
6	Invitation for	Service Provider Firm for Hiring Vehicles and Transport Facilities
7	Invitation Ref No.	MOWCA/SIMCBP/NCS-01/15/2025/69
8	Date	Issued on 25/09/2025

KEY INFORMATION

9 Procurement method National Open Tendering Method (NCS)

FUNDING INFORMATION

10 Budget and source of funds Development Budget, World Bank (IDA) Credit

11 Development partners (if applicable) World Bank (IDA)

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

12 Project/programme code N/A

13 Project/programme name Supporting Implementation of the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (SIMCBP) / Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project

14 Tender Package No. MOWCA/SIMCBP/BEIBEY/NCS-1

15 Tender package name Service Provider Firm for Hiring Vehicles and Transport Facilities

16 Tender publication date 26 September 2025

17 Tender last selling date 14 October 2025 4:00 pm

18 Tender closing date and time 15 October 2025 2:00pm

19 Tender opening date and time 15 October 2025 2:30pm

20 Name & address of the officer(s) Address Supporting Implementation of the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (SIMCBP) / Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project, Room No. 811, Level-7, Paribahan Pool Bhaban, Dhaka-1000.

No conditions apply for sale, purchase or distribution of tender documents

- Opening tender document Supporting Implementation of the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (SIMCBP) / Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project, Room No. 810, Level-7, Paribahan Pool Bhaban, Dhaka-1000.

21 Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional) Date NA Time NA

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

22 Brief eligibility and qualification of tenderer As mentioned in Tender Document

23 Brief description of service and associated goods Hiring of two Vehicle (Jeep & Microbus) for Official Purposes

24 Price of tender document (BDT) BDT 1,000.00 (one thousand only)

25 Tender Security and work completion timeline:

Package No. Identification of package Location Tender security amount (BDT) Completion time in months

NCS-1 Service Provider Firm for Hiring Vehicles and Transport Facilities Dhaka 3,50,000.00 (three lakh fifty thousand) only 38 (thirty-eight) months

26 Name of official inviting tender Dr. Prakash Kanti Chowdhury

27 Designation of official inviting tender Project Director (Joint Secretary)

28 Address of official inviting tender Supporting Implementation of the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (SIMCBP) / Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project, Room No. 810, Level-7, Paribahan Pool Bhaban, Dhaka-1000.

29 Contact details of official inviting tender Telephone: 00-88-02-55100646 Electronic mail address: pdfebeysimcbp@gmail.com

The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the Tender proceedings.

Dr. Prakash Kanti Chowdhury

Project Director (Joint Secretary)

GD-2094

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

17 Name of official inviting tender Swapan Kumar Goswami

18 Designation of official inviting tender Director

19 Address of official inviting tender Common Services Department-1, Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Dhaka,

20 Contact details of official inviting tender Tel: 9530148, Fax: 9530120, E-mail: swapan.goswami@bb.org.bd

21 The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings

GD-2098

DCP: 48/2025-2606

Date: 25-09-2025

ব্যাংকিং ও অর্থনৈতিক সেবা পেতে ইয়ারানির শিকার হলে কিন্তু
কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

Swapan Kumar Goswami
Director
Phone: 9530148
E-mail: swapan.goswami@bb.org.bd

LANGTANG VALLEY TREK

Land of endless beauty, simple living

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

SAJJAD HOSSAIN
a journalist and
nature lover

It was 3:15pm on August 20.

Monsoon rain lashed Nepal's Langtang National Park as our four-member team trudged back from Lama Hotel, soaked to the bone after more than 13 kilometres on the trail. Exhaustion weighed heavy, but ahead loomed the most perilous section of our return – the landslide-prone stretch between Rimche and Bamboo.

A wooden memorial suddenly appeared on the path, dedicated to Or Assaraf, an Israeli trekker who perished in the 2015 earthquake. The sight tightened my chest. It felt less like a marker and more like a warning. Moments later, the trail narrowed to a slippery ledge carved into the hillside.

"One by one," said our guide, Ngawang Bhole – Everest and Manaslu summitteer. The rain had turned the path to sludge.

