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## Parties agree to referendum on July Charter

### Says Ali Riaz; commission hails breakthrough in implementation talks

MD ABBAS

Political parties have reached a consensus on holding a referendum to secure public consent for implementing the July Charter, National Consensus Commission Vice-President Prof Ali Riaz has said.

However, differences remain over the timing of the referendum.

While the BNP and several other parties want it to be held on the same day as the national election, Jamaat-e-Islami prefers it before the polls to ensure the charter's implementation before the next government takes office.

The NCP did not clarify whether it wants the referendum to be held before the polls, or on election day.

If the referendum is held on election day, voters will cast a separate ballot to answer "Yes" or "No" on whether they support the charter. The party forming the next parliament will then implement the charter, said commission members.

After a meeting with the political parties at the Foreign Service Academy yesterday, Riaz said, "All political parties have agreed to hold a referendum to seek the people's approval. We see this as the first major step in the implementation process."

Expressing hope that the parties would reach consensus on other issues as well, he said the commission will send specific recommendations on implementation of the charter to the government soon.

Riaz also said there is now a "virtual consensus" among the parties that the parliament to be formed after the February election will bring reforms in such a way that the changes will be sustainable.

The charter contains 84 reform proposals -- half requiring constitutional amendments and the rest executable through existing laws or government orders.



Displaced Palestinian girls stand beside a tent used as a temporary shelter in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP



### Complete obliteration!

Donald Trump threatens if Hamas insists on staying in power

Hamas is very keen to reach an agreement to end the war and immediately begin the prisoner exchange process in accordance with the field conditions

Senior Hamas official

- BNP says referendum should be held on election day
- Jamaat wants it before polls; NCP yet to clarify position
- Ali Riaz says there is now 'virtual consensus' that next parliament will bring sustainable reforms

## Mobilise, resist, take action

### Shahidul urges int'l community



STAR REPORT

Photographer-activist Shahidul Alam yesterday urged the international community to show collective courage and help ensure the success of the Gaza-bound freedom flotilla.

"If you can take action on the ground that creates the pressure to allow us to get to Gaza, that will be the best outcome, but the only way it might happen is if there is sufficient public pressure on Israel to do so."

"So this is your chance to step into the action."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## Diplomacy gathers pace amid threats, strikes

### Parties set for ceasefire talks in Cairo; 19 more Gazans killed

AGENCIES

Efforts to end the conflict in Gaza gained momentum, with rival parties and mediators scheduled to meet in Cairo today, even as Israeli airstrikes continued across the territory, killing 19 more people.

US President Donald Trump said Hamas will face "complete obliteration" if the Palestinian group refuses to give up power and control of Gaza.

In an interview with CNN, Trump added that he expects to know soon whether Hamas is committed to peace. He also said that the deal would be a great one for Israel.

Earlier, Hamas called for a swift start to a hostage-prisoner exchange with Israel, as negotiators from both sides prepared to meet in Egypt for crucial talks aimed at ending the nearly two-year war in Gaza.

Foreign ministers of several countries, including Egypt, said the talks were a "real opportunity" to achieve a sustainable ceasefire.

"Hamas is very keen to reach an agreement to end the war and immediately begin the prisoner exchange process in accordance with the field conditions," a senior Hamas official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

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## BCB polls today after a series of controversies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) board of directors election is set to take place today, following a series of dramas, controversies, and legal battles.

With a court order yesterday effectively restoring the voting rights of 15 clubs that were under investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the electoral landscape has changed, as previously rejected candidate Iftekhar Rahman Mithu, an influential director of the last board, has been reinstated.

Earlier, the suspension of the 15 clubs had prompted former captain Tamim Iqbal, along with 15 other councillors, to withdraw their nominations, citing government interference.

A total of 157 voters will

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# In the heart of chaos, I FIND DHAKA'S FLAVOUR

RBR

Do you know why I will always be true to Dhaka? I admit that the metropolis is chaotic, but I do enjoy the fuss, the cacophony, and the colours in the lanes and by-lanes of this ever-changing city. Yet, it's the food scene that I love most. I believe I know the town well enough, but every now and then, I stumble upon a hidden gem: a food corner that most people do not know of.

Tiffin Box, right next to the Gulshan 2 circle, is one such eatery.

The setting looks like an old, worn-out cafeteria. With chairs and tables set in rows, it seems a little messy and a little stuffy. The ambience is almost like Madhur Canteen at the Dhaka University campus, and a tea boy is seen running with cups of their special tea, offering the menu card with a smile.

There were a few items that brought back cherished memories, like the Patenga pijayu, which are tiny pops of deep-fried lentil batter spiced up with onions and chilli. It instantly reminded me of the years I had spent in Chattogram in the mid-



PHOTO: STAR

eighties. Back then, Patenga Beach was our regular spot to unwind, and a pack of pijayu was a must.

The Chandni Chawk lassi, yet another item on the menu, made me cheerful. Whenever my cousins and I went shopping in this shopping district of Dhaka, the lassi and the hot

jilapi were a must. At Tiffin Box, the food is decent, and besides the one I have already talked about, their chicken cheese Mughlai, vitamin C drink with grated ginger, and shredded beef (jhura mangsho khichuri) deserve special mention.

I honestly think it is the fun names of their food that customers like the most. "Kolijar tukra shingara" and

"stadium jhalmuri" add a humorous note to the delicious foods that are served.

From Gulshan, I will next take you straight to a by-lane in Mohakhali, opposite the old Brac University premises. Here you find Durbin Bangla, a recently opened Bangla cuisine restaurant. The ambience, minimal with modern imitations, gives a retro vibe that creates a nostalgic feel. I particularly love their hanging lights, which are, in fact, upcycled tea kettles!

Durbin Bangla serves breakfast, lunch, tea, snacks, and dinner. Their early mornings witness a long waiting queue for the mutton paya, the ghee malai suji, and the paper-thin rumali roti.

As they themselves say, Durbin Bangla's food items are not just a menu. It's a map of Bengal, drawn in flavours – from "makkhon chicken soup" to "rupchandar rong", "shokal belar daal" to "shutkir gopon bhalobasha", "gorom dhua-utha bhaat" to "laal jhaal beel" and "roshun bhorta".

Be it a lazy morning, a scorching midday, a restless evening, or a humid night, food is always on our minds. However, we Dhakaites are a busy lot. How we manage to find moments that mix nostalgia with flavour is a small mystery. But the next time you eat out, try these places. Chances are, you will not be disappointed.

## Govt issues ordinances to punish errant polls officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government last night issued Election Officer (Special Provisions) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, to ensure punishment of election officials found negligent on duty or involved in irregularities during elections.

It also promulgated the Election Commission Secretariat (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025, which includes provisions for forming an Election Commission service to appoint its own officials.

The Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ministry published gazettes on both ordinances with immediate effect.

The ordinance expands the definition of election officials to include those involved in conducting polls, such as members of law enforcement agencies and others engaged in election duties.

The drafts of the ordinances were approved by the advisory council on September 18.

According to the ordinances, the EC's authority will prevail over the government in case of disagreements over the punishment of errant officials.

Failure or refusal by any election official to comply with an election-related order or instruction will be considered misconduct and treated as a punishable offence.

## Turkish deputy foreign minister arrives today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister A Beris Ekinci arrives in Dhaka today for a two-day visit as the two countries aim to deepen cooperation in the areas of trade, defence and political relations.

Ekinci will lead Turkiye in the Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) tomorrow, while Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam will lead Bangladesh, said foreign ministry officials. The last FOC was held in 2019.

During the FOC tomorrow, discussions will focus on boosting trade and investment, defence cooperation and political relations.



A Beris Ekinci

## Parties agree to referendum on July Charter

FROM PAGE 1

represent the entire population. If we can seek approval from the people, then that will be the final opinion on implementing the July Charter," he said.

He clarified that no constitutional amendment is needed for holding a referendum. "The fascist Awami League government had removed the referendum provision under article 142, but a High Court verdict has reinstated it. There is no clause preventing a referendum. Therefore, an ordinance can authorise the Election Commission to hold it on a separate ballot alongside the parliamentary election."

Asked whether MPs in the next

parliament who oppose the July Charter would be obliged to accept the public verdict, he said, "All Members of Parliament will be bound to accept it. When the people say, 'Yes,' parliament and its members must accept it."

He also noted that the constitution does not even allow any court to question parliament's proceedings.

On notes of dissent attached to specific reform clauses of the charter, Salahuddin said, "The charter will be drafted, signed, and endorsed by all as a declaration, published online and included in party manifestos."

"People will know what is in the July Charter. Those who receive the mandate can act according to their

notes of dissent."

The BNP had initially insisted that constitutional reforms could only be made through the next parliament and supported seeking the Supreme Court's opinion on whether any other path was possible.

The Jamaat said the referendum should be held before the polls, preferably in November or December, to lend "strong legitimacy" to the charter.

Jamaat's Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman Azad added his party would "accept the people's verdict regardless of the outcome."

The NCP has yet to say whether it wants the referendum held before

the polls or on election day. Its joint convener, Sarwar Tusher, said most parties now agree that the charter must first be "legally ensured."

He reiterated that the next parliament should serve a dual role – both legislative and constitutional – since reforms such as the prime minister's term limit, formation of an upper house, and High Court's decentralisation require more than simple amendments.

The NCP supports implementing the charter through a Constituent Assembly, arguing that the next parliament could serve as a Constituent Assembly along with a regular legislature.

AFP, Chicago

US President Donald Trump authorized deployment of troops to Chicago after a federal agent shot an allegedly armed motorist there on Saturday, while a judge blocked the Republican leader's attempt to send the military into Portland, another Democratic-run city.

The escalating crisis across the country pits Trump's increasingly militarized anti-crime and migration crackdown against opposition Democrats who accuse him of an authoritarian power grab.

"President Trump has authorized 300 national guardsmen to protect federal officers and assets" in Chicago, White House spokeswoman Abigail Jackson said in a statement, after weeks of the Republican threats to send troops to the Midwestern city over the wishes of local leaders.

"President Trump will not turn a blind eye to the lawlessness plaguing American cities."

Illinois Senator Dick Durbin called the move a "shameful chapter in our nation's history," adding that the "President is not intent on fighting crime. He is intent on spreading fear."

Chicago and Portland are the latest flashpoints in the Trump administration's rollout of raids, following the deployment of troops to Los Angeles and Washington.

The raids have seen groups of masked, armed men in unmarked cars and armored vehicles target residential neighborhoods and businesses, sparking protests.

Trump has repeatedly called Portland "war-ravaged" and riddled

with violent crime, but in Saturday's court order, US District Judge Karin Immergut wrote "the President's determination was simply untethered to the facts."

Although the city has seen scattered attacks on federal officers and property, the Trump administration failed to demonstrate "that those episodes of violence were part of an organized attempt to overthrow the government as a whole," Immergut wrote in granting a temporary restraining order.

Protests in Portland did not pose a "danger of rebellion" and "regular law enforcement forces" could handle such incidents, Immergut said.

Oregon Senator Ron Wyden applauded the order, saying the "victory supports what Oregonians already know: we don't need or want Donald Trump to provoke violence by deploying federal troops in our state."

White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller wrote on social media that the judge's order was "legal insurrection" and accused local leaders in Oregon of conducting an "organized terrorist attack on the federal government."

Earlier Saturday, a federal officer in Chicago shot a motorist after law enforcement agents were "boxed in by 10 cars," the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said.

"Agents were unable to move their vehicles and exited the car. One of the drivers who rammed the law enforcement vehicle was armed with a semi-automatic weapon," DHS assistant secretary Tricia McLaughlin said in a statement.

## Trump authorises troops to Chicago

## Diplomacy gathers pace amid threats, strikes

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drawal – remain unresolved. Doubts also persist over the prospect of a Palestinian state, which Netanyahu has unequivocally said he would never permit.

The war in Gaza has "not yet" ended, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said yesterday, describing the release of the hostages held by Hamas as the first phase, while details on what happens after that still need to be worked out.

He told NBC's Meet the Press that Hamas had "basically" agreed to Trump's proposal and the framework for releasing the hostages, while meetings were underway to coordinate the logistics of that.

"They have also agreed, in principle and generalities, to enter into this idea about what's going to happen afterwards," he said. "A lot of details are going to have to be worked out there."

Speaking later to Fox News yesterday, Rubio said that nothing was certain.

"No one can tell you it's a 100 percent guarantee," he said.

He described the second phase of the long-term future of Gaza as "even harder."

"What happens after Israel pulls back to the yellow line, and potentially beyond that, as this thing develops? How do you create this Palestinian technocratic leadership that's not Hamas?" Rubio said. "How do you disarm any sort of terrorist groups that are going to be building tunnels and conducting attacks against Israel? How do you get them to demobilise?"

"All that work, that's going to be hard, but that's critical, because without that, you're not going to have lasting peace," he added.

However, Rubio urged Israel to stop bombing Gaza ahead of the discussions in Egypt.

"You can't release hostages in the middle of strikes, so the strikes will have to stop," Rubio told CBS News talk show "Face the Nation".

"There can't be a war going on in the middle of it."

Negotiators are due to gather in the Egyptian resort town of Sharm El Sheikh, with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressing hope that the hostages could be released within days.

An Israeli government spokesperson said the country's delegation would be leaving yesterday evening.

Cairo confirmed it would be hosting a delegation from Hamas for talks on "the ground conditions and details of the exchange of all Israeli detainees and Palestinian prisoners".

The White House said Trump had also sent two envoys to Egypt – his son-in-law Jared Kushner and Middle East negotiator Steve Witkoff.

On Saturday, Netanyahu vowed to disarm Hamas, either through the peace plan proposed by Trump or by military means.

Hamas and other Palestinian groups seized 251 hostages during their October 7 attack, 47 of whom are still in Gaza. Of those, the Israeli military says 25 are dead.

According to Trump's plan, in return for the hostages, Israel is expected to release 250 Palestinian prisoners with life sentences and more than 1,700 detainees from the Gaza Strip who were arrested after the war began.

But Trump has warned he will "not tolerate delay" from Hamas, urging the group to move quickly towards a deal "or else all bets will be off".

On Saturday, the president said that Israel agreed to the initial withdrawal line outlined in his proposed ceasefire plan.

In a post on social media, he said the administration is now waiting for confirmation from Hamas. If Hamas agrees, Trump said, a ceasefire would be "immediately effective" and a hostage and prisoner exchange would begin.

Trump said on Friday he believed Hamas had shown it was "ready for a lasting PEACE" and he called on Netanyahu's government to halt airstrikes in Gaza.

However, Israel has continued to carry out strikes on Gaza.

AFPTV footage showed thick smoke billowing over the skyline over the coastal territory yesterday.

Gaza's civil defence agency, a rescue force operating under Hamas authority, said Israeli strikes killed at least 19 people in Gaza yesterday, after several attacks through the night. Israel killed 67 Palestinians on Saturday.

"There has been a noticeable decrease in the number of air strikes (since last night). The tanks and military vehicles have slightly pulled back, but I believe this is a tactical move, not a withdrawal," said Muin Abu Rajab, 40, a resident of Al-Rimal neighbourhood in Gaza City.

Israel's military chief yesterday said there was no ceasefire at the moment, but a tactical pause. He, however, said that if negotiations to secure the release of hostages fail to achieve their aims, the military will return to fighting in Gaza.

Under the proposal, administration of the territory would be taken up by a technocratic body overseen by a post-war transitional authority headed by Trump himself.

Since October 7, 2023, Israel's offensive has killed at least 67,139 Palestinians, according to health ministry figures in the Hamas-run territory that the United Nations considers reliable.

## BCB polls today

FROM PAGE 1

cast their ballots between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm to elect 17 directors from 28 candidates.

Six directors have already been elected unopposed from Category 1 (district and division), while four more directors will be elected from this category today.

In addition, 12 directors will be elected from Category 2 (Dhaka clubs), and one director will be elected from Category 3 (others). Two more directors will later be nominated directly by the National Sports Council (NSC).

Once the new board is formed, elections for president and vice-presidents will follow, determining who will run Bangladesh cricket for the next four years.

In today's election, BCB president Aminul Islam Bulbul and vice-president Nazmul Abedeen Fahim are set to contest from the Dhaka Division alongside Abdullah Al Redwan Fuad. Two directors will be elected from the Dhaka Division.

Although Redwan withdrew his name from the elections yesterday, citing a lack of transparency, his name will still appear on the ballot paper since October 1 was the last official date for withdrawal.

According to the election commissioners, 58 voters will cast their votes via e-mail, while the remaining councillors will vote in person.

Addressing the complaints made by Tamim and others regarding alleged government interference, Aminul spoke to the media yesterday at the BCB premises about his four months in charge.

"An election is an election. I had a role. We did everything within the constitution of the Bangladesh Cricket Board," Aminul told reporters.

Aminul joined the board on May 30 through the NSC quota after former president Faruque Ahmed was removed from NSC councillorship following a letter of no confidence from eight BCB directors.

Faruque, however, has come in as a nominee for directorship from the club category and is in a favourable position to be elected as a director.

## Mobilise, resist, take action

FROM PAGE 1

Mobilise, resist. Take action. This is a campaign for rights and justice, and we need to do this together."

He made the call on his verified Facebook page around noon (Bangladesh time), while addressing his concerns about possible arrest and deportation by Israeli forces in international waters.

"Given past history, it is very unlikely that they will let us through, and we are, in all probability, going to be arrested and either deported or sent to prison. When and where that will happen is impossible to pre-determine. It is certainly not in our hands."

Shahidul is the only Bangladeshi aboard the ship "Conscience", which is bound for Gaza in an attempt to end what he terms "an illegal siege" in famine-struck Palestine and stand in solidarity with journalists and health workers under attack there.

Setting sail from the coast of Italy on September 30, the Conscience

was 444.6 kilometres from the Gaza Sea Port as of October 5, 16:57 UTC, according to the live tracker on the official website of the Global Sumud Flotilla.

At the end of his post, Shahidul expressed gratitude to Dr Yunus for his well-wishes, saying, "I was delighted to receive a message this morning from the Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus. So good to have the messages of solidarity and support from my countryfolk and friends and well-wishers across the globe."

