

## ISLAMI BANK Terminated employees demand reinstatement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited's terminated employees and those placed on OSD (officer on special duty) yesterday demanded reinstatement to their original posts and immediate withdrawal of the OSD status imposed on thousands.

The announcement came at a press conference held at the Chattogram Press Club, where they outlined their six-point demands.

The other demands include cessation of conditional assessment tests imposed on employees; putting an end to "punishment transfers"; creating a fair working environment; and the return of all employees to their workplaces.

At the press conference, they said that nearly 5,500 families are now in crisis due to the move. They alleged that the bank authorities escalated the situation by blocking their official IDs and personal salary accounts.

Md Emdad Hossain, a terminated employee, said, "We should have been at the bank, yet today we are forced to struggle on the streets. The bank authorities defied a court order, organised a mock exam, and subsequently terminated over 300 employees and placed 5,000 on OSD."

## Four abducted fishers rescued from Sundarbans

UNB, Bagerhat

Coast Guard personnel yesterday rescued four fishermen from the Sundarbans who had been kidnapped by robbers demanding ransom.

The rescued fishermen are Mofizul Islam, 42, Habibur Rahman, 37, Shahjan Ali, 40, and Habibur, 35 – all residents of Khulna and Satkhira districts.

The rescue operation was carried out around 5:00am near the Arbauni Canal along the Shippa River in the eastern Sundarbans by members of the Mongla Coast Guard base and Nalian outpost, said Lieutenant Commander Siam-ul-Haq, media officer of the Coast Guard.

According to Coast Guard sources, the fishermen had been held hostage for 10 days by the "Jahangir gang" in the Sundarbans.

During the operation, three firearms and three live rounds used by the robbers were recovered.



A trader transports rice straw (bichali) on a locally-made vehicle. During the monsoon, when pastures are submerged, grass becomes scarce and the demand for rice straw as cattle feed rises. Collecting straw from villages, traders bundle it into stacks and carry it to markets or farms. Each bundle sells for Tk 3-4. The photo was taken from the Phuitala-Damodar area on the Khulna-Jashore highway recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## PARKING BAN IN LAWACHHARA A win for wildlife, a headache for visitors

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

The Forest Department has recently imposed a restriction on parking vehicles of visitors in Lawachhara National Park in Kamalganj upazila of Moulvibazar.

The ban came into effect on October 1 and has been hailed by environmentalists as a necessary step to protect the park's wildlife species.

However, it has caused considerable inconvenience to visitors, many of whom have been left stranded as there is no designated parking area near the park's entrance.

Previously, visitors were allowed to park their vehicles in a space near the main entrance. That facility has now been removed, with a 'No Parking' signboard erected in its place. As a result, vehicles are being parked along both sides of the Kamalganj Sreemangal road,

causing disruption to traffic flow.

Many visitors expressed frustration over the lack of alternative parking arrangements. "We bought

some others, unable to find a spot, had to turn back," said Sadeq Ahmed, a visitor.

Visiting the park premises on Thursday, this correspondent, however, saw

Sohel Shyam, founder of Stand for our Endangered Wildlife (SEW), expressed concern over the possibility of further deforestation if parking spaces are created within the park, and urged for alternative facilities outside the protected area.

Shamsul Haque, general secretary of Lawachhara Peoples' Forum, said a drop-off point near the entrance could be a feasible solution, allowing tourists to access the park while keeping vehicles outside the sensitive forest area.

Abul Kalam, divisional forest officer in Sylhet, said the restriction was imposed following the ministry's decision to stop parking within the park to protect wildlife and reduce the number of visitors.

He said the main purpose of the no-parking order is to ensure protection of the park's ecosystem.



tickets and entered the park, only to find that the parking space had been closed. We were forced to park on the road, and

some visitors continuing to park their vehicles around the entrance, defying the restriction in place.

## Part of Gohala river leased out illegally



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A portion of the Gohala river in Ullapara upazila of Sirajganj has been illegally leased to a businessman by a local mosque committee and influentials, sparking widespread criticism.