Then it happened. My boot pressed

fear. At the final stretch Ngawang grabbed my arm and pulled me across – only for us to face one last trial: a rope climb up a slick cliff. The rope was soaked, the rock offered no grip.

My legs quivered. I sat on the muddy ledge, hauling myself hand over hand. Arms burned, knees shook, but inch by inch I climbed until I collapsed at the top, breathless, muddy, but alive.

After a short rest, we pushed another six kilometres to Bamboo (1,970m), our refuge for the night.

Back in Dhaka now, the memory feels dreamlike – terrifying yet unforgettable.

FROM TEA SHOP TO HIMALAYA

It had all begun weeks earlier; on a humid July afternoon at a tea shop in Munshiganj Sadar Launch Ghat. Over steaming cups, my friends Kamrul Hasan Sajib, Samir Kumar, Pritam Saha – and I debated where to wander next. We had trekked the hills of Bandarban many times, so wanted to try a new destination. Then Sajib suggested Nepal. Hours later, our decision was sealed: the Langtang Valley trek, a moderate difficulty trek.

On August 15, in the evening, our flight landed in Kathmandu. We spent one night in the capital before heading out by car, more than 120 kilometres along cliff-hugging roads, to Syabrubesi – the gateway to Langtang. At four that afternoon, we began walking. By dusk we had reached Domen River View Guest House, lulled to sleep by the river's roar.

The next few days brought a steady rhythm: hiking on stone paths, seeing forests all around, and gaining altitude. On August 17, after about fifteen kilometres through Pairo, Rimche, and Lama Hotel, we stopped at Riverside Hotel in Gumnachok. The following day, we trekked another fourteen kilometres through Ghodatabela and Thangshyap before reaching Langtang village (3430m).

THE VALLEY OF PRAYER FLAGS

Stepping into the village, you are greeted by silence, broken only by the murmur of the rushing river and the fluttering sound of prayer flags. At the entrance stands a whitewashed stone stupa, weathered yet dignified, crowned with a golden spire. Painted eyes gaze out in all directions, watching over every traveller and villager.

Mani stones carved with sacred

mantras form a wall of prayers for peace and protection. Trekkers and locals walk clockwise around the stupa, whispering "Om Mani Padme Hum," believing each circuit spreads merit into the world. Prayer flags carry these blessings on the wind, across the valley and up to the snow peaks.

Langtang village rests in the cradle of the valley, where yak pastures and meadows slope down to the Langtang Khola river. Above it rise the white peaks of Langtang Lirung (7,227m), Tsergo Peak (4,998m), Kyanjin Ri (4,773m), and Yubra (6,262m). The valley teems with wildlife – red pandas, Himalayan thar, and the dazzling plumage of monals – all protected within Langtang National Park.

Here, culture and nature merge seamlessly: prayer wheels spin beside stone-and-wood homes, chortens and mani walls stand among pastures, and flags ripple against the skyline. The people, resilient and generous, welcome trekkers with food, shelter, and smiles. Their warmth helps to turn the harsh, remote Himalayan village into a place that feels like home.

TOWARD KYANJIN RI

The next morning, we set off early toward Kyanjin Ri, a mountain with two peaks – the lower at 4,400m, the higher at 4,773m. The air was sharp and cold, and the distant snow-capped summits shimmered in the morning light. Carrying only light packs, we planned to return by evening. Two hours of hiking brought us to Kyanjin Gompa at 3,890m. After a brief rest, we began the steep ascent, with Sajib surging ahead while Samir, Pritam, Ngawang, and I followed.

Everything was steady at first, but as the ascent continued, a strange fear gripped me. Looking down at the tiny village made me uneasy. At 3,970 metres, I collapsed, unable to go on. Around 11:00am, I told my team, "Something is happening in my mind. I can't move forward." Ngawang checked my pulse and urged me to stop. It felt like the saddest moment of my life – everyone going forward, but

not me. Back at the lodge, I sat alone, staring at the hills, wishing I was still up there. Soon, Samir returned, saying he too had been paralysed by fear. Together we wandered the village, waiting. By 1:45pm, Sajib and Pritam came back with Ngawang, faces glowing. Sajib had stayed nearly an hour at the summit.