The Conscience is the main boat of the flotilla organised by the international initiatives Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC) and Thousand Madelines to Gaza (TMTG). The freedom flotilla also comprises 10 other smaller vessels, carrying journalists, medical professionals, and humanitarian workers.

The FFC is a global civil society initiative challenging the siege of Gaza, imposed by Israel since 2007.

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## JULY ATROCITIES

## Hanif charged with crimes against humanity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution yesterday pressed formal charges before the ICT-2 against Awami League joint general secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif and three other party leaders in a crimes against humanity case over the killing of six people in Kushtia during the July uprising.

The tribunal fixed today to decide whether to take the charges into cognisance.

Hanif's co-accused are Kushtia district AL president and former zilla parishad chairman Sadruddin Khan, district AL general secretary Azgar Ali, and Kushtia city AL general secretary Ataur Rahman Ata. All four are on the run.

Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam told

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## EC to hold talks with media today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission will hold talks with journalists today as part of its ongoing dialogue series with stakeholders ahead of the 13th national election next year, said Md Ashadul Haque, assistant director of the EC's public relations wing.

The commission will meet representatives of electronic media at 10:30am, followed by print and online journalists at 2:30pm.

The EC launched its dialogue series on September 28, beginning with members of civil society, intellectuals, and academics.

It is scheduled to meet women representatives on October 7 and will later hold discussions with political parties and July uprising victims.

## Seize 6 flats, assets of ex-land minister

Court orders ACC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered ACC to confiscate six flats and nine shares of different markets owned by former land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, his wife and brother and their beneficiaries over corruption allegations brought against them.

These flats and markets are located in Chattogram.

Judge Sabbir Faiz of the Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order.



Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus exchanges greetings with a delegation of Buddhist religious leaders on the occasion of Probarona Purnima at the state guest house Jamuna in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## Not a penny in Ducsu's account

Newly elected leaders start with zero funds despite years of student fees

MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

Despite Dhaka University students paying fees for Ducsu and hall union funds every year, the newly elected committees have had to begin their activities with a "zero bank balance".

Leaders said they are struggling to initiate their activities due to the lack of money.

According to Ducsu constitution, a budget must be prepared by the general secretary and submitted to the executive committee within 14 days of assuming office.

Before that, all committee members are supposed to submit their own draft budget proposals to the GS.

However, a Ducsu executive committee member said on October 2 that they had been asked to submit their draft proposals only a few days ago.

Each DU student is required to pay Tk 60 for the Dhaka University Central Students'



If the Ducsu fees were separated from the admission fees and had been transferred to the account, there should be at least Tk 90 lakh for Ducsu. The collected amounts were instead deposited into the university's main account.

Prof HM Mosarof Hossain  
New Ducsu treasurer

Union and another Tk 60 for their respective hall union each academic session. By that calculation, at least Tk 90 lakh should have accumulated

for Ducsu and another Tk 90 lakh for the hall unions since 2020, when the last Ducsu committee's tenure ended.

"It is totally zero. There is no money either for Ducsu or the hall unions," said Prof HM Mosarof Hossain, the newly nominated treasurer of Ducsu. He said a Sonali Bank account exists in the name of Ducsu but has been inactive for years due to the absence of transactions.

"If the Ducsu fees were separated from the admission fees and had been transferred to the account, there should be at least Tk 90 lakh for Ducsu," he said, adding that the collected amounts were instead deposited into the university's main account.

He also said the new committee did not receive any leftover funds or audit reports from the previous one.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Shaiful Islam, director of accounts at DU, said in

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## DISRESPECTING QURAN

NSU student arrested, sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A student of North South University has been arrested and sent to jail on charges of hurting religious sentiments through a Facebook post.

Apurba Paul, 23, a student of NSU's Media and Journalism Department, was arrested from a flat in Dhaka's Bashundhara Residential Area early yesterday after a video surfaced showing him disrespecting the Quran.

Police filed a case in the morning, and a Dhaka court sent him to jail after the investigation officer produced him before the court, said Rakibul Islam, officer-in-charge of Bhatara Police Station.

Following the incident, NSU authorities expelled him and issued a press release, saying that they are also planning to file a case against him.

Meanwhile, Hefazat-e-Islam Amir Mohibullah Babunagari and Secretary

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## Syed Manzoorul Islam on life support

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted educationist and writer Professor Syed Manzoorul Islam has been placed on life support.

His colleague, Professor Fakrul Alam, told The Daily Star, "A medical board decided this [Sunday] afternoon to place him on life support due to heart problems as well as kidney and other complications."

Mazharul Islam, chief executive of Anyaprakash, who visited Prof Manzoorul at Dhaka's Labaid Hospital in the evening, quoted a doctor as saying his condition is "critical".

He was hospitalised following a heart attack on Friday morning. After undergoing surgery, two stents were placed in his heart on Saturday.

Manzoorul completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in English from Dhaka University before earning his PhD from Queen's University in Canada. He served for many years as a professor in the English department of Dhaka University.



## BNP, UN discuss polls, Rohingya issue

UNB, Dhaka

UN Resident Coordinator Gwyn Lewis yesterday met BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and discussed the country's political situation, the upcoming election, and the Rohingya issue.

Talking to reporters after the meeting at the BNP chairperson's office, Standing Committee member Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said the UN is committed to help restore the democratic order in Bangladesh.

To achieve this, he said, there must be democratic practices and mutual understanding among political parties.

Lewis said humanitarian situation of Rohingyas remained incredibly challenging and referred to a meeting last week hosted at the UN with Malaysia, Finland, and Bangladesh, where they highlighted their plight, and the financial needs of Bangladesh.

## Fascists' plot to incite communal unrest foiled: home adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday said law enforcement agencies had successfully foiled an attempt by "fascists and their collaborators" to incite communal unrest during Durga Puja celebration.

"Fascists and their collaborators tried to create communal tension by drawing beards on faces of idols at 793 mandaps. That conspiracy has been thwarted," he reporters at the Secretariat.

Referring to the Khagrachhari incident, he said medical tests had found no evidence of rape in the alleged case. "The army, police and locals handled the matter professionally. The blockade and Section 144 have since been withdrawn," he said.



রাত বা দিন

ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক

ফাস্ট ট্র্যাক

খোলা প্রতিদিন

ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক

ফাস্ট ট্র্যাক সার্ভিস

দিন-রাত ২৪ ঘণ্টা টাকা জমা, উত্তোলন এবং পাঠানো যায়  
সব ধরনের ব্যাংকিং একাউন্টসহ  
রকেট একাউন্ট খোলা, লোন প্রসেস করা, কার্ড এবং চেক বই  
ইস্যু করার ব্যাপারে সহযোগিতা করা হয়



ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক

আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী



## Doctor shortage cripples Nazirpur hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

Healthcare services at the 50-bed Nazirpur Upazila Health Complex in Pirojpur are being severely disrupted due to an acute shortage of doctors, depriving local people of proper treatment.

Around two lakh residents depend on the hospital for healthcare. Yet services are running on a limited scale in the absence of doctors for most departments.

At present, only four doctors are serving patients – two medical officers, a specialist, and a dentist – against 31 sanctioned posts. Of them, two are providing 24-hour emergency care alongside indoor and outdoor services, forcing

patients to wait for hours for consultations.

According to hospital sources, more than 200 patients seek outdoor consultations daily, while inpatient services are often overcrowded, with all 50 beds occupied.

Due to the shortage of manpower, services at a newly constructed hospital building have remained suspended.

There is also a shortage of other staff, including technicians and cleaners, leaving diagnostic services like ultrasonography suspended and making it difficult to maintain cleanliness and hygiene.

"I had to wait for more than two hours for my turn to see a doctor," said patient Sanzida Akter.

Another patient, Swapna Samadder, echoed her.

Mohammad Hasan, an attendant, said doctors advised him to shift his patient to Pirojpur Sadar Hospital. "But I couldn't manage it due to financial hardship," he said.

Doctors too are struggling to cope with the workload.

"I have to handle indoor, outdoor, and emergency units at the same time. It's impossible to provide quality care under such pressure," said medical officer Fazley Rabbi.

Contacted, Dr Md Moshir Rahman, upazila health and family planning officer of Nazirpur, said, "We have already informed higher authorities in this regard. Hopefully they will take steps soon."

## 7 held over attack on police in Narsingdi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

Police yesterday arrested seven individuals accused of involvement in the attack on police personnel including Additional Superintendent of Police (Sadar Circle) Md Anwar Hossain in Narsingdi on Saturday.

The arrests were made during drives in different locations across the district. They were later produced before the court, said Narsingdi District Police.

The arrestees are: Fazlul Rashid alias Ador, 40; Shafiqul Islam Suman, 44; Kudrat Hasan Robin, 23; Rakib Khan, 30; Sohag Mia, 35; Tanvir Mia, 22; and Shanto Mia, 23.

According to the press release, on Saturday morning (October 4), Anwar and several other policemen were attacked and injured by a mob when two extortionists were detained while collecting tolls from vehicles in Arshinagar Rail Crossing area of Narsingdi Sadar upazila.

Following the incident, Md Sohel Ahmed, in-charge of Narsingdi City Police Outpost, filed a case with Narsingdi Sadar Police Station accusing five named and 25-30 unidentified individuals.

## Unregulated shops choking Lawachhara

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Various food stalls and gift shops have been operating inside Lawachhara National Park in Moulvibazar for the past 11 years, posing a serious threat to its fragile ecosystem and biodiversity.

Environmentalists said more than 10 shops were set up with the Forest Department's approval, but their presence – along with the growing number of visitors, vehicle movement, and noise – has severely disrupted the park's wildlife habitat.

The 1,250-hectare park is home to several rare and endangered species.

According to sources in the park's Management Committee (CMC), most of the shops were built irregularly around 2014 without following proper procedure.

A former CMC member, requesting anonymity, said, "There are no shops allocated for women's Community Patrol Groups (CPGs), even though they need them the most. Only one shop belongs to CPG member Hatim Ali Longdo. The rest are run by private traders with backing from local influential people, but have no link with the CPGs."

Hatim Ali said he started his shop in 1964. "Initially, my shop was inside Lawachhara Punjee. The authorities brought and settled me here. In 2000, I was relocated near the rest house, and again in 2005 to a hillock near the CMC office. During the pandemic, I was shifted to the entrance gate area," he said.

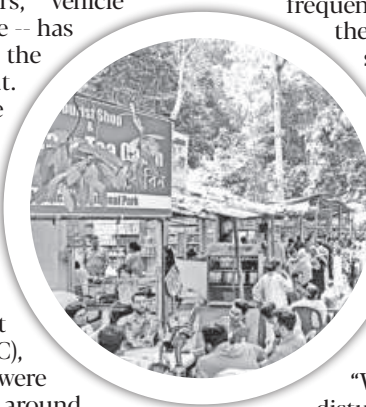
Swapna Deb Sajal, director of Bangladesh Banya Prani Sheba Foundation, said plastic littering, frequent vehicle movement, and the operation of numerous shops within the park are damaging its ecosystem.

Sohel Shyam, founder of Stand for Our Endangered Wildlife, echoed the concern.

Saju Marchiang, publication secretary of the Khasi Social Council, said, "We demand a noise- and disturbance-free habitat for the park's wildlife. These shops are right at the entrance of the forest, polluting the area with litter."

Abul Kalam, divisional forest officer of Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation in Sylhet, said the ministry concerned recently ordered the eviction of all shops except one or two eco-friendly outlets currently operating within the park.

"We are now working on implementing the directive," he added.



## Not a penny in Ducsu's account

FROM PAGE 3  
practice, there is no separate Ducsu fund.

"Ducsu's expenses are covered by the university's budget allocation. The Ducsu fees collected through admission are not deposited into a separate account but counted as part of the university's general income," he told The Daily Star.

Since the university runs on a deficit budget with government funding, he said Ducsu must request

money as needed, which will be provided subject to availability.

SM Farhad, general secretary of Ducsu, said they have not yet received any money from the university authorities.

"We are initiating some small programmes on our own, which may be adjusted later," he said, adding that the university is not accustomed to paying for Ducsu due to its long absence.

He said the process has

started but it will take time to set up a proper system to separate Ducsu's funds.

Former Ducsu vice-president Mahmudur Rahman Manna criticised the current practice, saying the money collected from students in Ducsu's name belongs solely to the union, not the authorities.

"The authorities should immediately transfer the funds to Ducsu's account. The university cannot spend this money for other purposes," he said.

Most newly elected leaders said they were unaware of the funding structure and have so far relied on hall authorities, donations, and sponsorships to begin their activities.

Bangabandhu Hall Union Vice-President Md Muslimur Rahman said, "Our hall administration sent a letter to the central admission office seeking funds, but we heard the

money has already been spent elsewhere."

Surja Sen Hall Union VP Azizul Hoque said, "Since 2019, no budget allocation for the hall unions has been disbursed from the Registrar Building, making it impossible to take even minor initiatives."

Ducsu VP Abu Shadik Kayem said they will take action after receiving a report from the treasurer. "He has been asked to trace the money," he added.

Contacted, DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan said, "We are currently reviewing Ducsu's budget and other financial matters. The new treasurer has been assigned on a priority basis, and I have held urgent meetings with the Accounts Office."

Despite the fund constraints, an interim budgetary provision has been made to enable Ducsu operations and welfare activities, he added.

**NOTICE**  
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH  
HIGH COURT DIVISION  
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)  
COMPANY MATTER NO.1812 OF 2025

Mr. Khan Mahmood Hassan, Director, Supreme Knitwear Ltd. Address at-82, Mohakhali C/A (13th Floor) Dhaka-1212. ...PETITIONER

**VERSUS**  
The Registrar of Joint Stock Companies & Firms and another ...RESPONDENTS

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that an application under section 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed by the above-named petitioner before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh praying, inter alia, for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting of Supreme Knitwear Ltd for the years of 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. The Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, presided over by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Md. Toufiq Inam, vide order dated 30.09.2025 was pleased to admit the above application. Any person interested in the said application may appear before the Hon'ble High Court Division either personally or through his duly authorized Advocate. Copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned. (Tazren Jahan) Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, For the Petitioner, Room No. 4047, Shurawardi Bhaban, SCBA, Dhaka. Cell-01675608771

**Trust Bank PLC.**  
Shadhinata Tower,  
Bir Srestha Shaheed Jahangir Gate Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka-1206  
For further information  
Website: <https://www.tblbd.com> Email: [info@tblbd.com](mailto:info@tblbd.com)

**NOTICE FOR THE ISSUANCE & PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION MEMORANDUM OF UNSECURED, NON-CONVERTIBLE, REDEEMABLE, FLOATING RATE SUBORDINATED BOND WORTH BDT 5,000 MILLION BY TRUST BANK PLC. THROUGH PRIVATE PLACEMENT**

This is for kind information of all concerned that Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) has accorded consent vide letter no. BSEC/CFD/CRD/DS-280/2025/599, dated: September 30, 2025 to Trust Bank PLC. for raising Tier II capital through issuance of Unsecured, Non-Convertible, Redeemable, Floating Rate Subordinated Bond of BDT 5,000 million through private placement. The summary of subscription for the said subordinated bond are as follows:

Offer Summary	
Name of the Instrument	Trust Bank Subordinated Bond VIII
Issue Type	Unsecured, Non-Convertible, Redeemable, Floating Rate Subordinated Bond
Issuer	Trust Bank PLC.
Nature of Instrument	Unsecured
Purpose and Objectives	To strengthen Tier II Capital Base
Arranger	UCB Investment Limited
Co Arranger	Trust Bank Investment PLC.
Trustee	DBH Finance PLC.
Mode of Issue	Private Placement
Issue Size	BDT 5,000,000,000 (Five Thousand Million Taka)
No. of Bonds to be Issued	50,000 (Fifty Thousand) no.s
Face Value	BDT 100,000 (One Hundred Thousand) Per Bond
Tenure	7 years from the date of issuance
Rate of Return/ Profit Rate	Reference Rate + Coupon Margin Reference Rate: Latest average of the 6-months' highest FDR rate of all private commercial banks (excluding all the foreign banks, Islamic Banks, 4th and 5th generation banks) as available by any regular publication of Bangladesh Bank website on the Quotation Day. Coupon Margin: 3.00% p.a.
Listing	As per the Consent Letter from BSEC

Information memorandum of Trust Bank Subordinated Bond VIII is available in the website(s) of:  
Trust Bank PLC. (Issuer): (<https://www.tblbd.com/investor-relation>)  
UCB Investment Limited. (Arranger): (<https://ucb-investment.com/media#publications>)  
DBH Finance PLC. (Trustee): (<https://dbhfinance.com/>)

Sd/-  
Unmesh Ray Himel  
Company Secretary (Acting)

Dated: October 04, 2025  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

**TENDER NOTICE**

**UNHCR**  
The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar, hereby announces the launch of the following tender:

TENDER REFERENCE NUMBER	ITEM DESCRIPTION
BGD - UNHCR RFP 1684	ESTABLISHMENT OF A FRAME AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVISION OF ELECTRICAL DESIGN, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING AND EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE SUPPORT

Interested and potential vendors are invited to participate in this Invitation to Bid (ITB) by accessing and downloading the tender documents from the **UNHCR Cloud ERP Supplier Portal**.

UNGM Notice Link: <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/279995>

BDjobs: <https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/unhcr/unhcr551.htm>

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT:** Please confirm your participation for BGD - UNHCR ITB 1684 by using the "Acknowledge Participation" functionality in the Cloud ERP Supplier portal.

**It is very important to subscribe (Acknowledge Participation) to an ongoing negotiation that you wish to participate in, as this is the only way to receive automatic email notifications with information on any changes related to this negotiation.**

**Instruction to Bidders:**  
UNHCR will organize an online supplier **Join Pre Bid Meeting here BGD-UNHCR-RFP-1684 on 13 October 2025 at 10:00 am BST** via **Microsoft Teams**. Bidders may also join the meeting by scanning the QR Code from mobile:

To register as a prospective supplier and submission of bids, please follow the guidelines: <https://www.unhcr.org/media/guidelines-unhcr-suppliers-how-use-supplier-portal>

Existing suppliers use this link: <https://supplier-portal.unhcr.org/> to log in with your email address and password. Do not create a new profile if you are already registered. If you have forgotten your password, click on **Forgot Password** to reset your password.