The Udhunia Bazar Jame Masjid committee, along with some local elites, reportedly called an open tender on Thursday noon to lease out part of the river flowing through Udhunia village.

According to locals, a group of lease seekers attended the quotation process at Udhunia Bazar, where local trader Eusuf Ali Mollah secured the lease of a 2.5 kilometre stretch of the river for a year at Tk 1.6 lakh.

Hazi Abdul Hamid, vice president of the mosque committee, confirmed the matter to a local journalist.

Asked about the legality of leasing out a river, he could not provide an answer. The Daily Star has obtained a recording of the conversation.

This correspondent tried to contact the mosque committee president, but his phone remained switched off.

Meanwhile, local fishermen protested, saying they are being restricted from fishing in the open waterbody.

Md Abdul Mannan, a fisherman from Udhunia village, said, "We have been fishing in the Gohala river for the past four decades, but nobody ever restricted us. This year, I have to catch fish by paying money to a leaseholder."

"More than a hundred fishermen from the village are now worried about their livelihood. Local influentials have begun setting up bamboo enclosures in the river for fish projects as monsoon waters recede."

MD ABDUL MANNAN  
A fisher from Udhunia village

MD ABDUL MANNAN  
A fisher from Udhunia village

"Gohala is one of the key rivers of the Chalan Beel region for the flow of water to and from the wetland. There is no scope to lease out a river in this manner," said SM Mizanur Rahman, organiser of Chalan Beel Movement.

Contacted, Ullapara UNO Abu Saleh Md Hasnat said, "No one can lease out a river in this manner. It is obviously illegal. I have heard about the matter. Steps will be taken following investigation into it."

## With crutch and courage, he rows the Bay



SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

For fisherman Sohrab Hossain of Kuakata in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila, life has been a relentless struggle. A decade ago, a road accident claimed one of his legs, leaving many to believe he would never return to the sea.

Defying all odds, he still sets out before dawn, leaning on his crutch and relying on a single leg to battle the waves.

The sea has always been inseparable from his life. From childhood, he accompanied his father on fishing trips in the Bay of Bengal. Losing his leg in 2015 could not break that bond. Today, he rows out in a small boat, starts the engine himself, grips the tiller, and faces the turbulent waters head-on, because the sea remains his only means of survival.

Sohrab, 28, lives with his family in a government-built

house under the Ashrayan Project in Kuakata Municipality's Ward-3 fishermen's colony.

But life is weighed down by NGO loans and advances from fish traders.

"My family includes my elderly parents, wife, and three children. The eldest son, only eight, helps by running a small tea stall on the beach. The middle son has just started school, though uncertainty looms over how long he can continue. The youngest is only seven months old," he said.

"All my struggles and hard work... it's for them," Sohrab added.

His father, Kalam Majhi, recalled the day of the accident: "A rod pierced his leg. Doctors said keeping it risked cancer, so we had no choice but to amputate. Since then, he has gone to sea every day, risking his life for his family. When he goes, either I or his mother wait by the

shore until he returns."

Age and hardship have left Kalam exhausted. "We spent all we had on his treatment. Now I am destitute," he said.

Yet Sohrab's wife Halima carries no complaints. "We married in 2016, a year after his accident. I never left him because we loved each other."

Local fishing leader Nijam Sheikh described Sohrab as an inspiration. "Despite such a tragedy, he never gave up. He still works tirelessly, and we stand by him through the fishermen's association."

Kalapara Upazila Nirbahi Officer Kawsar Hamid said, "Sohrab's life is not just one man's struggle – it is a symbol of resilience against all odds. He is a registered fisherman and receives government rice assistance three times a year, but it is not enough. We are exploring ways to do more for him."

## Teenage boy abducted in Benapole

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Benapole

A teenage boy has reportedly been abducted in Jashore's Benapole.

The victim, Idris Ali, 15, is son of Azizur Rahman from Ghiba village under Benapole Port Police Station.