For Ngawang, it was routine. At only twenty-seven, he was already a veteran, having summited Everest last year. This was his 10th Kyanjin Ri visit. His journey in the mountains began at the age of 14, when he started working as a porter on Mount Everest. Mountaineering runs in his family: his father had worked in the mountains, one brother summited Everest five times, and another serves in a security force.

Back at the lodge, I sat alone, staring at the hills, wishing I were still up there. Soon, Samir returned, admitting he too had been paralyzed by fear. Together we wandered the village, waiting. By 1:45 pm, Sajib and Pritam returned with Ngawang, faces glowing. Sajib had stayed nearly an hour at the summit.

That evening, we left Kyanjin Gompa at four. Fog closed in as Sajib, Pritam, and I walked ahead. After more than an hour downhill, we reached Langtang.

While we were resting, the hotel owner received a video call from a hotel owner of Kyanjin Gompa – Samir had fallen behind and turned back after losing sight of us. The owner and Ngawang rushed to fetch him, and two hours later he returned safely. That was one of the most beautiful moments of the trip.

DAL BHAT POWER, 24 HOUR

This line is everywhere in Nepal, and trekking in Langtang made me understand why. Dal Bhat, the national dish, is simple but sustaining: rice, lentil soup, vegetables, pickles, and a

crunchy papad. Sometimes eggs or meat are added, but even plain dal bhat keeps you going for hours.

Every tea house serves it, and the best part is unlimited refills of rice, dal, and veggies. In Langtang village, a plate costs about 950 rupees with eggs, 700 without. Pricey, yes, but fair – every essential is carried up here by mules or human porters.

Tea is a must. A steaming cup of milk or lemon tea, costing around 170 rupees, feels perfect after a freezing trek. At Ghodatabela, I tried potato-and-vegetable momos for 700 rupees a plate – expensive, but biting into them with snowy peaks in view made them priceless.

Even basics come at a cost: a boiled egg is 250 rupees, hot water 70. Yet once you realize the effort it takes to bring supplies to these heights, every sip and bite earns your respect.

Sightings of wildlife along the trail added to our experience. We spotted numerous species of birds – the Yellow-breasted Greenfinch, Plumbeous Redstart, Streaked Laughingthrush and Variegated Laughingthrush. Along the trail, we also saw Himalayan Goral, Nepal Gray Langur, and Northern Red Muntjac.

LIFE IN LANGTANG

Villages in Langtang seem carved out of time. Most hotels are simple stone-and-wood lodges with tin roofs painted blue, standing out against the white mountains. From the outside, they appear modest, but inside, cosy dining halls warmed by a fire or stove welcome trekkers.

Rooms are basic – wooden walls, two single beds with thin mattresses, a blanket or two. Nights are cold, so most trekkers carry sleeping bags. Rent is surprisingly cheap, around 1,000 Nepali rupees per night, but guests are expected to eat their meals there; the hotels depend on their kitchens.

However, the true beauty isn't luxury but the experience. Sitting in the dining hall, sipping hot tea as the sun sets behind snowy ridges, hearing yak bells outside, and watching prayer flags flutter in the wind, it feels like living inside a postcard.

In the villages of Langtang, life is simple, and the beauty around you is endless.



Want to share your travel experiences with us? Please send your stories to holiday@thedadystar.net

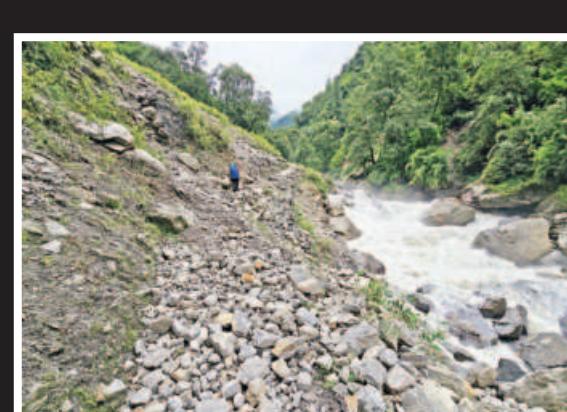


PHOTO: KAMRUL HASAN SAJIB, PRITAM SAHA



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Marie Helena Costa Mendes of the International School Dhaka competes in the balance beam individual girls' event (age category 12-14) during the Interschool Gymnastics at the National Sports Council Gymnasium in Paltan yesterday. Organised by the Bangladesh Gymnastics Federation, the second edition of the two-day competition began on Thursday, featuring 209 participants from 64 institutions across several districts. While the initiative is a commendable step in promoting youth participation in gymnastics, the subpar venue conditions highlighted areas that still need attention. With poor ventilation and inadequate lighting, the hot and humid environment posed an additional challenge for the young athletes -- issues the federation may need to address if it hopes to attract more participants in the future.