Bid submission deadline: Tuesday, 28 October 2025 - 15:00 hrs. BST Bangladesh time.

Kindly note that no hard copy is acceptable. The offer must be submitted only through the Cloud ERP portal.

Scan above QR Code to join

**TENDER NOTICE**

**UNHCR**  
The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sub-Office in Cox's Bazar, hereby announces the launch of the following tender:

TENDER REFERENCE NUMBER	ITEM DESCRIPTION
BGD - UNHCR ITB 1763- ICT Items and PA System	FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRAME AGREEMENTS FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS ICT EQUIPMENT AND PA SYSTEM INCLUDING INSTALLATION AT UNHCR BANGLADESH

Interested and potential vendors are invited to participate in this Invitation to Bid (ITB) by accessing and downloading the tender documents from the **UNHCR Cloud ERP Supplier Portal**.

UNGM Link: <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/279790>

BDjobs.com Link: <https://hotjobs.bdjobs.com/jobs/unhcr/unhcr547.htm%20>

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT:** Please confirm your participation for BGD - UNHCR ITB 1763- ICT Items and PA System by using the "Acknowledge Participation" functionality in the Cloud ERP Supplier portal.

**It is very important to subscribe (Acknowledge Participation) to an ongoing negotiation that you wish to participate in, as this is the only way to receive automatic email notifications with information on any changes related to this negotiation.**

**Instruction to Bidders:**  
UNHCR will organize an online supplier **pre-bid conference on 6 October 2025 at 10:30 am BST** via **Microsoft Teams**. Bidders may also join the meeting by scanning the QR Code:

To register as a prospective supplier and submission of bids, please follow the guidelines: <https://www.unhcr.org/media/guidelines-unhcr-suppliers-how-use-supplier-portal>

Existing suppliers use this link: <https://supplier-portal.unhcr.org/> to log in with your email address and password. Do not create a new profile if you are already registered. If you have forgotten your password, click on **Forgot Password** to reset your password.

Bid submission deadline: Tuesday, 21 October 2025 - 02:00 PM Bangladesh time.

Kindly note that no hard copy is acceptable. The offer must be submitted only through the Cloud ERP portal.

Scan above QR Code to join



Attendees hold placards and Palestinian and Turkish flags during a rally in solidarity with Palestinians and to protest against the interception by the Israeli navy of the Global Sumud Flotilla in Istanbul yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Thunberg 'beaten and forced to kiss Israeli flag': report

AGENCIES

Activists who were detained alongside Greta Thunberg in Israel have accused Israeli forces of beating, humiliating, and depriving the Swedish climate campaigner of food and water following the interception of the Gaza aid flotilla.

Testimonies from multiple detainees describe scenes of abuse and intimidation after the capture of the Global Sumud Flotilla, a convoy attempting to deliver humanitarian aid to the besieged Gaza Strip.

Turkish journalist Ersin Celik, one of those detained, told TRT World that Israeli soldiers "dragged Greta Thunberg on the ground" and "forced her to kiss the Israeli flag". He alleged she was "severely tortured before our eyes ... made to crawl and humiliated".

Other activists offered similar accounts. Malaysian participant Hazwani Helmi told Al Jazeera that detainees were "denied food, clean water, and medication", calling the experience "a disaster - they treated us like animals".

Italian journalist Lorenzo Agostino claimed Thunberg "was humiliated and wrapped in an Israeli flag and exhibited like a trophy".

Turkish presenter Ikbal Gurpinar alleged that detainees were left without sustenance: "They treated us like dogs. They left us hungry for three days. They didn't give us water; we had to drink from the toilet."

According to The Guardian, internal Swedish foreign ministry correspondence indicated that Thunberg complained of dehydration, rashes she attributed to bedbug infestations, and being forced to sit for long periods on hard surfaces. It was also reported that she had been forced to hold the Israeli flag.

Israel's foreign ministry has rejected allegations of mistreatment.

The flotilla included hundreds of activists, journalists, and lawmakers from more than 40 countries. Turkish officials said 137 detainees were flown to Istanbul after being held by Israel, part of a larger group of over 450 people captured during the operation.

Legal aid group Adalah, representing several of the activists, said detainees were also filmed in front of Israeli flags and threatened with further detention if they refused.



## Landslides, floods kill 64 in Nepal, India

AFP, Kathmandu

Landslides and floods triggered by heavy downpours in Nepal and neighbouring India have killed more than 60 people, officials said yesterday, as rescue workers raced to reach cut-off communities in remote mountainous terrain.

Torrential downpours have lashed Nepal since Friday, leaving rivers in spate and many areas in the Himalayan nation inundated.

At least 44 people have died in rain-triggered disasters and five are missing, Shanti Mahat, spokeswoman for Nepal's National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority, told AFP.

At least 37 were killed by landslides in the worst-affected eastern district of Ilam.

"Heavy rains overnight caused the landslides," said local district official Sunita Nepal.

"Rescue workers have reached the affected areas. It was difficult because many roads were blocked."

Rivers in the capital Kathmandu have also swelled, inundating settlements along their banks.

Security personnel were deployed to assist rescue efforts with helicopters and motorboats.

"There is some damage, but thanks to the authorities' prior flood alert, we were able to move some belongings to a safe place," said vegetable seller Rajan Khadga, 38.

Landslides have blocked several highways and disrupted flights, leaving hundreds of travellers -- many returning after celebrating the Hindu festival of Dashain -- stranded.

At least five people are still missing, according to federal disaster officials.

Prime Minister Sushila Karki said government agencies were

"fully prepared for rescue and relief".

"Your safety is our utmost concern. Do not hesitate to seek necessary assistance," she said in an address, adding that the government has declared Sunday and Monday public holidays and urged people not to travel unless necessary.

Across the border in India, at least 20 people were killed in the tea-growing hill district of Darjeeling in West Bengal

monitored in the wake of heavy rains and landslides," he said in a statement on social media.

India's weather department yesterday issued a red alert for "extremely heavy rainfall" in sub-Himalayan areas, including Darjeeling, until Monday.

Relentless downpours also swelled rivers in neighbouring Bhutan, prompting the Indian army to join rescue efforts.

Military helicopters were deployed to evacuate several



civilians stranded in the border town of Phuentsholing, the army said in a statement.

Monsoon rains, usually from June to September, bring widespread death and destruction every year across South Asia, but the number of fatal floods and landslides has increased in recent years.

Experts say climate change has worsened their schedule, frequency and intensity.

The Kathmandu based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development warned in June that communities faced heightened disaster risks this monsoon season.

## INDONESIA SCHOOL TRAGEDY

### Death hits 45; 26 remains missing

AFP, Sidoarjo

The death toll from an Indonesian school collapse rose to 45 yesterday, officials said, as rescuers recovered more victims buried under the rubble.

Part of the multi-storey building on Indonesia's Java island collapsed suddenly on Monday as students gathered for afternoon prayers.

Rescuers retrieved another 19 victims from the rubble on Sunday, National Search and Rescue Agency (Basarnas) operations director Yudhi Bramantyo said.

"According to our calculation, the total number of victims we have evacuated are 149, with 45 reported dead ... and 104 survivors," Yudhi told reporters Sunday, up from a toll of 37 earlier on Sunday and including several body parts.

Nanang Sigit, the head of the local search and rescue agency, confirmed the same death toll.

Yudhi said before the latest bodies were found on Sunday that at least 26 people were still missing. Rescuers were still working around the clock in the rubble of the Islamic boarding school.

"We will continue to do our best," he said. "In other words, we will probably extend the operation until we are sure that all victims... have been recovered."

Yudhi estimated that authorities would be able to clear the rubble by Tuesday.

Investigators have been looking into the cause of the collapse, but initial signs pointed to substandard construction, according to experts.



## Russian strikes kill 5 in Ukraine Cause power outages

AFP, Kyiv

Russian strikes on Ukraine yesterday killed five people and badly damaged energy infrastructure, temporarily severing power supplies to tens of thousands and prompting neighbouring Poland to put ground defence on high alert.

Russian forces fired 496 drones and 53 missiles at Ukraine, the majority of which were shot down, according to the Ukrainian air force.

"Sadly, five people were killed. My sincere condolences to everyone who lost loved ones to this terror," Ukraine's leader Volodymyr Zelensky said.

Strikes killed four people near Lviv, which lies in western Ukraine and is hundreds of kilometres from the front line, and has been largely spared the attacks that have hit cities further east.

Attacks also killed one person in the southern region of Zaporizhzhia and wounded people near the eastern front, local authorities said.

The strikes cut power to over 110,000 subscribers across several regions, Ukraine's emergency services said, with the hardest hit being Zaporizhzhia.

Overnight, more than 73,000 people in Zaporizhzhia were left without electricity, regional head Ivan Fedorov said, though power had been partially restored by the afternoon.

Ukraine's state-run gas company Naftogaz network also reported damage to its network.

The Russian army said it launched an attack "against enterprises of the military-industrial complex of Ukraine and gas and energy infrastructure facilities that ensured their operation."



Syria's interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa (left) visits the polling station where members of Syrian local committees have been casting their votes in the country's selection process to designate an interim parliament, in Damascus yesterday. Syria yesterday voted to select members of its first post-Assad parliament in a process criticised as undemocratic, with a third of the members appointed by Ahmed al-Sharaa.

PHOTO: AFP

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### গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

সাম্প্রতিক সময়ে পরিলক্ষিত হচ্ছে যে, বাংলাদেশে বিভিন্ন সেক্টরের কলকারখানা, শিল্পপ্রতিষ্ঠান বিশেষ করে বাণিজ্যিক প্রতিষ্ঠানে ব্যবহৃত লিফট অথবা উত্তোলক যন্ত্রপাতির যথাযথ পরীক্ষা না করার কারণে জনসাধারণ বা শ্রমিকদের মারাত্মক দুর্ঘটনায় আহত/নিহত হওয়ার ঘটনা ঘটছে। লিফট অথবা উত্তোলক যন্ত্রপাতির যান্ত্রিক অংশ, ক্যাবল, ব্রেক বা কন্ট্রোল সিস্টেম সঠিকভাবে কাজ না করলে প্রাণঘাতী দুর্ঘটনা ঘটানোর সম্ভাবনা রয়েছে। কর্মক্ষেত্রে দুর্ঘটনার ঝুঁকি হ্রাসে লিফট অথবা উত্তোলক যন্ত্রপাতির নিয়মিত রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ ও নিরাপদ ব্যবহার নিশ্চিত করতে ঝুঁকি নিরূপণ ও পূর্ণাঙ্গ পরীক্ষণ করা অপরিহার্য। বাংলাদেশ শ্রম আইন, ২০০৬ এর ধারা ৬৯(১) উল্লেখ আছে, প্রত্যেক প্রতিষ্ঠানে প্রত্যেক হারেস্ট এবং লিফট ক) পর্যাপ্ত শক্তিশালী ও মজবুত পদার্থ দিয়ে উত্তমরূপে তৈরি হইতে হবে; খ) যথাযথভাবে রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ করিতে হইবে; গ) প্রত্যেক প্রতিষ্ঠানে প্রত্যেক হারেস্ট এবং লিফট প্রতি ছয় মাসে অন্ততঃ একবার একজন উপযুক্ত ব্যক্তি দ্বারা সম্পূর্ণভাবে পরীক্ষিত হইতে হইবে এবং উক্ত রূপ প্রত্যেক পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত বিধি দ্বারা নির্ধারিত বিষয়াদি লিপিবদ্ধ করিবার জন্য একটি রেজিস্টার থাকিতে হইবে। উক্ত বিধানের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে লিফট অথবা উত্তোলক যন্ত্রপাতির সম্পূর্ণভাবে পরীক্ষার জন্য কলকারখানা ও প্রতিষ্ঠান পরিদর্শন অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক এ পর্যন্ত ২৮টি প্রতিষ্ঠানের ৪০ জনকে যোগ্য ব্যক্তি হিসাবে ঘোষণা করা হয়েছে। যোগ্য ব্যক্তির তালিকা অধিদপ্তরের ওয়েবসাইটে (dife.gov.bd) প্রকাশিত রয়েছে। এছাড়াও কোন প্রকৌশল বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের মেকানিক্যাল বিভাগের ওয়ার্কশপ তত্ত্বাবধায়ক কর্তৃক লিফট অথবা উত্তোলক যন্ত্রপাতির যোগ্য ব্যক্তি ঘোষণা করার এখতিয়ার রয়েছে। অতএব, সংশ্লিষ্ট কলকারখানা, শিল্পপ্রতিষ্ঠান ও বাণিজ্যিক প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রতি ০৬ (ছয়) মাস অন্তর তাদের ব্যবহৃত লিফট অথবা উত্তোলক যন্ত্রপাতি যোগ্য ব্যক্তির মাধ্যমে পরীক্ষণ করাতে হবে এবং পরীক্ষার রিপোর্ট সংবলিত তথ্য এবং সার্টিফিকেশন লিফটের ভিতরে অথবা বাহিরে যেখানে জনসাধারণের দৃষ্টিগোচর হয় সেখানে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে। এ আদেশ অবিলম্বে কার্যকর করা হবে।

স্বাক্ষরিত/-

ওমর মোঃ ইমরুল মাহসিন  
মহাপরিদর্শক

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## Give teachers respect, financial security

Their role is crucial in shaping the nation's future

Reports published on the occasion of World Teachers' Day have, unsurprisingly, portrayed a woeful state that should not be unfamiliar to erudite observers in Bangladesh. The respect and financial security afforded to our teachers remain persistently inadequate. Even government policies related to education still fail to adequately recognise the vital role teachers play in driving learning, innovation, and the advancement of both society and the nation.

The situation is especially dire at the foundational level of primary education, where many teachers have been pushed into debt traps and are not being duly respected. Current salary levels in non-government primary schools are so low that they can no longer attract talent. For example, the basic salary of an assistant teacher starts at a mere Tk 11,000, while a trained head teacher receives Tk 12,500—far below what is required to sustain a family. Contrast these figures with a 2023 study by the non-governmental thinktank Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) that revealed that a family of four needed Tk 18,115 per month to cover food costs in 2022.

The impact of poor pay on national educational development has been depicted in detail in the white paper on the state of Bangladesh's economy, produced by a task force led by economist Debapriya Bhattacharya and submitted to Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus on December 1, 2024. Among other things, the paper noted that teachers continue to be underpaid compared with their counterparts in other Asian countries, thereby adversely affecting the quality of education and limiting their intellectual output.

According to globally accepted norms, as reflected in the 1966 ILO/UNESCO recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, working conditions for teachers should be such that it best promotes effective learning and enables teachers to concentrate on their professional duties. Our lack of sincerity and insufficient attention to equipping teachers with proper training, academic freedom, and a decent salary are the reasons the teaching profession has become unattractive.

Beyond financial insecurity, teachers' dignity has been severely undermined by the intrusion of partisan politics into educational management. The capture of school and college managing committees by political forces has vitiated the academic environment and, in many cases, drawn teaching staff into partisan rivalries. This has also adversely affected the accountability process. The white paper noted that the culture of political criminalisation in educational institutions has far-reaching social effects, as these teachers will continue teaching for the next 30 years or so. Sadly, we have witnessed its consequences in the form of teachers being humiliated, forced to resign, and deprived of their livelihoods. According to the paper, more than 150 teachers were forced to resign following the July uprising.

We, therefore, must recognise teachers' importance in building the nation's future and improve both their financial security and societal dignity. While the interim government may have missed an opportunity to restore teachers' status meaningfully, there is still time to initiate a realistic plan. As the country prepares for the election phase, all parties vying for power should make quality education a priority and commit to far-reaching reforms to ensure a future that can keep pace with global advancements.

## Regulate battery-run rickshaws

Proper steps needed to protect the interests of passengers, operators

It is true that battery-run rickshaws have provided a source of income to thousands from low-income groups; their operation also makes practical sense in an increasingly fast city. However, the unregulated way in which these vehicles operate comes at a heavy cost. Most drivers have no training in driving or traffic rules. Moreover, these rickety vehicles can, and often do, run at speeds of up to 30 km per hour, making them quite accident-prone.

Accidents involving battery-run rickshaws have therefore been on the rise, often resulting in injuries and even fatalities. According to Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, battery-powered rickshaws were involved in about 15 percent of the 315 road accidents in Dhaka during the Eid rush between March 24 and April 7. This pattern of road risk has often raised concerns, with a report in this paper citing urban planners who warn that without regulation these rickshaws may cripple Dhaka's transport network. Underlying their concern is the fact that drivers frequently ignore traffic signals and cross intersections at high speed, exacerbating congestion.

With no central registry or licensing system for those involved in this system in the country, the exact number of battery-powered rickshaws is unknown. But it is estimated that around five lakh vehicles operate in Dhaka city alone, far outnumbering paddle rickshaws. It is, therefore, heartening that the government has drafted a policy to regulate battery-powered rickshaws nationwide. The policy will reportedly prohibit these electric three-wheelers on highways and introduce mandatory registration, fitness certificates, and driving licences.

Moreover, if the government's pilot project using a Buet-designed model of the battery-run rickshaw turns out to be successful, it will make these vehicles structurally safer. The idea is to introduce the new models in selected areas of Dhaka, track illegal rickshaws there, and gradually replace traditional rickshaws with the safer new models in each zone. According to Dhaka North City Corporation, 20,000 drivers have already received training, with sessions continuing for others.

The government policy will also set vehicle fitness standards, provide for driver training, and impose penalties for violations of traffic rules. Drivers will be required to own the vehicle they operate, discouraging individuals from owning multiple rickshaws. Establishing discipline will understandably be very challenging given the staggering number of vehicles. But it is imperative that the policy is implemented without delay, accompanied by expanded training workshops for drivers, to ensure the safety of both operators and the public.

### Corrigendum

In the article titled "Can Trump's proposal deliver real peace for Gaza?", published on yesterday's Editorial page, the author's name was misspelled. The correct spelling is Yousef SY Ramadan. We regret the inadvertent error.