Family members alleged that a teen gang abducted Idris and demanded Tk 3 lakh in ransom for his release. According to family sources, Idris left home on October 1 morning to join work and remained missing since then. His mobile phone was found switched off later that day.

The family filed a general diary with Benapole Port Police Station on October 2.

On the night of October 1, the abductors sent a photo to the family over phone, showing him blindfolded and being tortured inside a room, and demanded Tk 3 lakh as ransom, the family alleged in the GD.

Azizur Rahman said Idris was previously assaulted by some 8-10 members of a local teen gang about a week ago at Mayor Market in Benapole, adding that they had threatened to beat him again.

Meanwhile, police detained three local teenagers for questioning in connection with the incident, said Rashedul Islam, a sub-inspector of the police station.

"The detainees admitted to being present during the previous assault on Idris but denied any involvement in the abduction. We have already launched an investigation to rescue Idris and identify those responsible," the SI added.

## Press secretary

FROM PAGE 3

Bangladesh is ready to uphold the democratic values cherished by its people and partners.

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENTS WITH GLOBAL LEADERS

The chief adviser held a series of high-level bilateral meetings aimed at strengthening Bangladesh's global partnerships and advancing shared priorities.

Key engagements included talks with leaders from Italy, Finland, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Australia, Albania, Kosovo and Bhutan, focusing on democratic governance, trade, climate resilience, and human development.

He also met with United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, Unicef Executive Director Catherine Russell, UN Under Secretary General Rabab Fatima, World Bank President Ajay Banga, Queen Maxima of the Netherlands, and IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva.

Prof Yunus attended a dinner hosted by US President Donald Trump, where he met a number of top world leaders.

Significant discussions also took place with a special envoy of the US, underlining Bangladesh's pivotal role in regional cooperation and multilateral diplomacy.

HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP ON THE ROHINGYA CRISIS

A central focus of Prof Yunus' mission was the Rohingya crisis, where he

emphasised Bangladesh's continued leadership in providing shelter and humanitarian assistance to over a million displaced people.

In meetings with UN agencies and donor nations, he called for renewed global action to ensure safe, voluntary, and dignified repatriation to Myanmar and urged the international community not to let the crisis fade from global attention.

Prof Yunus was able to gain the commitment of \$96 million from the US and UK to aid the Rohingya refugees.

NEW ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Bangladesh's engagement at the UNGA also opened new doors for overseas employment and labour mobility, Alam said.

Chief Adviser Yunus held productive discussions with officials from Kosovo, Albania, and other European countries, exploring avenues for Bangladeshi workers to contribute to their growing labour markets.

These opportunities are expected to bolster remittance inflows and strengthen people-to-people ties with new partner nations, said the press secretary.

A VISION FOR A COLLABORATIVE FUTURE

Yunus' participation in the UNGA underscores Bangladesh's role as a responsible global actor committed to democratic governance, humanitarian solidarity, and constructive international cooperation.

## Ongoing rains

FROM PAGE 3

alongside a chatbot for symptoms and free testing at 52 urban primary health centres. Advocacy campaigns through imams, schools, leaflets, and local volunteers are also continuing.

Nishat Parvin, chief health officer at DGHS, said their activities include larviciding, adulticiding, and awareness campaigns.

"We spray outside houses, but dengue mosquitoes often breed indoors, in hidden spots, or in seemingly clean areas. Without household awareness, controlling them is very difficult," she said.

Parvin noted that while DGHS has sufficient manpower, medicine and machines, public participation remains weak. "People know what to do but don't always follow through. That's why we've strengthened both large-scale and small-scale campaigns."

She said the most vulnerable areas include parts of Old Dhaka such as Jurain, where abandoned or waterlogged houses provide breeding grounds. Coordinated efforts are improving conditions, but risks remain.

"Dengue won't disappear completely, but with year-round programmes, we can keep it under control," she said.

PRAYER TIMING		OCTOBER 4			
		Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib Esha
AZAN		4-45	12-45	4-15	5-53 7-30
JAMAAT		5-20	1-15	4-30	5-56 8-00
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					