EKUSH TAPADER, from Dubai

During Wednesday's Asia Cup Super Four fixture between Bangladesh and India, a particular chant from the stands instantly raised eyebrows.

That expression from the Bangladesh fans at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium had nothing to do with cricket; nor did it carry any sign of nationalism, or typical banter. In the last World Cup, a group of Indian supporters was also seen involved in similar activity during their match against Pakistan.

The Asia Cup was originally launched to foster harmony among teams in the region. In recent years, however, it has been organised mainly in line with the global calendar, with schedules ensuring multiple India-Pakistan matches. On paper, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) says it aims to help teams prepare for world events; in practice, the tournament has lost much of that spirit, creating a setting where genuine cricket fans often end up anxious rather than entertained.

This edition has felt particularly tense. It began with Indian players declining to shake hands with Pakistanis after a group stage match and escalated to gestures such as Sahibzada Farhan's "rifle-pointing" celebration and Haris



Rauf's "fighter jets-crashing" signal during Sunday's Super Fours clash. Both were widely circulated on social media, prompting the India cricket board (BCCI) to lodge an official complaint with the ICC.

The Pakistan Cricket Board, in turn, raised concerns over India captain Suryakumar Yadav's post-match remarks, which it argued carried political undertones. These incidents have reinforced the view that the ACC's indifference has let tensions escalate; handshakes are skipped, press conferences avoided,

yet little action is taken. Ironically, youth-level footballers from India and Pakistan have exchanged courtesies of late.

Covering the tournament, many Indian and Pakistani journalists have gathered in the UAE. In past events, they were seen engaging in long, lively conversations. This time, however, everyone seems more reserved, as if showing friendliness might call their loyalty into question. Even when Indian legend Sunil Gavaskar appeared in the press box a few times this year, it felt as though

an invisible curtain had descended. Although India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh once shared the same land before 1947, they remain caught up in social divides and narrow political sentiment. Despite sharing much of the same language and culture, someone who migrated from Chandigarh to Lahore after Partition may now, in his twilight years, feel distant from the soil of his birth. The same applies to those who moved from Bardhaman to Dhaka or from Khulna to West Bengal.

As Srinivas Thota Narayon, a taxi driver from South India, put it: "I've lost all interest in cricket now. The English Premier League is much better." Pakistani fan Adil Shehzad, a Virat Kohli admirer, now keeps such opinions to himself. Most cricket lovers admire Wasim Akram's swing or Sachin Tendulkar's straight drive, yet the political climate dictates silence.

Unfortunately, Srinivas and Shehzad are the minority. Social media content creators and "influencers" fuel the tension further. India-Pakistan or Bangladesh-India matches almost automatically become sensational spectacles.

In the end, when politics overshadows the game, even if the ACC's funds are filled with millions, cricket itself is the ultimate loser.

Rangpur girls win JFA tourney

Rangpur district emerged champions of the JFA U-14 Women's Youth Development tournament -- launched in 2015 as a talent-hunting initiative with financial support from the Japan Football Association (JFA) -- defeating Thakurgaon in a tiebreaker following a 1-1 draw in the final at Rajshahi Stadium yesterday. After Thakurgaon's

Runa Akhtar cancelled out 15-minute opener, Rangpur prevailed 3-2 in the penalty shootout. Divided into six zones, a total of 42 districts competed from mid-August, with six zonal champions, the best runners-up, and hosts Rajshahi advancing to the eight-team final round which began on September 16.