# Time to draw the line between influencers and journalists



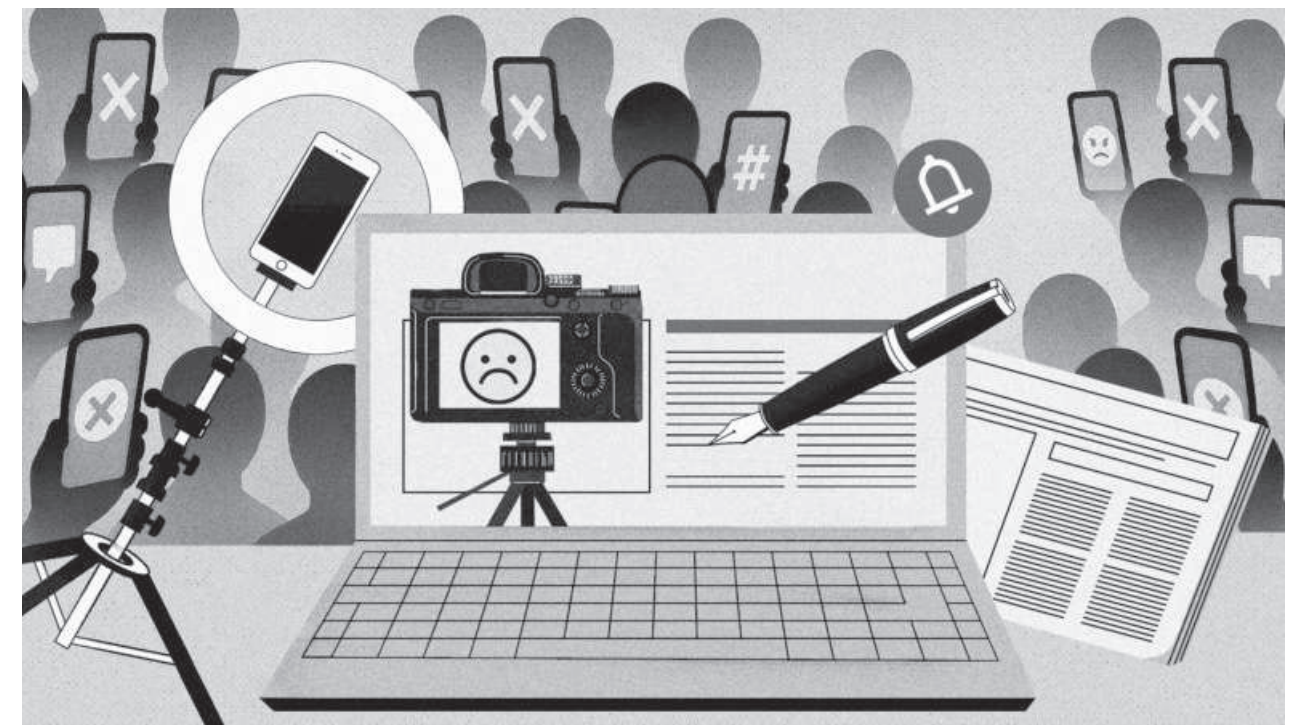
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KAMAL AHMED

The well-known proverb "the pen is mightier than the sword" perhaps needs redefining in today's world, as social media has emerged as the mightiest of all. These platforms have spawned a vast number of so-called "influencers" who operate without formal accountability, thriving on their ability to deepen divisions and sharpen antagonisms. They often recklessly blend lies with half-truths, distort facts, misquote others, and cherry-pick data to suit their purposes. And here lies the real danger—the blurring of lines between professional journalism and influencer content—which has become one of the most disruptive developments of the digital age.

This failure to distinguish between professional journalists and self-styled influencers has left the public vulnerable to manipulation. In particular, assembling a mob for political or personal gain has become one of the most alarming phenomena in Bangladesh today. Professional journalists working for newspapers and broadcast channels—those who painstakingly verify facts, exercise editorial judgment, and adhere to professional ethics—are losing ground in the battle for truth. In contrast, influencers are driven by an insatiable hunger for popularity, likes, and content-generated income, sometimes twisting facts or spreading lies to suit their agenda. Shockingly, quite a few people having years of experience in journalism have also senselessly sacrificed ethical standards for cheap popularity or political ambition.

Bangladesh, where media literacy among the general populace is still quite low, has thus become fertile ground for the cultivation of hatred. Politicians, artists, cultural figures, and media personalities all remain at risk of being targeted for online harassment. Rather than fostering healthy debates or meaningful counterarguments, the widespread practice is to brand opponents with derogatory labels, distort information, or unleash vulgar language. During the Awami League regime, "razakar" was the most feared insult; today, it is "Indian stooge." For victims, such stigmatisation is akin to digital mob lynching, and in many



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

cases, it has spilled over into offline violence.

We have witnessed several such unsettling incidents in recent times, some of which were unpredictable. There is growing suspicion that such incidents are deliberately designed to create chaos and derail the chief adviser's election roadmap. Two main forces are being held responsible for this sinister drive: first, the organisational networks of the fugitive leadership of the fallen Awami League regime; second, powerful individuals or groups who have mastered the art of using social media as a weapon to spread hatred and sow animosity.

In Bangladesh, Facebook and YouTube are the primary battlegrounds for such attacks, while globally, X (formerly Twitter) plays the leading role. The destructive power of social media is not unique to Bangladesh: in 2018, UN investigators concluded that these platforms helped incite ethnic hatred against the Rohingya in Myanmar, contributing to what many recognise as genocide. In 2021, a lawsuit was filed against Facebook's parent company,

Meta, for failing to prevent incitement of violence against the Rohingya.

Of course, social shaming as a trend is not new. But strikingly, those most frequently targeted are not black marketeers, corrupt bankers, or food adulterators, for instance, as one might expect. Instead, political rivals and public figures often face the brunt of orchestrated campaigns.

tolerated.

The government appears not to be paying sufficient attention. Some critics even allege that it is deliberately ignoring these provocations—an accusation many of us would rather not believe. Still, inaction is no longer an option. While no one expects an interim government to shut down the internet or suppress free speech,

Just as the Awami League had become a fascist party by often calling for the total annihilation of their political opponents, now we are witnessing the emergence of another group of people who have started to act in the same way to eliminate their rivals. If this pattern continues, Bangladesh's political crisis will deepen, leading to further violence, which may endanger the upcoming election.

In this volatile context, the government's response has been far from satisfactory. It has failed to prevent troublemakers, provocateurs, and criminals, particularly those driven by or operating on social media, although quick arrests were made in a few cases, such as the rape and murder of a child in Magura and the brutal murder in Mitford. But in most other cases, the state has appeared unprepared, reactive, or indifferent. Particularly worrying has been the misuse of religious or sectarian sentiment by influencers who use emotive language to destabilise society. Under the banner of "freedom of expression," acts of incitement to violence are being increasingly

it is internationally recognised that governments bear the primary responsibility for curbing online hatred and incitement to violence. The UN General Assembly reaffirmed this in two resolutions adopted on December 19, 2023 (A/RES/78/214 and A/RES/78/213).

Yes, regulating social media is undeniably complex, given that these platforms are run by multinational corporations. Yet governments around the world have already imposed billion-dollar fines, forcing companies to adopt stricter policies against the circulation of harmful content. So, Bangladesh must follow suit, and urgently. It must hold these companies accountable, compel them to act against hate speech or manipulated content, and ensure that the digital space does not remain a breeding ground for hatred. Ahead of the 2026 election, holding social media platforms accountable is paramount. Regulating social media is not about curbing freedom of expression; it is about safeguarding society from manipulation, division, and violence. The cultivation of hatred must not continue unchecked.

## Why Trump's Bagram rhetoric matters beyond Afghanistan



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SAIMA AFZAL

US President Donald Trump's recent statement to get control of Bagram airbase has started a new debate among global policymakers, and they are concerned whether the renewed US interest in Afghanistan, especially in the airbase, could destabilise the region and reignite the global rivalry. Trump wrote on Truth Social that "bad things" would happen if Afghanistan did not return Bagram airbase to America. He also noted the strategic importance of Bagram airbase due to its proximity to China.

For the US and Nato forces, Bagram has been the epicentre of the war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda for two decades. The airbase was built by the Soviet Union in the 1950s and played a major role in its occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s. The US controlled the airbase when it overthrew the Taliban regime in 2001; the Taliban regained its control when the US abruptly withdrew its forces from Afghanistan in 2021. Trump, at various occasions, expressed that Washington should have a small force in the airbase to keep an eye on China's activities.

However, the Afghan government has strongly rejected recent US calls to reclaim the airbase, reaffirming its

unwavering commitment to national sovereignty and urging Washington to honour its pledge against military interference in the 2020 Doha Agreement. Deputy spokesman of the Taliban, Hamdullah Fitrat, posted on his X account that in accordance with Islamic principles and grounded in its balanced, economy-oriented foreign policy, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan seeks constructive relations with all states based on mutual and shared interests.

While framed as a bilateral issue between the US and Afghanistan, control of Bagram carries profound regional and global consequences. Afghanistan risks once again becoming a battleground for power competition, undoing fragile efforts for stability and peace. Afghanistan shares borders with Tajikistan, China, Pakistan, Iran, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Iran views the US control of Bagram airbase as a natural threat. Situated in northern Afghanistan close to the Iranian border, the base would allow surveillance and possible military operations to target Iran's eastern provinces. The *Tehran Times* highlights Bagram through the lens of US-Iran geopolitical rivalry; the US return to Afghanistan is likely

to encircle Tehran and check Sino-Iran's growing influence in South and Central Asia.

Establishing a foreign military foothold risks provoking regional rivalries rather than encouraging cooperation. The struggle over Bagram is embedded within a broader triangular contest involving the US, China, and Russia, all vying for influence in Afghanistan and the Central Asian

**The struggle over Bagram is embedded within a broader triangular contest involving the US, China, and Russia, all vying for influence in Afghanistan and the Central Asian corridor.**

corridor. For Washington, Bagram symbolises a foothold from which to project power, counter China's Belt and Road Initiative, and monitor regional security threats. China sees Bagram with concern, as it would be US surveillance near Xinjiang province, which faces ethnic unrest and terrorism. Russia and China, both of which view Bagram as a strategic threat, would likely react strongly, potentially creating new rifts in global peace. Militarisation could fuel proxy conflicts, drawing multiple actors into confrontation.

The Taliban has been balancing relationships with China, Russia, the US, and regional powers such as

Iran and Pakistan. Their refusal to cede control of Bagram despite US pressure underscores this new reality. In an increasingly fragile regional order, Bagram's fate carries both practical and symbolic weight, shaping diplomacy, influencing alignments, and serving as a measure of power in and beyond Afghanistan.

For Afghanistan, hosting US troops in Bagram risks eroding sovereignty, sparking internal backlash, and destabilising governance. Such a move may also inflame anti-American sentiment in Afghanistan and the wider Muslim world, providing extremist groups with fresh agendas. Re-occupation would require massive manpower and defences, effectively resembling a new US invasion. Even with Taliban compliance, US presence would remain a magnet for ISIS-K, Al-Qaeda, and other militants, deepening insecurity. For Washington, "taking back" Bagram also risks another protracted conflict with no clear endgame, repeating past mistakes.

In the end, talk of Trump reclaiming Bagram is less a blueprint than a political gesture; a projection of American resolve at home rather than a practical plan abroad. Yet the symbolism carries weight. Bagram remains more than an abandoned airfield; it is a reminder of unfinished wars, contested sovereignties, and the fault lines of great-power rivalry. Whether it re-emerges as a military asset, a bargaining chip, or a symbol of decline, Bagram's shadow will continue to stretch far beyond Afghanistan's borders, shaping calculations in Washington, Beijing, Moscow, Tehran, and Kabul alike.

# Ending Bangladesh's environmental data drought



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MUHAMMAD IMRAN

Just last year, as a Chevening scholar pursuing an MSc in Computational and Data Journalism at Cardiff University, I worked on a fascinating project: turning Britain's live rainfall data into a self-generating instrumental soundscape. It was a creative way to engage the public with environmental information, made possible due to something remarkable. Britain has a network of 1500 rain gauge stations spread across England, Scotland and Wales that feed data every 15 minutes into a public API (think of it as a direct, automated connection to machine-readable data) that anyone can immediately access free of charge from anywhere in the world. Some of these stations date back to the 1850s, and data from the stations are used to predict rain, flood and other weather events with extreme accuracy and granularity.

As a Bangladeshi, my mind jumped home. Our nation, one of the most vulnerable countries to extreme weather events, could benefit immensely from such a system. I immediately started researching. Bangladesh has fewer than 300 such stations maintained by the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB). While its website looks nifty with maps of rainfall distribution and inundation, the data is updated only daily, and the raw data (the kind that can be analysed in a spreadsheet or programming language) is nowhere to be found on the site. Instead, that raw data is hidden behind several layers of bureaucratic, technological, and financial walls. The manual alone—which describes how to get a static snapshot of the data, not a live feed—is 14 pages long. One must go through a rigorous online application process, complete with a payment.

As one of the only few data journalists in Bangladesh, this is a wall I hit all too often. My search for rainfall data revealed not an anomaly, but the default setting for environmental information in our country, which is inaccessible. In fact, this isn't just



In Dhaka and other big cities, real-time waterlogging monitoring would help residents make smarter decisions regarding commuting.

FILE PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

anecdotal. The US-based non-profit Open Data Watch classifies Bangladesh 132nd out of 197 countries in its latest ranking. This abysmal position places us behind far less economically developed nations like Rwanda, Uganda, and even war-torn Myanmar.

This systemic data drought has far-reaching implications. As the monsoon recedes and the winter haze approaches, a familiar anxiety hovers over the country. But the haze that clouds our skies is matched by

a second, more insidious fog: the lack of data that prevents us from holding polluters and authorities accountable.

We have been promised a digital Bangladesh for more than a decade now. But the persistent gap between the promise of the digital age and the reality on the ground is more than just an inconvenience. In the UK, rainfall data may inform an art project, but in Bangladesh, it is a tool for survival. If we had

For our country, this data drought extends far beyond rainfall data. Take Dhaka's toxic air. There are government bodies that monitor this data, but do the public have access to neighbourhood-level live data that would allow a parent to decide whether it is safe for their kid with asthma to play outside? Much ink has been spilled about Dhaka's river pollution, yet do we have updated, publicly available data showing the water quality of

analytical usability. And finally, there is the lack of awareness. Even on the rare occasion that an open data platform is created, it remains largely invisible to journalists and researchers due to poor outreach, which leads to the simple yet frustrating truth that unused data is as good as no data at all.

Withholding environmental data stands in direct contradiction to several national and international legal commitments. Bangladesh's own Right to Information Act establishes a citizen's right to know. Bangladesh is also a signatory to the Rio Declaration, principle 10 of which clearly states, "each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities".

Of course, fulfilling this commitment will not be an easy task. There will be technological and financial hurdles to overcome in building a robust open data infrastructure. But the biggest hurdle to overcome is not of resources but of mindset. Our policymakers, from civil servants to ministers or advisers, must shift away from a culture of data gatekeeping to one that treats data as a public utility.

With that fresh mindset, establishing a national environmental data hub could be a crucial and practical first step towards the right direction. But this platform cannot be mere lip service; the government must ensure the data hub is regularly updated with a wide range of data, from atmospheric to biodiversity to industrial emissions, all in machine-readable format. The government should also require businesses to release data about waste discharge, emissions and overall environmental footprint. Corporate pollution must be a matter of public record.

At the same time, we journalists, researchers and civil society members should step up our efforts to invest in our own data literacy so that we can investigate, humanise and disseminate data through compelling narratives that can drive public debate and hold those in power accountable.

My experience of turning British rain into music showed me the creative potential of open data. But in Bangladesh, the potential is far more practical: the potential to build a more informed citizenry, smart cities and create more effective disaster warning systems, to name a few. The future we will build depends on the data we set free today.

# Gaza flotilla puts Israel's blockade on trial



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KHAN KHALID ADNAN

The Global Sumud Flotilla was not a photo op. It was one of the largest aid missions to attempt to break Israel's blockade of the enclave, comprising about 44 vessels carrying some 500 activists from more than 40 countries. Israel intercepted them in international waters and carried out deportations. The organisers lost their boats but gained the spotlight. The question now is what that spotlight obliges the law and the world to do.

It may be recalled that, earlier in June, there was a similar attempt when a single ship—the Madleen—was seized after a brief, well-documented effort to deliver food, medical kits and water equipment. The Sumud effort multiplied that by orders of magnitude and kept sailing despite a dragnet. Even Israel acknowledged that one ship came perilously close to Gaza's waters before being stopped. In terms of movement strategy, that is no trivial difference. It reframed a symbolic stunt into civil resistance at sea.

Israel's legal case rests on the classic law of naval blockade. The San Remo Manual permits capture of neutral vessels suspected of breaching a blockade, even on the high seas, provided conditions are met. Those conditions are not cosmetic. A blockade cannot have the starvation of civilians as its purpose, and it must allow passage of relief supplies essential for survival, subject to search and controlled distribution by a neutral body. That is black-letter law.

There is also a historical precedent that cuts both ways. The United Nations' Palmer Panel once accepted the Gaza naval blockade in principle while criticising Israel's use of force during earlier interdictions.

Nonetheless, the Palmer Panel held that a blockade is unlawful if intended solely to starve civilians or if its impact on them outweighs the military advantage gained. The UN Human Rights Council's Fact-Finding Mission took the opposite view, calling the closure a form of collective punishment. The mission concluded that while blockades may be lawful in armed conflict, the Gaza blockade of May 31, 2010, was unlawful, as it caused disproportionate harm to civilians compared with the military advantage anticipated, amounting to a humanitarian crisis. That split is exactly why the Sumud flotilla matters. It forces today's facts into contact with a doctrine written for another century.

Those facts now include binding orders and warrants that did not exist when Palmer wrote. In early 2024, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered Israel to take all measures to prevent acts prohibited under the Genocide Convention and to ensure humanitarian assistance, later requiring an immediate halt to the Rafah offensive and the keeping open of Rafah for aid. These orders are not suggestions. The UN Security Council (UNSC) demanded unhindered humanitarian access in Resolution 2720 and condemned starvation of civilians as a method of warfare in Resolution 2417, then demanded a ceasefire and removal of barriers to aid in Resolution 2728. The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry has recently concluded that Israel has indeed committed genocide in the Gaza Strip. The International Criminal Court has active arrest warrants for the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence

Minister Yoav Gallant, alleging responsibility for the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare, among other crimes. Against that canvas, stopping civilian relief convoys at sea is not a neutral enforcement choice.

But was Sumud a failure because no boats reached the beach? No. If the metric is boxes

**The United Nations' Palmer Panel once accepted the Gaza naval blockade in principle while criticising Israel's use of force during earlier interdictions. Nonetheless, the Palmer Panel held that a blockade is unlawful if intended solely to starve civilians or if its impact on them outweighs the military advantage gained.**

delivered, yes. If the metric is shifting the legal and political cost curve, the flotilla has already altered the landscape. One vessel reached Gaza waters before being stopped. Dozens approached closer than in previous missions. Hundreds of detainees included elected officials and high-profile figures whose detention triggered demonstrations and diplomatic pressure in many capitals. Every hour of that custody kept the blockade and its human consequences in the news cycle. That is a strategic outcome in itself. Amnesty International has rightly described Israel's interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla as unlawful, highlighting it as evidence of Israel's ongoing intent to deliberately starve Palestinians in Gaza.

What should states do now? Start with first principles. States whose nationals remain detained should insist that any deportations respect due process and consular access. More

broadly, member states should operationalise Resolution 2720 by insisting that cargo inspected by an impartial mechanism under UN coordination move by sea to Gaza without political veto. That is consistent with San Remo rules requiring the passage of medical supplies and essentials, and with ICJ orders demanding unimpeded assistance. Arms exports and surveillance support that enable the enforcement of a closure starving civilians should be suspended as a matter of due diligence under international humanitarian law.

How can a future mission actually reach Gaza, given Israeli surveillance and interdiction capacity? Civilian convoys alone will not break a military closure. The next increment is not stealth but legitimacy at scale. A sustainable maritime corridor requires state actors and the UN to intervene. That means flagged governmental or UN-contracted vessels, real-time inspection by an agreed neutral authority, live tracking open to all parties, pre-agreed distribution under the International Committee of the Red Cross or a comparable body, and escorts by non-belligerent navies whose rules of engagement are limited to protection of the humanitarian mission. San Remo provides for the passage of essentials under supervision. The UNSC has the mandate to backstop that with political authority and reporting. Without those guardrails, each brave civilian voyage will run into the same wall.

Moreover, what about the activists from over 40 countries? Their diversity is not window dressing. It creates diplomatic hooks in many capitals and normalises the view that starving a population is beyond the pale. It also tests the seriousness of states that claim to support the ICJ and the UNSC. Furthermore, the broader relevance of Sumud is that it calls time on legal complacency. For years, lawyers debated blockade doctrine in journals while Gaza's lights went out. Now the law is back on the water. The flotilla exposed the

distance between elegant theories and the daily reality of a population pushed to the brink. It forced a reckoning that can no longer be outsourced to footnotes. Either the international community enforces the

rules it wrote on humanitarian access and the prohibition of starvation, or it admits those rules are for other wars and other peoples. That is the stark clarity Sumud Flotilla delivered.

**গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার**  
জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়  
প্রশাসন-৪ শাখা  
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নম্বর-০৫.০০.০০০০.১১৩.২৮.০৩২.২৫-৯৫২      তারিখ: ২০ আশ্বিন ১৪৩২  
০৫ অক্টোবর ২০২৫

**অকেজো গাড়ি নিলামে বিক্রয়ের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

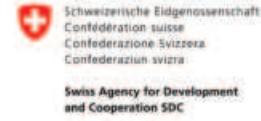
জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়ের ০৫ (পাঁচ) টি নিশান মাইক্রোবাস যার রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর যথাক্রমে ঢাকা মেট্রো-৫-৫১-৭৫৭৭,৭৫৭৮,৭৫৭৯,৭৫৮০ ও ৭৫৮১ এবং হিরো হোডা (গ্রামার) ১২৫ সিসির ০৩টি মটরসাইকেল রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর: ঢাকা মেট্রো-৫-৪৯-২৯১৭, ২৯১৮ এবং ২৯১৯ 'যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে' ভিত্তিতে নিলামে বিক্রয়ের জন্য বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিক/আগন্তী ক্রেতাদের নিকট থেকে সিলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্রের পূর্বতর্পণ শর্ত ও তথ্য নিম্নরূপ:-

ক্রমিক নং	বিষয়	বিবরণ
০১।	বিক্রয়ের শিরোনাম	জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়ের অকেজো যোথাকৃত গাড়ি নিলামে বিক্রয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি
০২।	মন্ত্রণালয়	জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়
০৩।	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম ও ঠিকানা	সে।: আলমগীর কবীর, প্রশাসন-৪ শাখা, জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয় (নতুন ভবন নং-০১, কক্ষ নং-১১০৫), বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।
০৪।	দরপত্র আহ্বানের সারক নং ও তারিখ	০৫.০০.০০০০.১১৩.২৮.০৩২.২৫-৯৫২, তারিখ: ০৫-১০-২০২৫
০৫।	দরপত্রের বিবরণ	অকেজো যোথাকৃত নিশান মাইক্রোবাস (ঢাকা মেট্রো-৫-৫১-৭৫৭৭, ৭৫৭৮, ৭৫৭৯, ৭৫৮০ ও ৭৫৮১) এবং ১২৫ সিসির ০৩টি মটরসাইকেল (ঢাকা মেট্রো-৫-৪৯-২৯১৭, ২৯১৮ এবং ২৯১৯) নিলামে বিক্রয়।
০৬।	ক্রয়/সেত্রে পদ্ধতি	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিক্রয়
০৭।	দরপত্র দাখিল/সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১৯ অক্টোবর ২০২৫ তারিখ অফিস সময় পর্যন্ত
০৮।	দরপত্র জমা দেয়ার সর্বশেষ তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান	২০ অক্টোবর ২০২৫, বেলা: ১.৩০ ঘটিকা, জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয় (নতুন ভবন নং-০১, কক্ষ নং-১১০৫), বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।
০৯।	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২০ অক্টোবর ২০২৫, বেলা: ৩.০০ ঘটিকা, জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয় (নতুন ভবন নং-০১, কক্ষ নং-১১০৫), বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।
১০।	অকেজো গাড়ি পরিদর্শনের স্থান	০৫ (পাঁচ) টি নিশান মাইক্রোবাস সরকারি যানবাহন অধিদপ্তরের গ্যারেজে এবং ১২৫ সিসির ০৩টি মটরসাইকেল বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়ের নতুন ভবন নং-০১ এর গ্যারেজে রাখা আছে। অফিস চলাকালে নিজ ব্যবস্থায় পরিদর্শন করতে হবে।
১১।	দরপত্র দাখিল/সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	প্রশাসন-৪ শাখা, জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয় (নতুন ভবন নং-০১, কক্ষ নং-১১০৫), বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।
১৩।	যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা	জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়, নতুন ভবন নং-০১, কক্ষ নং-১১০৫, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।
১৪।	ফোন নম্বর ও ইমেইল	০২-২৬৬৪৪৫০০, <a href="mailto:admins@mopa.gov.bd">admins@mopa.gov.bd</a>
১৫।	দরপত্র জামানত	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র ১০%
১৬।	যার অন্তর্ভুক্ত জামানত পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট করতে হবে	উপস্থিত, প্রশাসন-৪, জনপ্রশাসন মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা।
১৭।	কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র বাতিল অথবা গ্রহণের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।	

২। ক) দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় ব্যতীত কোন দরপত্র/দরপত্র সিডিউলের ফটোকপি প্রদানযোগ্য হবে না;  
খ) জামানত ব্যতীত কোন দরপত্র গৃহিত হবে না;  
গ) বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্তাবলী দরপত্র সিডিউলে উল্লেখ থাকবে।

**স্বাক্ষরিত**  
সে।: আলমগীর কবীর  
উপসচিব  
প্রশাসন-৪ শাখা  
ফোন: ০২-২৬৬৪৪৫০০

GD-2158



# Women at the Forefront: Shaping Climate Action in Bangladesh

A roundtable titled “Advancing Gender-Responsive Climate Action: Road to COP30” was held on September 1, 2025, at The Daily Star Centre, Dhaka. Jointly organised under the EmPower Project—led by UN Women and UNEP with support from the Governments of Sweden and New Zealand—and hosted by The Daily Star, the dialogue brought together government officials, development partners, civil society, and academics. Participants highlighted Bangladesh’s climate vulnerabilities and the disproportionate risks faced by women and girls, while emphasising their critical role in resilience and innovation. Discussions focused on shaping Bangladesh’s COP30 position, strengthening the national Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (ccGAP), and ensuring women’s voices and leadership guide climate action.



**Navanita Sinha**  
Deputy Representative, UN Women



This year marks a pivotal moment for gender equality, coinciding with the 100th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, the most comprehensive framework on women’s rights. While progress has been made over three decades, gaps remain significant. The Gender Snapshot report by UNDESA and UN Women highlights stark inequalities: eradicating extreme poverty among women could take 137 years, and 48 million more women face food insecurity than men. Women spend 250 million hours daily collecting water, and climate change could push up to 158 million women into extreme poverty by 2050. COP30 must strengthen climate finance, gender-responsive adaptation, and feminist climate justice.

**Dilruba Haider**  
Programme Specialist, UN Women (Keynote presenter)



Over the past decade, the UNFCCC has made significant strides in integrating gender into its processes. Starting with the Lima Work Programme on Gender in 2014, followed by the adoption of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) at COP25 and subsequent reviews at COP26-28, progress has been evident, though gaps remain. With COP30 in Brazil approaching, the final review of the enhanced Lima Work Programme and GAP offers a crucial opportunity to assess achievements, address shortcomings, and set clear priorities for the years ahead.

The GAP focuses on five core areas. Capacity building, knowledge, and communication aims to harmonise gender terminology, promote gender-disaggregated data, and tailor outreach to marginalised groups. Women’s leadership and participation prioritises representation, mentorship, grassroots funding, and protection for women human rights defenders. Coherence emphasises integrating gender across UNFCCC bodies and coordinating with institutions like the IPCC and CBD, although linkages with frameworks such as the Rio Conventions and Sendai Framework remain weak. Means of implementation highlights gender-responsive budgeting, financing for grassroots women and smallholder farmers,

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Strong COP30 Position:

Prepare a clear, actionable position paper to represent Bangladesh’s gender-responsive priorities.

### 2. Gender in Policy:

Embed gender-responsiveness in national climate documents, including NDCs and adaptation plans.

### 3. Data & Evidence:

Collect and use gender-disaggregated data to guide policies and monitor progress.

### 4. Women’s Leadership:

Ensure meaningful participation of women, especially from grassroots and marginalised communities.

### 5. Gender-Focused Finance:

Secure dedicated funding for gender-integrated climate projects.

### 6. Global Alliances:

Form coalitions with like-minded countries to push feminist, accountable climate policies.

### 7. Inclusive Approaches:

Address needs of women with disabilities, gender-diverse, and marginalised groups, engaging men as allies.

access to technologies, and data collection. Monitoring and reporting ensures transparency in gender composition, systematic reporting, and development of gender indicators to strengthen accountability.

Bangladesh’s Climate Change Gender Action Plan (CCGAP), developed prior to the GAP, outlines six priority areas: natural resources, livelihoods, infrastructure and settlements, women’s leadership, means of implementation, and capacity building. While aligned with the GAP, it initially lacked coherence and monitoring provisions, though frameworks are now being developed.

Challenges remain. Negotiation texts are heavily bracketed, with care work, gender-based violence, and climate finance often diluted. Reliance on voluntary reporting weakens accountability, and political sensitivities around gender constrain inclusivity. Yet opportunities exist. Bangladesh can prepare negotiators with clear priorities, form alliances with like-minded states, and push for feminist climate justice. As Dilruba Haider emphasises, there can be no climate justice without gender justice.

**Dr. Ainun Nishat**  
Advisor, C3ER - BRAC University



Recommendations on gender-responsive climate action are only meaningful if effectively implemented. Resolutions alone are insufficient unless integrated

into national policies with dedicated funding for gender-responsive projects. A landmark development on June 24, 2025, saw the International Court of Justice recognise disabilities within gender-responsiveness, broadening inclusivity and highlighting the need to address

diverse identities in climate policy. Understanding the global political context is equally critical—Bangladesh must identify supportive and non-consenting countries to ensure its COP30 delegation is fully prepared, aligned, and capable of negotiating effectively. While most ministries have developed Gender Action Plans, these risk remaining symbolic unless implementation is prioritised. Gender-responsiveness must be country-driven, embedded across all sectors, and treated as integral to development planning rather than an afterthought.

**Dr. Shamima Nasrin**  
Planning and Statistics, Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs



The Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs must be an integral part of the Gender Action Plan under discussion. While priorities have already been identified,

the key challenge lies in translating these commitments into concrete delivery, particularly in the context of gender and climate change. Gender considerations should not be viewed as a separate agenda but mainstreamed across all sectors, embedded at the heart of national planning and implementation.

**Mohammad Faruk Hossain**  
Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief



The increasing frequency of climate-induced disasters in Bangladesh affects communities unevenly, with women, girls,

persons with disabilities, and marginalised groups being the most vulnerable. Women face heavier unpaid care burdens, limited access to resources, and greater risks of gender-based violence. Gender-responsive measures have helped reduce disaster mortality disparities: from a 1:14 death ratio in 1970, to 1:5 in 1991, and now 1:1. The ministry promotes gender equality through targeted employment programmes, reserving at least 30 percent of beneficiary positions for women, often exceeding 40 percent. The cyclone preparedness programme, with 80,000 volunteers—half women—earned a UN Public Service Award in 2021. Early warning and evacuation systems prioritise women and girls, supported by a Disaster Risk Financing Strategy. Strengthening women’s leadership and ensuring accountability remain central to gender-responsive disaster management.

**Farah Kabir**  
Country Director, ActionAid



Despite some progress, major gaps persist in advancing gender-responsive climate finance. Many countries still lack comprehensive policies, while

the Gender Action Plan (GAP) faces weak accountability and inadequate funding. Similarly, the proposed \$1.3 trillion in climate finance, including \$300 billion annually lacks clear delivery mechanisms. Also, no pledges have been made for the minimum annual need of \$400 billion for the Loss and Damage.

A lack of political will continues to be a major obstacle. Women’s participation in climate negotiations is often symbolic, with most holding junior roles while decision-making power rests with men. Bangladesh must therefore advocate for emission caps, predictable climate finance, and gender justice on the global stage. Nationally, a transformative, rights-based Gender Action Plan is needed supported by cross-ministerial collaboration, gender- and age-disaggregated data, capacity building, and the amplification of grassroots women’s voices—to ensure that policies are rooted in lived realities.

**Shaheen Anam**  
Executive Director, Manusher Jonno Foundation



Global and national frameworks are important for securing commitments, but unless they are translated into concrete

policies and actions, they risk becoming meaningless. The realities of marginalised women—those who struggle daily for food, shelter, and security—often remain far removed from high-level discussions. Thirty years ago, Bangladesh returned from Beijing with renewed hope and a national action plan, but momentum was lost due to weak accountability, leaving implementation incomplete. At this critical juncture, we cannot afford to waste more time. Achieving gender justice requires first believing in gender equality as a principle.

It is also vital to recognise that women are not a homogenous group. Intersectionality must shape our strategies, particularly in addressing the needs of climate-vulnerable women. Their practical needs—such as food, accommodation, sanitation, and basic rights—must be met alongside their strategic needs, including equal access to resources and opportunities. Continuity within the bureaucracy is equally crucial so that commitments are sustained and transformed into action on the ground.

**Jesmin Nahar**  
Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change



Our gender action plans must align closely with both national and international priorities while addressing the root causes of gender inequality. These plans should

not be developed in isolation; they must actively engage all stakeholders—including government institutions, development partners, and civil society organisations—to ensure the process is inclusive and representative. Above all, accountability is crucial. Strong gender indicators and robust monitoring frameworks must guide the implementation process so that commitments do not remain on paper but are effectively translated into action.

**Md. Shamsodoha**  
Chief Executive, Centre for Participatory Research and Development



A key gap in gender equity discussions is the inclusion of gender-diverse populations, indigenous communities, and persons with disabilities, yet some countries resist incorporating this perspective at international platforms. Implementation remains critical: beyond commitments

## ROUNDTABLE

on paper, it requires finance, capacity-building, and resources for focal points to train, mobilise communities, and generate gender disaggregated, climate-specific data. Developed countries have often denied these resources, limiting real-world impact. Bangladesh must proactively mobilise international support. National governance must translate global decisions into action, with gender action plans adopting gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches, supported by strong inter-ministerial coordination, transparency, accountability, and reporting mechanisms to ensure commitments move from paper to practice.

**Sohanur Rahman**  
Youth Climate Activist



LIMA emphasises the critical role of men and boys in promoting gender equality within climate action. They are not only allies but also beneficiaries and strategic partners. Over

the past two years, the "Eco-Man" initiative engaged communities across five districts, including fishing communities in Barishal, a Dalit community in Khulna, and "tiger widows" in the Sundarbans—women unfairly blamed for their husbands' deaths. By training men and boys in gender-transformative approaches, space has been created for these women to participate fully in climate action. This initiative has mobilised men as community leaders, ensuring women's active engagement and informing Bangladesh's CCGAP framework ahead of COP30.

**Jannatul Mouwa**  
Executive Director, BINDU Nari Unnayan Sangstha



I come from Satkhira, one of Bangladesh's most climate-vulnerable regions. While speaking with a doctor in Shyamnagar, I learned that

around 600 women visit him daily with skin-related issues. During the dry season, water scarcity affects basic needs, from drinking to bathing. I am not a policymaker,

but I represent my community and aim to share how climate change impacts women's daily lives. Gender is often treated as a side issue, and women remain participants rather than decision-makers. Discussions on leadership must translate into practice, ensuring climate policies are inclusive, actionable, and reflective of women's lived realities.

**Professor Sharmin Neelormi**

Department of Economics, Jahangirnagar University



Civil society representatives have emphasised that COP30 commitments must avoid generic language and be measurable, reportable, and

verifiable. As Bangladesh expands its national preparedness to meet climate goals, it is crucial to reflect on the contributions already being made. This is particularly important as the country prepares to graduate from LDC status.