BPL to BFL: Rebranded league starts today

After 13 years, the country's professional football league is getting a new name as the 17th edition, which gets underway today, has been renamed to the Bangladesh Football League (BFL). The league was called the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) from 2012 onwards. The change was made to avoid clash with the franchise T20 cricket tournament which is also called BPL. Alongside the name change, this season will also see a few new features, which the organisers are hoping would liven up the biggest and most important domestic football tournament in men's football in the country.



- The BFL will be held in five venues this season with Shaheed Miraj-Tapan Stadium in Manikganj being the new addition.
- Ten clubs including two promoted outfits Arambagh KS and PWD SC will compete this season.
- For the first time, footballers from the SAARC region will play as local players. Teams can register four foreign players and field a maximum of three in a match.
- Each club must field an Under-20 player in the starting XI.
- The league will see two breaks -- September 29 to October 15 and October 23 to November 23 -- due to international engagements of the national team and Bashundhara Kings.
- Holders Mohammedan SC are the reigning champions.
- On the opening day, Rahmatganj MFS will host Abahani Ltd in Munshiganj while Fakirerpool Young Mens Club will take on Arambagh KS in Manikganj.

Tigresses' first WC warm-up tie gets rained out

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's preparation for the upcoming ICC Women's World Cup suffered a blow as their first warm-up match against South Africa ended in a no result due to rain at the Colombo Cricket Club Ground on Thursday.

Sent to bowl, the Tigresses had reduced South Africa to 49-3 in nine overs before incessant rain ended the match abruptly.

Pacer Marufa Akter bowled South African skipper Laura Wolvaardt on the very first ball, and then removed Annerie Dercksen in her second over. Left-arm spinner Nahida Akter joined her in the act by dismissing Marizanne Kapp on 21.

South Africa's in-form opener Tazmin Brits was unbeaten on 19 alongside Anneke Bosch (0) when rain halted the proceedings.

The warm-up match was crucial for the Tigresses to gauge themselves as they have not played an international match since April this year.

Bangladesh's second and last warm-up match will be against Sri Lanka at the same venue on Saturday. Nigar Sultana and Co will begin their World Cup campaign against Pakistan in Colombo on October 2.

More drama awaits as final voters' list due today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) in Mirpur was abuzz on Thursday, as former skipper Tamim Iqbal and former board president Faruque Ahmed appeared before the Election Commission (EC) for their hearings regarding the 38 objections to the draft voters' list received the day before, ahead of the upcoming Board of Directors' election of the BCB.

The EC informed in the evening that the final voters' list would be published at 4:30pm today after it scrutinises the papers of 15 clubs, who were among the objectors for not being included in the voters' list due to various irregularities, which are currently under investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

The objection against Tamim was not taken into account, as the "person who submitted it was not present at the hearing," with the left-handed opener claiming to be "embarrassed over explaining the issue" to the media.

Tamim expressed scepticism over whether he would be "allowed to

participate in the elections," while refraining from commenting on whether he would quit the polls.

Meanwhile, former BCB boss Faruque's nomination papers were accepted despite a late submission -- an issue that many clubs objected to, claiming clarification behind their inclusion in the voters' list still being left pending. Faruque presented an explanatory letter during the hearing yesterday.

The EC found itself embroiled in controversy. The BCB had previously said that a decision on the 15 clubs had been made in the last board meeting, and since the ACC had not alleged anything, the clubs would be allowed to provide councillors in the upcoming elections.

Reportedly, the BCB sent a letter to the EC concerning the 15 clubs. When asked who in the BCB signed the letter, the EC tried to sidestep the issue. "We had to view a huge number of papers," one EC member said.

As the back-and-forth exchanges of words and allegations prevail, the drama surrounding BCB elections appears to continue.



BANGLADESH STORM INTO FINAL

Captain Nazmul Huda Faisal and Opus Rahman found the net as Bangladesh marched into the final of the SAFF U-17 Championship with a 2-0 victory over Pakistan in the first semifinal at the Racecourse International Stadium in Colombo yesterday. The two-time winners, who scored 10 and are yet to concede, will face India in the September 27 final.