Gender Action Plans and national preparedness strategies must align with Bangladesh's own trajectory, recognising that vulnerability is dynamic and context-specific. Adopting best international practices while adapting them to national realities will be key to success.

The Green Climate Fund, for instance, already has a strong gender policy. What is needed now are more scalable, well-coordinated projects that ensure preparedness is both effective and inclusive, integrating gender considerations at every stage of planning and implementation.

**Mritunjoy Das**

Deputy Chief of Party, NABAPALLAB; Deputy Director, Humanitarian and Resilient Futures Programme, Care Bangladesh



Since 2009, gender has often been treated as an add-on in climate and development projects. While progress toward integrated, gender-responsive

initiatives exists, many plans remain only on paper. Focused projects can be designed, but their effectiveness is limited if they operate outside global frameworks.

Core funding is essential to implement strategies like CCGAP and to monitor progress effectively. Gender considerations must be central to adaptation and transition efforts, safeguarding human rights language and ensuring coherence across frameworks. Currently, CCGAP lacks provisions on "intersectionality," which must be incorporated. Post-COP30, refining CCGAP to align with national and global priorities is crucial.

**Jacob De Leon**

Second Secretary (Development), Climate Change Lead, Australian High Commission, Dhaka



Australia recognises that climate change and natural disasters disproportionately impact women and girls. We also understand that participatory

approaches can enhance ambition and deliver sustainable outcomes in environmental protection and disaster risk reduction. However, gender must not be viewed through a single lens. Intersectionality is critical: policies and programmes need to reflect the diverse experiences of women and marginalised groups. Only with a holistic approach can gender-responsive plans be implemented effectively, ensuring that no one is left behind and that climate action benefits all members of society.

**Sharmin Islam**

Gender Team Leader, UNDP Bangladesh



Acknowledging the gaps in our approach is essential. When UNDP engages with different ministries, communication challenges often

arise, particularly in integrating gender into climate issues. Strengthening this process is critical, as the government plays a central role in translating international agreements into national action. Financing gaps persist, requiring innovative solutions such as blended financing to bridge them. Data gaps also remain a challenge, and political parties must be included in discussions to ensure comprehensive

policymaking. Too often, women are seen as passive participants both nationally and internationally, resulting in limited leadership. It is vital that grassroots women, who bear the greatest climate burdens, are not only heard but actively shape policies and solutions.

**Roufa Khanam**

Assistant Director, Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER), BRAC University



We are supporting the government in developing climate policies with a focus on gender. She noted that while the UNFCCC provides clear guidelines,

gaps remain: the ministry included a gender plan in the NAP document but not in the NDC, and most gender action plans are placed in annexes, limiting visibility. Collaboration between ministries is difficult due to the absence of designated gender focal points, and the lack of union-level gender-disaggregated data hampers monitoring. She recommends including gender plans in main documents and appointing focal points in every ministry to ensure accountability and effective implementation.

**Nayoka Martinez Bäckström**

First Secretary, Environment and Climate Change; Deputy Head, Development Cooperation Section, Embassy of Sweden in Bangladesh



We must expand dialogue spaces and ensure broader representation in climate discussions. Sweden negotiates on gender issues in

close alignment with the EU, where gender remains a key agenda item, particularly as Sweden serves as co-chair of the Green Climate Fund. Integrating gender equality across climate action must continue, supported by experts and strengthened through gender-disaggregated data. Currently, gender is often mentioned only in renewable energy discussions, while areas like market regulations require additional attention. Efforts must be country-driven, with Bangladesh's CCGAP

serving as a strong example. Ministries should maintain a unified position when negotiating on multilateral platforms. As this year's delegation works to increase climate ambition, keeping gender integration central is essential for achieving meaningful and equitable outcomes.

**Md Khayrul Hasan**

Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change



Bangladesh continues to face resource constraints, although the situation has improved in recent years. While we have made significant progress

through service-oriented interventions, there is an urgent need to prioritise structural measures as well. These long-term solutions are essential to strengthen climate resilience and ensure gender-responsive outcomes. I would urge our COP30 delegation to highlight this critical issue on the international stage, advocating for support and collaboration that enables both immediate and sustainable climate action.

**Tanjim Ferdous**

In-charge, NGOs and Foreign Missions, The Daily Star (Moderator of the session)



Bangladesh is among the countries most vulnerable to climate change, with floods, cyclones, river erosion, and rising sea levels posing serious development

challenges. These impacts are not gender-neutral: women and girls face disproportionate risks, yet they are powerful agents of resilience and innovation. As COP30 approaches, Bangladesh has a unique opportunity to shape the global Gender Action Plan while strengthening its national response through CCGAP. Today's roundtable aimed to develop concrete recommendations, enhance gender-responsive national actions, and ensure women's leadership is central to climate action.

## NEWS

## She was sexually assaulted

**FROM PAGE 16**  
Sub-inspector of Sakhipur Police Station, the investigation officer of the case, told this newspaper last night that they have not yet received the post-mortem report.

Contacted, Additional Superintendent of Police (Bhedarganj Circle) Saumya Shekhar said, "She was strangled to death, and we confirmed it."

Taiba, a nursery student, was the daughter of Titu Sardar of Chhoyalkandi village under Bhedarganj upazila.

After the murder, Sardar filed a case with Sakhipur Police Station, based on which the child's aunt Ayesha Begum, 35, along with three others - Nasima Begum, 35, Asif Bepari, 20, and Shahnaz Begum, 25 - were arrested on September 28.

Police sought seven-day remands for Ayesha and Asi each, but the court granted three days. Shahnaz was arrested following information gathered during interrogation.

Ayesha gave a confessional statement before the Chief Judicial Magistrate on the day of her arrest.

Investigators said Ayesha killed the child over a long-standing family feud and dumped the body in the septic tank to hide the crime.

All four of the arrestees are currently in jail.

## ICT to probe AL for crimes against humanity

**FROM PAGE 16**  
and affiliated political organisations of killing, injuring and otherwise repressing thousands of protesters during last year's July uprising.

Responding to a question from journalists regarding recent remarks by Law Adviser Asif Nazrul, Tajul said a political party named NDM (Nationalist Democratic Movement) had earlier lodged a formal complaint accusing the Awami League as a party of committing crimes against humanity.

## Road of endless misery

**FROM PAGE 16**  
are now single-lane, causing massive tailbacks, he said.

It sometimes takes 14-15 hours to reach Sunamganj via Sylhet, even though people use an alternative route from Ghorashal to avoid the Kachpur-Gausia stretch, said Mohammad Abul Khaer, a veteran driver with Ena Paribahan.

An 11-kilometre stretch from Ashuganj to Sarail has become the epicentre of traffic woes.

Though part of the Dhaka Sylhet highway, it falls under a separate initiative: the 50.58-kilometre Ashuganj Riverport-Akhaura Landport Four-Lane Highway Development Project.

Launched in 2017 with a revised budget of Tk 5,791 crore from India's second Line of Credit (LOC-II), the project was awarded to Alcons Infrastructure of India.

However, progress stalled after the Awami League government fell on August 5 last year and the Indian contractors and workers left due to security concerns.

"Based on that complaint, we have initiated the process of investigation. So, you can say that we are now moving to start an investigation against Awami League as an organisation under charges of crimes against humanity," he said.

While speaking at an event last week, the law adviser said the ICT prosecution team is preparing to try the Awami League as an organisation, and as such, the ban on Awami League's political activities is unlikely to be withdrawn anytime soon.

Tajul noted that the investigation is currently at the verification stage.

"Yes, a complaint has been filed. We are seriously scrutinising it, and a formal investigation will begin very soon."

He also mentioned that once the investigation starts in full swing, the prosecution will be able to provide a clearer picture of how far the process of holding the Awami League accountable as a party has advanced.

Responding to another query, Tajul said, "Trials in

This left the Ashuganj-Sarail section in ruins.

"The worst suffering for commuters is at Ashuganj and Sarail," said AKM Fazlul Karim, additional chief engineer of RHD.

While work on the section is expected to resume within months with the return of Indian contractors, the rest of the highway remains in shambles in the absence of basic maintenance for years.

"We cannot do much maintenance as we are low on funds and the old road must be broken up," said the project director Karim.

He said he has requested repair funds from the higher authorities.

The dilapidated condition has forced commuters to opt for air or rail travel to save time.

week, said Kamrul Islam, general manager for public relations.

Novoair has a 100 percent load factor on their flights, said Sohail Majid, the airline's director of marketing and sales.

Both of Air Astra's daily flights tend to be fully booked, said Sakib Hasan Shovo, the airline's deputy manager for public relations.

Railways are also under pressure.

"Thousands are traveling by train due to the highway's condition - many are traveling without tickets, and we are allowing it on humanitarian grounds," said Md Shuboktagin, general manager (east) of Bangladesh Railway.

Mohiuddin Arif, divisional railway manager, said they have been facing severe passenger pressure since July.

"Even after adding carriages and issuing standing tickets, we are struggling to meet demand," he added.

Rashidul Hasan and Mashuk Hridoy contributed to the report

## 9 dead

**FROM PAGE 16**  
secondary healthcare facilities to build public trust. "Right now, people feel they don't get proper care there, so they rush to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. But Dhaka Medical cannot take everyone. Overcrowding makes proper clinical care almost impossible."

The health expert emphasised that decentralising both clinical and diagnostic services is urgent. "People should have access to dengue tests at little or no cost. This will reduce the burden of patients on major hospitals."

Prof Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist at Jahangirnagar University, said, "Dengue comes in waves. When mosquito density is high, it becomes very difficult to stop the spread of dengue. Our forecasting model shows that cases will peak in October, start to decline in November, but continue significantly until January."

He stressed that while city corporations must intensify source reduction, breeding-site management, hotspot control, and other measures, everyone must also work from their own position.

## Trusting many of the advisers

**FROM PAGE 16**  
He also alleged that many advisers have "secured their own futures" and "betrayed the mass uprising". He warned that he would reveal the advisers' names when the time comes.

"They [advisers] felt that they could not stay in power or run the government without the support of

political parties. It is also true that the political parties created various obstacles [to the advisers]," Nahid said during the interview.

In response to a question about whether student leaders should have taken the role of advisers, Nahid said. "If the force of the uprising were not in this interim government, it would not have lasted even

three months."

Nahid was a key organiser of Students Against Discrimination that spearheaded the uprising, leading to the ouster of the Awami League regime last year. Nahid, who resigned from the interim government on February 25 this year, launched NCP three days later.



**বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক**  
হিউম্যান রিসোর্সেস ডিপার্টমেন্ট-২  
(পারফরমেন্স অ্যান্ড ডিসিপ্লিন উইথ)  
প্রধান কার্যালয়  
ঢাকা

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের ওয়েবসাইটঃ [www.bb.org.bd](http://www.bb.org.bd)

**চূড়ান্ত কারণ দর্শানোর নোটিশ**

আপনি জনাব আজিম চৌধুরী (আইডি নম্বরঃ ১৯১০৯২৩৫), সহকারী পরিচালক (ক্যাশ), বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক, খুলনা গত ২৯.০৯.২০২৪ তারিখ হতে অননুমোদিতভাবে অফিসে অনুপস্থিত আছেন। আপনার গ্রুপ অননুমোদিতভাবে অফিসে অনুপস্থিতি Bangladesh Bank Staff Regulations, 2003 এর 19(2) ধারায় বর্ণিত বিধানাবলীর পরিপন্থী এবং একই রেগুলেশনের 44(1) ধারার আওতায় শাস্তিযোগ্য অপরাধ হিসেবে বিবেচ্য বিধায় এ ডিপার্টমেন্টের ২২.০১.২০২৫ তারিখের সূত্র নম্বর এইচআরডি-২(পিডি) ৭ (পিএফ-৯২৩৫)/২০২৫-৭৪০ এর মাধ্যমে আপনার বিরুদ্ধে অভিযোগনামা (চার্জশীট) প্রণয়ন করা হয়। এ প্রেক্ষিতে আপনার উপর কেন্দ্র উপরোক্ত শাস্তি আরোপ করা হবে না সে বিষয়ে আপনার বক্তব্য পত্রের তারিখ হতে ০৭ (সাত) দিনের মধ্যে এ ডিপার্টমেন্টে দাখিল করার নির্দেশ দিয়ে ২৯.০৬.২০২৫ তারিখে কেফিয়ত (দ্বিতীয় শো-কন্স) অঙ্গের নোটিশ আপনার বর্তমান ও স্থায়ী ঠিকানায় প্রেরণ করা হলেও অদ্যাবধি আপনি কোনো ধরনের যোগাযোগ করেননি এবং উক্ত নোটিশের কোনো জবাব প্রদান করেননি।

এমতাবস্থায়, এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের ০৭ (সাত) দিনের মধ্যে অফিসে হাজির হয়ে কারণ দর্শানো নোটিশের (কেফিয়ত দ্বিতীয় শো-কন্স) জবাব প্রদানের জন্য আপনাকে চূড়ান্ত নির্দেশ দেয়া যাচ্ছে। এ নির্দেশ পালনে ব্যর্থ হলে আপনার সাথে আর কোনো প্রকার যোগাযোগ ব্যতিরেকেই Bangladesh Bank Staff Regulations, 2003 এর 44(1)(g) ধারা মোতাবেক আপনাকে চাকরিচ্যুত (Removal from service) করা হবে।

ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২৫-২৬৬১  
তারিখঃ ৩০/০৯/২০২৫

নাসিমা সুলতানা  
পরিচালক (এইচআরডি-২)  
হিউম্যান রিসোর্সেস ডিপার্টমেন্ট-২  
বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক  
প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা  
ফোনঃ ৯৫৩০২০৮  
Email: [nasima.sultana@bb.org.bd](mailto:nasima.sultana@bb.org.bd)

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা শেখে হারানোর শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

GD-2155



Table with columns: সন্দের বিবরণ (Account Name), ব্যাংক হিসাবের বিবরণ (Account Details), স্থিতির তারিখ (Date), স্থিতির পরিমাণ (Balance). Lists various bank accounts and their balances.

এছাড়া যে সব বিক্রেতা/ইউজার, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক এবং বণিক ব্যাংকের ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালক/ব্যবস্থাপক কে এই মর্মে আওতা প্রদান করা হল যে, উক্ত হিসাব সমূহের উপর জবরদখল (Freezing) আদেশ কার্যকর হওয়া পর্যন্ত জবরদখল (Freeze) হিসাব সমূহে অন্য কারা যাকে কিছু কোন অবস্থাতেই উত্তোলন করা যাবে না।

পারামিশন পিটিশন নং-৫৮৭/২০২৫

আবেদনের নাম: মাননীয় মহানগর সিনিয়র পেশাদার জজ আদালত, ঢাকা।
সূত্র: ০১) পারামিশন পিটিশন নং-৫৮৭/২০২৫।
আবেদন নম্বর: ০১, তারিখ: ০২/০৮/২০২৫।
ব্যাখ্যা: জনাব বিচারিক আদালত, উপস্থাপিত প্রতিকার ও অনুরোধকারী কর্তৃক, দুইটি দমন কামিশন, প্রথম কার্যদিবস, ঢাকা।

Table with columns: SI, Bank Name, Branch Name, A/C Number, Account title, A/C type, Total Debit, Total Credit, Balance. Lists bank transactions and balances for various branches like PUBLI BANK, AIBPLC, etc.

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পারামিশন পিটিশন নং-৫৮৭/২০২৫

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আবেদন নম্বর: ০১, তারিখ: ০২/০৮/২০২৫।
ব্যাখ্যা: জনাব বিচারিক আদালত, উপস্থাপিত প্রতিকার ও অনুরোধকারী কর্তৃক, দুইটি দমন কামিশন, প্রথম কার্যদিবস, ঢাকা।

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জনাব হাসান ভাভের ইমারত ব্রী জনাব নিলামত চিহ্নিত প্রকল্পের আবেদন

Table with columns: সন্দের বিবরণ/সংস্থান (Account Name), ব্যাংক হিসাবের বিবরণ (Account Details), স্থিতির তারিখ (Date), স্থিতির পরিমাণ (Balance). Lists bank transactions and balances for various branches like PUBLI BANK, AIBPLC, etc.

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দুসক, সজেকা, ঢাকা-১ এর মামলা নং-১১৯(১১)২০২৪ জখির নং- ১৬৬/২০২৪।

আবেদনের নাম: বিজ মহানগর সিনিয়র পেশাদার জজ আদালত, ঢাকা।
সূত্র: ০১) দুসক, সজেকা, ঢাকা-১ এর মামলা নং-১১৯(১১)২০২৪ করা জিয়ার নং-১৬৬/২০২৪।
আবেদন নম্বর: ০১, তারিখ: ১৮/০৮/২০২৪।
ব্যাখ্যা: জনাব বিচারিক আদালত, উপস্থাপিত প্রতিকার ও অনুরোধকারী কর্তৃক, দুইটি দমন কামিশন, প্রথম কার্যদিবস, ঢাকা।

আবেদনের নাম: মাননীয় মহানগর সিনিয়র পেশাদার জজ আদালত, ঢাকা।
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আবেদন নম্বর: ০১, তারিখ: ১৮/০৮/২০২৪।
ব্যাখ্যা: জনাব বিচারিক আদালত, উপস্থাপিত প্রতিকার ও অনুরোধকারী কর্তৃক, দুইটি দমন কামিশন, প্রথম কার্যদিবস, ঢাকা।

Table with columns: ক্র.সং, ডায়েরি নম্বর, শাখার নাম, একাউন্ট নাম, একাউন্ট নম্বর, হিসাবের ধরণ ও বৈশিষ্ট্য, সর্বশেষ স্থিতি. Lists court cases and account details.





## Rallies demand Nov start of Teesta master plan

### Memorandum submitted to CA through DCs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The "Teesta River Protection Movement" has called on the government to start work on the long-awaited 'Teesta Master Plan' by November under state funding, ahead of the national election next year.

The platform made the call yesterday during simultaneous processions held in five Teesta basin districts: Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Rangpur, Nilphamari, and Gaibandha.

From the processions, leaders and supporters of the platform submitted memorandums to the respective deputy commissioners in the districts to forward to the chief adviser.

The memorandum stated that the Teesta River is vital for the lives and livelihoods of people in northern Bangladesh. But due to India's unilateral withdrawal of water, the river has turned into a dying channel. It urged implementation of the Teesta Master Plan to safeguard agriculture, the economy, and the environment of the region.

## Ex-MP Mozammel among nine AL leaders held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives arrested nine leaders and activists of the Awami League and its affiliated organisations, including former lawmaker BM Mozammel Haque, during drives in different areas of Dhaka from Saturday evening to yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a team from the Detective Branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrested Mozammel around 2:45pm, said Muhammad Talebur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media and public relations) of the DMP.

Mozammel, organising secretary of AL and former lawmaker from the Shariatpur-1 constituency, is accused in eight cases, including a murder case related to the July uprising.

According to a DMP press statement, the other arrestees are Enamul Kabir Emon, 51, member of the AL central committee; Emdadul Haque, 55, office secretary of the Dhaka south unit AL; Mosharrif Hossain, 38, vice-president of Banani Thana Tati League; Kazi Miraz Hossain Moni, 30, joint general secretary of BCL's Dhaka Metropolitan south unit; Belal Ahmed Nahian alias Biplab, 32; Shaharur Alam Sabu, 53, president of Joypurhat Amdai Union AL; Nure Alam Liton, 37, organising secretary of Motijheel Thana Jubo League; and Aminul Haque Murad, 45, vice-president of Chawkbaraz unit AL.

## One dies in Karnaphuli Tunnel bus accident

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,  
Ctg

One of the passengers injured in Saturday's bus accident inside the Karnaphuli Tunnel died at Chattogram's National Hospital yesterday.

The victim, 47-year-old Faisal from the port city's Nizam Market area, succumbed to his injuries around 2:00am, said family members.

His wife, 31-year-old Rani Akhter, who was also injured in the accident, remains hospitalised.

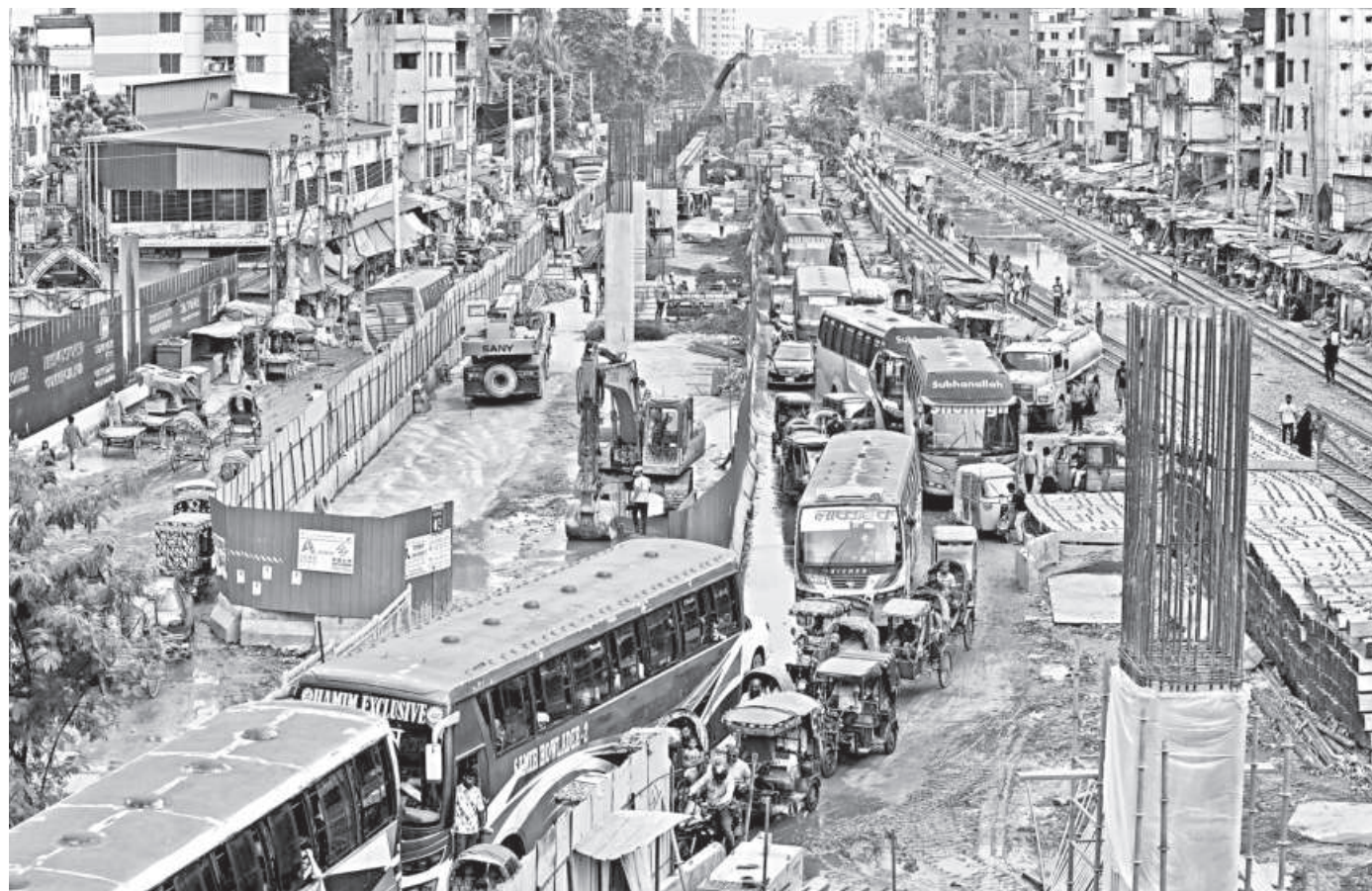
The accident occurred around 1:00pm when the bus driver, reportedly speeding, lost control of the steering, causing the vehicle to overturn inside the tunnel while travelling from the Patenga end towards Anwara.

Around 30 passengers were injured, six of them critically.



Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-45	12-45	4-15	5-53	7-30
JAMAT 5-20	1-15	4-30	5-56	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Scores of passenger buses, cars, and CNG-run autorickshaws remain stuck on a section of the road next to the under-construction Dhaka Elevated Expressway yesterday. Due to the construction work from Malibagh intersection to Khilgaon, the roadway has narrowed, causing severe traffic congestion in the area.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Lightning kills eight in four districts

STAR REPORT

At least eight people were killed in lightning strikes in four districts yesterday.

Of them, three died in Cumilla's Homna upazila, police said.

Homna Police Station Officer-in-Charge Rafiqul Islam said the incident occurred around 2:45pm in Ghagutia union.

Locals said several people were waiting for the Uzanchar-Ghagutia ferry when heavy rain began. Moments later, lightning struck the area, killing two women and one man on the spot.

The victims are Jakia Begum, 35, and Momtaz Begum, 30, of Nala Dakshin village, and an unidentified man in his forties from Khode Daudpur village. Several others were injured.

Homna Police Sub-inspector Jibon Biswas said police recovered the bodies and handed them over to the families.

Homna UNO Khemalika Chakma said the local administration is assisting the victims' families with burial arrangements.

In Kurigram, two people were killed in lightning strikes in Nageshwari upazila.

The victims are Babu Miah, 8, son of Noor Hossain of Kalikapur village, and Sahibur Rahman, 45, of Char Luchni village.

Sahibur was struck while cutting grass near his home around 10:00am, and Bablu was hit by lightning while returning home from madrasa around noon, said Nageshwari Police Station Officer-in-Charge Rezaul Karim, quoting locals.

In Jhenaidah, two farmers were killed in separate lightning strikes.

The deceased are Shimul Biswas, 38, of Armukhi village, and Hurmat Ali, 55, of

Shekhra village.

Imran Zakaria, additional superintendent of police in Jhenaidah, confirmed the deaths.

In Narayanganj, a 13-year-old boy died after being struck by lightning in Araihaaz upazila.

The victim, Md Wasim, son of Dila Mia of Ulukandi village, was a fifth grader at a local primary school.



In Cumilla several people were waiting for the Uzanchar-Ghagutia ferry when heavy rain began. Moments later, lightning struck the area, killing two women and one man on the spot.

His uncle Jahirul Islam said Wasim was inside a cowshed during the rain and was struck by lightning as he stepped outside.

Araihaaz Police Station Officer-in-Charge Khondoker Nasir Uddin confirmed the death.

[Our correspondents from Cumilla, Lalmonirhat, Narayanganj, and a correspondent from Jhenaidah contributed to this report.]

## Ensure judicial probe into Khagrachhari violence

Demands PCJSS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 22 communal attacks have taken place in the CHT since the signing of the 1997 Peace Accord, yet almost none of the perpetrators have been held accountable, according to a report released by the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) yesterday.

The report said the situation worsened following two recent attacks in Khagrachhari and Guimara on September 27 and 28, which left three indigenous youths dead and many injured.

The violence erupted after student groups organised protests demanding justice for the alleged gang rape of a 12-year-old Marma schoolgirl, said the report.

The report cited eyewitnesses, who claimed that some bodies were left inside burning houses and that rescue efforts were obstructed.

It also accused law enforcement agencies of failing to intervene, saying they either remained inactive or watched as the violence unfolded, continuing a pattern of institutional negligence.

The organisation demanded a judicial inquiry commission to investigate the recent incident, and full compensation and rehabilitation for affected families.

It also called for full implementation of the CHT Peace Accord.

## Hanif charged

FROM PAGE 3

reporters that three specific charges have been brought against Hanif, a former lawmaker from Kushtia-3, including allegations of command responsibility.

The prosecution told the three-member tribunal, headed by Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury, that it has sufficient evidence against the accused and will submit all relevant documents in support of the charges.

Meanwhile, the ICT-1 yesterday sent former AL lawmaker Jannat Ara Henry and two other party leaders to jail in a case filed over the killing of three protesters in Sirajganj during the uprising.

Besides, the tribunal granted a three-month extension to the prosecution for submitting the investigation report against Maj Gen (forcibly ret'd) Ziaul Ahsan in a case filed over enforced disappearances committed during the 15-year rule of the AL government.

## NSU student

FROM PAGE 3

General Allama Sajedur Rahman in a joint statement condemned the act of disrespecting the Quran and urged the interim government to ensure exemplary punishment.

The Hafazat-e-Islam leaders also threatened to launch a long march to Dhaka if exemplary punishment is not ensured.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Department of Environment

Paribesh Bhaban, E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

### Request for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Hiring Consultancy Firm

Memo No. 22.02.0000.065.14.071.24-233

Date: 5 October 2025

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
2.	Agency	Department of Environment (DoE)
3.	Procuring entity name	Project Director, Formulation of a National Framework for Loss and Damage Assessment, Accessing International Climate Finance and Assessment of Internal Migration/Displacement in the Country/Project
4.	Procuring entity code	Not applicable
5.	Procuring entity district	Dhaka
6.	Invitation of Interest for Selection of	Consultancy Services for Preparing Two Full-Sized Project Proposals for Green Climate Fund (GCF)
7.	Eoi Ref No.	Memo No. 22.02.0000.065.14.071.24-233
8.	Date	5 October 2025
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>		
9.	Procurement method	Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS)
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>		
10.	Budget and source of funds	Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund
11.	Development partner	N/A
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>		
12.	Project/programme code	N/A
13.	Project/programme name	Formulation of a National Framework for Loss and Damage Assessment, Accessing International Climate Finance and Assessment of Internal Migration/Displacement in the Country
14.	EOI closing date and time	26 October 2025, 4:00pm (BST)
<b>INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT</b>		
15.	Brief description of the assignment	A consultancy firm will be hired to develop two full-sized Green Climate Fund (GCF) project proposals for Bangladesh, focusing on loss and damage, climate change adaptation, and resilience. It includes project identification, feasibility studies, safeguard, M&E frameworks, and resource mobilization. The consultancy firm will work closely with the DoE to ensure alignment with national priorities, stakeholder needs, and GCF investment criteria for securing project approval.
16.	Experiences, resources & delivery capacity required	The firm must have proven experience in developing GCF or similar climate finance proposals, with expertise in climate vulnerability assessment, climate adaptation and resilience. A multidisciplinary team is required to conduct feasibility studies, stakeholder engagement, and prepare GCF-compliant documents. Adequate technical, analytical, and institutional capacity to coordinate with government and partners, ensure quality deliverables, and provide post-submission support is essential.
17.	Other details of application	• Expression of Interest application shall be submitted by 26 October 2025, by 4:00pm in a sealed envelope delivered to "Project Director, Department of Environment, Paribesh Bhaban (9th Floor), E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207" and be marked "EOI for Preparing Two Full-Sized Project Proposals for Green Climate Fund (GCF)". The Consultancy firm will be selected in accordance with Public Procurement Rules 2025. • The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any/all Expression of Interest. • Details Terms of Reference (ToR) is available in the Project Office/DoE.
18.	Association with foreign firm is	Not Required
<b>PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS</b>		
19.	Name of official inviting EOI	Md. Mahmud Hossain
20.	Designation of official inviting EOI	Deputy Director (Climate Change), Department of Environment and Project Director
21.	Address of official inviting EOI	Department of Environment (DoE), Paribesh Bhaban (9th Floor), E-16, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
22.	Contact details of official inviting EOI	Phone: +88-02-22212822, Email: mamnoon.us@gmail.com

For further information and clarification, the intending applicant may contact the address given below during office hours (10:00am to 4:00pm).

GD-2157

Md. Mahmud Hossain  
Deputy Director (Climate Change)  
Project Director, Loss & Damage Project  
Department of Environment

## Sudden storms leave 4 hurt, 1,500 houses damaged in 3 districts



STAR REPORT

At least four people were injured and over 1,500 houses, mostly tin-sheds, were damaged by sudden storms in three northern districts yesterday.

Many trees were uprooted and vast tracts of Aman paddy fields were damaged, according to local administration officials and representatives of local government bodies.

In Rangpur's Gangachara upazila, the storm swept through 46 villages around 6:00am. Mafi Hossain, 9, was injured when a partially brick-built house collapsed in Hajirhat village. He was admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, said his father, Nazmul Amin.

Ashraf Ali, chairman of Nohali Union Parishad, said residents in shoal areas were the worst affected.

Gangachara UNO Mahmud Hasan Mridha said around 1,200 houses were damaged in the storm. The administration is preparing a list of affected families for relief distribution.

In Thakurgaon, around 250 to 300 houses were damaged and many trees uprooted in several villages under Baliadangi upazila as a storm, accompanied by rain, struck around 5:00am.

"The local administration is assessing the extent of the damage and preparing a list of affected families to provide assistance," said UNO Md Mofijur Rahman.

In Lalmonirhat, a sudden storm hit Totmari union under Kaliganj upazila around noon, damaging more than 100 houses, said local union parishad chairman Farhad Hossain.

At least three people were injured, he said.

Kaliganj UNO Jakiya Sultana said the administration is preparing a list of affected families to distribute relief materials.

[Our correspondents from Lalmonirhat and Thakurgaon contributed to this report.]

# DHAKA, THE CITY OF ELEPHANTS

## The lost history of Pilkhana's elephant depot



Elephants on the march, Dhaka, 1904.  
PHOTO: FRITZ KAPP

To the British authorities of the nineteenth century, 'hunting' was more than sport—it was prestige and power. Among the big game, elephants stood as the ultimate prize, pursued through elaborate expeditions. In colonial records, elephants were "hunted," rarely "shot"—for hunting implied a ritual of mastery, where the elephant was subdued through courage and strategy rather than killed outright.

Mahouts training elephants at Pilkhana, 1880.



### HOSSAIN MUHAMMED ZAKI

What is today a bustling capital once stood on the brink of desolation. In the seventeenth century, Dhaka was among the most prosperous cities of eastern India, home to nearly nine lakh people. But after the capital shifted to Murshidabad in 1704, famine, drought, epidemics, and neglect steadily eroded its grandeur. By 1872, only sixty-nine thousand inhabitants remained. Once-vibrant quarters like Narinda, Wari, and Azimpur lay abandoned, while disease and decay haunted its canals and cantonments. Amid this decline, a curious revival took shape—the Hathi Kheda enterprise, the organised capture of elephants, which briefly restored Dhaka's fading significance.

**Hunting the elephant, not shooting**  
To the British authorities of the nineteenth century, 'hunting' was more than sport—it was prestige and power. Among the big game, elephants stood as the ultimate prize, pursued through elaborate expeditions. In colonial records, elephants were "hunted," rarely "shot"—for hunting implied a ritual of mastery, where the elephant was subdued through courage and strategy rather than killed outright.

**Origin of the kheda system**  
In the 1770s, the East India Company renewed its attention to kheda expeditions. The objective was to replace bullock carts in military transport with the stronger and more versatile elephant, which could be employed in both logistical and combat operations. Although the use of firearms, cannons, and gunpowder was rapidly expanding during this time, the elephant retained strategic importance across the subcontinent—especially in frontier expansion and expeditions through difficult terrain. Under such circumstances, bringing the vast and free-ranging elephant population under the exclusive control of the colonial state became an urgent necessity.

The British learnt much from the Mughals in matters of elephant management. The refined systems of training and upkeep developed during the Mughal period for warfare and ceremonial use influenced both regional kingdoms and the later British administration. Among the traditional methods of elephant capture were the pit trap, the noose or mela shikar, and the wooden stockade known as the kheda. Under British rule, these methods were re-evaluated. For safety and humanitarian reasons, the pit trap was completely banned in territories under direct British administration, though it continued in some princely states. Gradually, mela shikar too was phased out. In the British view, the kheda was the most controlled, effective, and comparatively humane method.

### The Dhaka kheda office and life at Pilkhana

In 1810, the British established the Military Commissariat in Bengal—a department responsible for the supply of military

provisions. One of its key functions was the procurement and maintenance of elephants for the army. From this necessity emerged the Dhaka Kheda Office. Geographically, Dhaka was ideally situated—only about two hundred miles away from the forested hills of Chittagong, Sylhet, Tripura, Cachar, and Assam, regions teeming with wild elephants. Moreover, as a centre of the elephant trade, Dhaka offered cost-effective and efficient logistical advantages for conducting kheda operations.

Additionally, there had long been an international demand for ivory artefacts, and during the colonial period this demand expanded further, boosting Dhaka's ivory industry.