PHOTO: BFF



BSRM
THE ONLY STEEL FACTORY IN BANGLADESH TO RECEIVE THE
GREEN FACTORY AWARD 2025



Bangladesh crash out of Asia Cup

India, Pakistan set for first-ever final

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A shambolic batting display saw Bangladesh fall to an 11-run defeat against Pakistan in their Asia Cup Super Four clash in Dubai yesterday, crashing out of the tournament and paving the way for a first-ever India-Pakistan final.

Chasing a modest 136-run target, Bangladesh's batters showed needless urgency, losing wickets at regular intervals before being restricted to 124 for nine in 20 overs at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. The same venue will now host the much-anticipated India-Pakistan final on Sunday – the first title clash between the two politically charged neighbours in the tournament's 41-year, 17-edition history.

With skipper Litton Das missing his second consecutive game due to injury, stand-in captain Jaker Ali opted to bowl first. The Tigers dominated the early stages, with

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



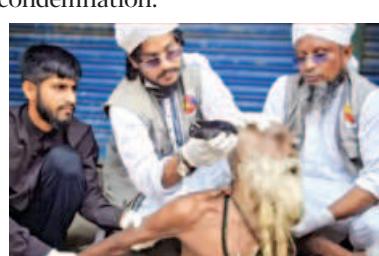
Pakistan pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi celebrates the wicket of Bangladesh opener Parvez Hossain Emon in their 11-run win in an Asia Cup Super Four fixture in Dubai yesterday. Chasing a paltry 136-run target, the Tigers limped to 124 for nine, leading to Pakistan setting up the title decider against India on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Outrage grows over shaving of fakir's hair
Legal experts, Bauls, rights activists term it a serious rights violation

ARAFAT SETU

A viral video of three men forcibly shaving the hair of a 70-year-old fakir in Kodalia Kashiganj village of Mymensingh's Tarakanda upazila has triggered nationwide outrage and condemnation.



The video, widely shared on social media, shows Halim Uddin Akand walking down a road when three men in grey vests chase him, drag him aside, and pin him down. As he struggles and cries out "Allah, tui dehi!" (Allah, You see!), they shave off his hair.

The incident happened just before Eid-ul-Azha, said Rezaul Karim Aslam, general secretary of the Mymensingh Baul Association.

Speaking to The Daily Star, he said

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

SMUGGLING ALONG THE BAY Rice goes out, yaba comes in

Myanmar's AA involved with syndicates; nightly trawler movements tracked by radar, says BGB

MOKAMMEL SHUVO and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Essential goods like rice, fertiliser, and medicines are being quietly smuggled into Myanmar by a syndicate working with the Arakan Army (AA). In return, yaba, crystal meth, and other narcotics pour into Bangladesh, according to BGB and home ministry sources.

An intelligence report says four to five heavy trawlers depart daily from jetties in Chattogram and Cox's Bazar for AA-controlled areas in Myanmar's Naikondia to deliver the goods. They come back with narcotics.

Rohingyas, who know the routes, reportedly act as carriers.

The matter came up at a recent law and order meeting at the home ministry.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said the goods are trafficked not only from Cox's Bazar and Chattogram but also from Barguna, Patuakhali and Bhola.

"As much of the trafficking takes

place through the sea, the navy and coast guard have been instructed to stop it at any cost."

On August 29, a Bangladesh Navy warship intercepted a suspicious trawler but missed three others believed to be smuggling cement. On September 15, the navy stopped another trawler 12 nautical miles off Saint Martin's Island, carrying 11 traffickers and potatoes, garlic and lentils.

BGB officials said that with strict monitoring along the Naf River and land borders, traffickers have shifted to maritime routes. Nearly 80% of smuggling along the Bangladesh-Myanmar frontier now takes place by sea and is tracked using radar surveillance.

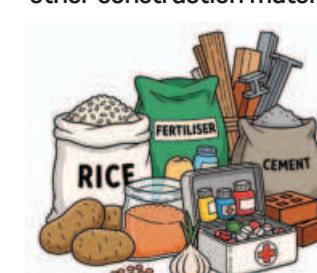
Radar footage also revealed suspicious movements of Bangladeshi trawlers in Myanmar waters, BGB sources said.

A senior official said sometimes even around two dozen trawlers bypass Saint Martin's in a single night to deliver goods.

He explained that since fighting

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

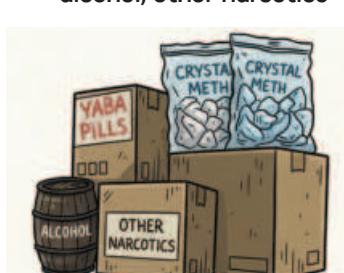
WHAT GOES OUT
Rice, fertiliser, medicines, potatoes, lentils, garlic, cement, other construction materials



"Around 80 percent of these drugs are trafficked by sea. We now have strong digital footprints of these smuggling operations."

Col Mohiduddin Ahmed, BGB Ramu Sector Commander

WHAT COMES IN
Yaba pills, crystal meth (ice), alcohol, other narcotics



Netanyahu again says there will be no Palestinian state as he heads to US

West readies plan for post-war Gaza

Macron says Trump against annexation of West Bank

No role for Hamas in future state
Palestinian leader Abbas tells UN, rejects antisemitism

AGENCIES

Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas yesterday rejected any future role for Hamas and condemned antisemitism, as he appealed for full global support for a state in the face of Israeli annexation threats.

Days after France led a special summit and several Western powers recognised a state of Palestine, the veteran 89-year-old leader was forced to address the UN General Assembly by video after the United States took the unusual step of denying him a visa to come to New York.

Abbas took a moderate tone in his speech as he directly took up key concerns of Israel and the United States – notably on Hamas, which is based in Gaza and is the rival to his Fatah movement.

"Hamas will not have a role to play in governance. Hamas and other factions will have to hand over their weapons to the Palestinian National Authority," Abbas said in a speech that received loud applause from

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



PHOTO: MONJUR MORSHED

WINGED WARRIORS

Faridpur's wetlands came alive in a flash of wings and water as a Bronze-winged Jacana lunged at an Indian Pond Heron, fiercely defending its vulnerable chicks hidden among the floating leaves. Known locally as "Jol Pipi", jacanas tread delicately across lily pads on impossibly long toes, foraging for insects, snails, and seeds. Pond herons, by contrast, stalk fish, frogs, and other small prey. This charged moment is a portrait of parental instinct -- a reminder that Bangladesh's wetlands are both battleground and sanctuary, where survival plays out in raw, breathtaking drama.



ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন
Dhaka South City Corporation

সমস্যাকে কর
পরিপূর্ণ কর্মসূলী স্বীকৃত করে নেও

গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

রিবেট সুবিধাসহ পৌরকর (Holding Tax) পরিশোধ, সারচার্জ ব্যতীত ট্রেড লাইসেন্স নবায়ন ও দোকান ভাড়া সংক্রান্ত

ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের সম্মানিত করদাতাগণের (বাড়ি/ফ্ল্যাট/ইমারতসমূহের মালিক ও ব্যবসায়ীগণের) অবগতির জন্য জন্ম জন্মানো যাচ্ছে যে, ৩০ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৫ এর মধ্যে:

- ২০২৫-২৬ (হাল) অর্থবছরের ৪ (চার) কিস্তি পৌরকর একত্রে পরিশোধ করে ১০% রিবেট গ্রহণের সুযোগ রয়েছে।
- বকেয়াসহ হালসনের পৌরকর পরিশোধ করে শুধু ২০২৫-২৬ (হাল) অর্থবছরের উপর ১০% রিবেট সুবিধা গ্রহণ করুন।
- ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরের জন্য সারচার্জ ব্যতীত ট্রেড লাইসেন্স নবায়ন করা যাবে।
- ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের মালিকানাধীন দোকানসমূহের ভাড়া সারচার্জ/জরিমানা ব্যতীত পরিশোধ করা যাবে।

উক্ত সময়ের মধ্যে বর্ষিত ১০% রিবেট সুবিধা এবং সারচার্জ ব্যতীত ট্রেড লাইসেন্স নবায়ন ও ভাড়া পরিশোধের সুযোগ গ্রহণ করার জন্য সম্মানিত করদাতা ও ব্যবসায়ীগণকে বিশেষভাবে অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

কর্তৃপক্ষ
ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন

ডিএসসি/পিআরডি/৭৫/২০২৫-২৬