Under the Kheda Office, the captured elephants were supervised by a European superintendent, under whom worked local contractors and skilled kheda workers. Every year, the kheda expeditions began in December and continued for three to four months. By May, the captured elephants were brought to the Dhaka depot. There, with the assistance of kunki (female) elephants, the wild ones were trained until November. Upon completion of their training, they were sent to the military depot at Barrackpore, from where they were distributed to various commissariat stations across the country.

The kheda expeditions for capturing elephants were extremely labour-intensive and expensive. Usually, in November, a reconnaissance team known as the Panjali was sent out first to locate the habitats and migration routes of wild elephants during winter. This group comprised about sixteen men, assisted by another eight labourers responsible for carrying their food and equipment. Once a potential hunting ground was identified, around three hundred garua (field hands) were dispatched to encircle the entire area. Among them were twelve sardars (leaders), while each group of twenty-five garua worked under the supervision of a dafadar and a barkandaz (guard). The entire expedition was led by a superintendent. Only the jamadar and a few senior officials were employed on a permanent basis, while coolies and labourers were hired on short-term contracts, typically for two or three months each year as needed. The work involved considerable risk—many participants lost their lives during the expeditions. Yet, there was never any shortage of volunteers.

Because of the high costs involved, the Dhaka Kheda Office had not become profitable even by the late 1850s. Eventually, in 1862, the government decided to suspend the official kheda operations temporarily in order to reduce expenses. However, private initiatives failed to capture elephants in sufficient numbers, prompting the authorities to reinstate the government-run kheda in Dhaka in 1865. Valuable accounts of this period's elephant-management system are found in Principal Heads of the History and Statistics of the Dacca Division (1868) by Arthur Lloyd Clay, the then Joint Collector of Dhaka. He wrote that, at the time, there were no elephants

under government ownership in Dhaka city. However, thirty-four elephants were registered under the names of local landlords and European planters within the jurisdiction of the Sadar police station. Although the government elephant depot had remained unused for a long time, efforts were later made to revive it.

### Professionalising the kheda department

It was G. P. Sanderson who gave the Dhaka kheda office a professional shape. In September 1875, he was appointed Superintendent of the Dhaka kheda department. Residing in Dhaka for a long period, he restructured the entire system through modern hunting techniques, efficient administrative procedures, and a well-organised commercial framework. The economic aspects of the kheda operations under his supervision are reflected in the advertisements for elephant sales published in contemporary newspapers. For instance, The Hindoo Patriot of 15

and supplied it to the Kheda Office.

In his autobiography *Thirteen Years among the Wild Beasts of India*, Sanderson painted a vivid picture of Pilkhana. According to his description, the depot covered nearly one-quarter of a square mile and was surrounded by a moat. Inside, rows of brick-paved stalls with wooden posts were used for tethering elephants. There were long sheds to provide shade during the summer heat, a separate hospital for sick elephants, storerooms for food and equipment, and a warehouse for howdahs and ropes. Even a local physician was employed to attend to the mahouts. At that time, Dhaka was the principal centre in Bengal for the supply of elephants used in government service.

### Elephants and the city

However, the movement of elephants within the city posed significant challenges for municipal authorities. Just before the formation of the Dhaka Municipality in 1864, members of the

customary. According to Sanderson, the Superintendent of the Dhaka Kheda Office, the mahouts, through long experience, became remarkably skilled in determining the exact age of an elephant. Trained elephants were said to grow so fond of their mahouts that their attachment often surpassed their loyalty to the owner; even after years of separation, they could recognise their mahout instantly.

The colonial-era book *Oriental Field Sports* by Williamson also noted the extraordinary proficiency of native mahouts in the care and treatment of elephants. For instance, when elephants suffered from intestinal worms, they would feed them water mixed with rock salt; and when the animals' feet became sore from walking on dry or stony terrain, they would treat them with herbal remedies. The mahouts' residential quarters in Dhaka too earned a separate identity—the area where they lived became widely known among townspeople as Mahuttuli.

### From private enterprise to state control

Before 1857, the army's need for elephants was largely met by private owners. In the early nineteenth century, although the Dhaka administration participated in kheda operations, the work was entirely dependent on private initiative. However, by the mid-century, the British government brought these activities under state control, establishing a monopoly over elephant hunting. The Forest Act of 1878 and the Elephant Preservation Act of 1879 placed wild animals—especially elephants—under the British government's strategic control and usage. Yet debates surrounding the government's exclusive right to capture elephants on public land had begun much earlier, as far back as 1851.

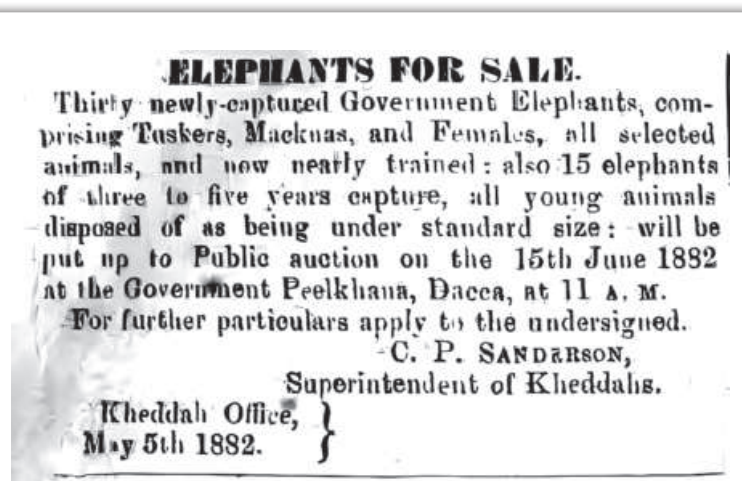
During the 1860s, the British established monopoly control over the elephant trade across India, ensuring hunting rights through a system of government khedas and leases. With the rapid decline in the elephant population and their growing nuisance in rural areas, an effective conservation policy was framed under Sanderson's leadership. Its aim was to meet the military and strategic requirements of the state while safeguarding the lives and property of local inhabitants. Similar policies were also introduced in southern India to prevent indiscriminate hunting, creating a new framework that combined conservation and control.

Alongside government-run khedas, hunting rights in certain forests were leased out, on the condition that a specific portion of the captured elephants—usually those above a certain height—had to be handed over to the state. In practice, however, the lessees often violated these terms, resulting in revenue loss for the government, and penalties were seldom enforced effectively. This irregularity weakened administrative control on one hand, while on the other, it created a constant tension between central directives and local autonomy.

Landlords, meanwhile, considered government interference oppressive, though they did experience some relief as wild elephant incursions diminished. Nonetheless, many landlords took the issue of hunting rights to court. In the Garo Hills, landlords' privileges of hunting and collecting revenue were revoked, and obtaining a licence became mandatory for any hunting expedition.

Through the intertwined systems of hunting and forestry management, the colonial administration built a strategic bridge for the control of natural resources. In this process emerged a dual framework of conservation and exploitation—where the elephant became an inseparable component of political, economic, and military strategy. The so-called "preservation laws" served as the legal foundation of this control, enabling the British to consolidate their monopoly over elephant hunting, trade, and training.

Hossain Muhammed Zaki is a Researcher. He can be contacted at [zakimmed@gmail.com](mailto:zakimmed@gmail.com). The article is translated by Samia Huda.



Government notice published in *The Hindoo Patriot*, 15 May 1882, announcing a public auction at Dhaka's Pilkhana for thirty newly captured elephants.



Map of Dhaka, 1859 – Depicting Pilkhana and the Government Elephant Stables.

May 1882 carried a government notice for the sale of elephants, signed by Sanderson himself. Even earlier, on 31 March 1870, Amrita Bazar Patrika had printed a similar advertisement announcing the sale of government elephants in Dhaka—evidence of the continuity of this commercial enterprise.

### Pilkhana: The elephant depot of Dhaka

The Kheda Office was commonly known as Pilkhana (literally "elephant enclosure"). In his book *Glimpses of Old Dhaka*, S. M. Taifoor recounts that at one time Pilkhana was an open field on the western edge of the city, close to the river—a site later used as the headquarters of the East Pakistan Rifles. During the nineteenth century, private landlords could also keep their elephants there by paying a prescribed fee. As Pilkhana remained under the direct control of the central government of India, its European supervisors often showed reluctance to follow the orders of the provincial administration.

The depot's proximity to the river made Pilkhana an ideal site for elephants. Bathing and watering them was convenient, and fodder could easily be delivered by boat. The collection of grass for elephant feed developed into a distinct business. Local boatmen and grass-cutters, after paying rent and obtaining permission from landlords, harvested grass from the marshlands

Dhaka Committee brought this issue to the attention of the visiting Lieutenant-Governor, describing it as a major public nuisance—an incident recorded in *A City and Its Civic Body*, edited by Azimushshan Haidar.

The present-day Elephant Road was originally the main route for elephant processions. In Nawabganj, a jetty constructed for the elephants of Pilkhana is still known as Hatir Ghat ("Elephant Jetty"). Likewise, the name Hatirpul ("Elephant Bridge") originated from a high bridge under which elephants used to pass. The bridge was built with extra height to accommodate their towering frames, and from that unique feature the area derived its enduring name—Hatirpul.

### Dhaka's elephant kheda and the lives of the mahouts

The mahout—caretaker, trainer, and physician of elephants—led a life filled with toil on one hand and constant danger on the other. A vivid account of the mahouts of Dhaka during the nineteenth century appears in James Wise's *Notes on the Races, Castes and Trades of Eastern Bengal* (published in 1883). His description reveals that most mahouts employed at the Government Kheda Office were Muslims, generally from lower-caste families. Within their profession, titles such as Jamadar and Sardar were

# Star

DHAKA MONDAY OCTOBER 6, 2025, ASHWIN 21, 1432 BS

# SPORT

What to  
WATCH

T Sports  
NCL T20  
Rajshahi vs Barisal  
Live from 10:00 am  
Dhaka Metro vs  
Rangpur

Live from 1:30 pm  
ICC Women's World  
Cup  
New Zealand vs South  
Africa  
Live from 5:30 pm

## An election only for continuity?

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

The stage is set, the voters are ready, as the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) heads to polls today – not with anticipation, but with a weary sense of repetition.

The cash-rich board is once again electing its directors for the next four years, but the process, mired in controversy and control, feels less like an exercise of democracy and more like a scripted drama.

From the moment the election schedule was announced on September 21, controversy began to swirl. Allegations of government interference, disputes over councillorships, and loopholes in the BCB constitution marred the process.

What could have been an opportunity for reform, became a repeat of the old game – power over principle, influence over integrity.

With the ousting of the Awami League

government, there was genuine hope that the interim authority would seize this rare chance to introduce reforms in the BCB, paving the way for genuine cricket organisers to reclaim the board.

But those expectations have faded away. Rather than ushering in transparency, the election has exposed the same systemic flaws that have long crippled Bangladesh cricket's governance.

The controversy first erupted over the nomination of district and divisional councillors. Allegations of interference surfaced after it was revealed that several nominations were manipulated and deadlines were extended twice.

The root of the problem lies in the BCB's constitution, which allows the district sports association to send councillors "if" there is no district cricket association. That one word – "if" – has created endless disputes and left room for political and



**"The Election Commission will decide whether it's an ideal election. At the end of the day, we all shake hands -- like in cricket. No matter who wins, we must work together for Bangladesh cricket. That's the key."**

BCB president  
AMINUL ISLAM BULBUL

administrative meddling.

Then came the clubs. As always, they remain the most powerful bloc in the board, with 12 of the 25 directors coming from Dhaka clubs. In no other major cricketing nation do clubs hold such disproportionate sway, but in Bangladesh, club politics has become the backbone of the BCB. Every attempt to reform this imbalance has failed, crushed by the same vested interests that benefit from it.

The irony runs deeper. Even as officials decry political interference, the BCB's own constitution ensures it – by allowing the National Sports Council (NSC) to directly nominate two directors. This structural dependency on the government leaves the board perpetually vulnerable to influence.

The promise once made to the International Cricket Council (ICC) – in Bangladesh cricket's former director of development Eddie Barlow's handwritten note – to form regional associations and decentralise power has long been forgotten.

### BCB POLLS

➤ **Category 1:** (10 directors to be elected) Already six including former cricketer Abdur Razzak elected unopposed and four directors to be elected from nine candidates including Aminul Islam, Nazmul Abedeen Fahim.

➤ **Category 2:** 12 directors to be elected from 17 candidates

➤ **Category 3:** One director to be elected from two candidates -- Debabrata Paul and Khaled Mashud Pilot.

### ➤ COUNCILLORS: 191

Category 1: 70

Category 2: 76

Category 3: 45

➤ The voting will take place between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm today at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Dhaka.

➤ The result of the BCB polls will be announced at 6:00 pm. The president and vice-president election will be followed after the result of BCB polls and the result will be announced at 9:00 pm.

➤ Two more directors are set to join the board as National Sports Council (NSC) nominees. These two names will be revealed after the board of directors' election.

➤ 58 councillors will cast their votes through e-mail while others are expected to cast their votes in person.

## 'Test specialists' coming alive in NCL T20

SPORTS REPORTER

The ongoing National Cricket League – NCL T20 – is going against the regular modus operandi of T20 tournaments in country. The likes of Mahmudul Hasan Joy, Shadman Islam, Amite Hasan or Fazle Mahmud Rabbi – considered red-ball specialists – are amongst the top run-getters, in absence of regular faces some of whom are in the UAE with the Bangladesh T20I or ODI teams.

Joy was the latest among the 'Test specialists' to hit a ton on Sunday, following Shadman's century the day before. The likes of Mominul Haque had found some runs in the last NCL but this season a few Test cricketers have turned a corner.

Joy batted at a strike-rate of just over 115 in eight innings in the last edition. Yesterday the 24-year-old moved to 99 with a six over long on off Rejaur Rahman Raja before completing his ton with a four. His acceleration was notable. Having reached his fifty in 40 deliveries, he needed just 19 more to get to the hundred. Joy finished with a 63-ball 110, laced with five fours and nine sixes, setting the record for the highest score in NCL T20 history.

Courtesy of Joy's exploits, Chattogram reached 214 for 6 – the highest score in NCL T20, with Mominul also contributing with a 19-ball 32.



Despite Amite's 25-ball 40 at the top, Sylhet were bundled out for 115, handing Chattogram a 99-run win.

Rabbi of Barishal believes that players such as Joy or Shadman are getting a chance to showcase their abilities in another format, which is a positive thing.

"It's a good thing. These players are getting an opportunity to showcase their T20 performances despite getting tagged as Test players. The players too want to perform in the top formats and do not want to be thought of as belonging to a certain format," he told The Daily Star.

Players such as Nurul Hasan, Shamim Hossain or Jaker Ali are playing for the national team at the moment. Asked about how it impacts the tournament, Rabbi said: "It's not possible to fill a gap left by players who are playing international cricket but you can see from a different point of view since a new player is getting an opportunity in those players' absence. There are quite a few players like that. If [Mohammad] Naim Sheikh was there, maybe Shadman would not have opened [for Dhaka Metro], so it's positive in that sense if players can capitalise."



Saif Hassan flicks one during his unbeaten 38-ball 64, which guided Bangladesh to a six-wicket win in the third T20I against Afghanistan at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium yesterday, helping the visitors to a 3-0 series win. Bowling first, Bangladesh restricted the Afghans to 143 for nine before chasing down the target in 18 overs.

PHOTO: ACB

## 'No need for panic'

AGENCIES

Arne Slot urged calm after Liverpool's slump continued with a 2-1 defeat at Chelsea on Saturday – their third loss in a row and second consecutive Premier League defeat.

Brazilian teenager Estevao delivered the decisive blow in the 95th minute at Stamford Bridge, condemning Slot to a first-ever run of three successive defeats in his managerial career.

It marked another agonising late collapse for Liverpool, coming just a week after Crystal Palace's 97th-minute winner and following Tuesday's 1-0 Champions League loss to Galatasaray. The Reds have not endured such a streak since 2023 when Jurgen Klopp was in charge.

"Another disappointing loss, that is clear," Slot admitted after the game. "We created three big chances in the first half, they only had one and they scored it. The second-half performance, I liked. We created more than enough to score more than one goal. There were periods where I thought we were going to win it." Liverpool's struggles were

glaring, particularly in the first-half, as they again looked disjointed despite just two of their starting outfield players having joined this summer. Nearly £450 million worth of new signings have yet to bring cohesion, with £116 million midfielder Florian Wirtz's advanced role behind forwards Hugo Ekitike and record signing Alexander Isak leaving the team exposed through the middle.

Slot, however, chalked the defeat up to fine margins going against his side and the impact of a turbulent off-season, with the tragic death of Diogo Jota.

"I don't say we deserved the win, a draw we definitely deserved and then we would have had a great start to the season, if you take into account everything that happened in the summer in Liverpool," Slot said.

Up front, Isak's rhythm remains off following a truncated pre-season, while Mohamed Salah's dip continues to concern. The Egyptian has just five goals in his last 21 appearances and missed several key chances against Chelsea.

Liverpool managed only one shot on target before the 51st minute, despite Chelsea missing several key defenders due to injuries. The hosts, who had lost their previous two league matches, were vulnerable, yet Slot's side failed to capitalise.

"We didn't play the final pass well enough in those [final] chances. It was end to end in the last few minutes. Either team could have won it and Chelsea did," Slot added.

The defeat leaves Liverpool second in the Premier League table, a point behind Arsenal, having led the Gunners by five just two weeks ago.

A staggering 10 goals have been scored after the 80th-minute mark in Liverpool's 11 games so far this season. All but two of those goals have altered the result of the match. Seven such strikes gave Liverpool the win.

Bournemouth, Newcastle United, Arsenal, Burnley and Atletico Madrid, and Southampton all fell to last-gasp blows – but it was a high-risk unsustainable strategy, especially with Liverpool so far from their best. And now they have received a bitter taste of their own medicine twice in seven days.



PHOTO: AFP

### IND-PAK HOSTILITY CONTINUES

For the fourth time in 25 days, India and Pakistan met on the cricket field and one thing remained the same -- the cold vibe among the players. Similar to the three meetings during the Men's Asia Cup, the skippers of the two sides refused to shake hands during their ICC Women's World Cup match at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday. India's Harmanpreet Kaur and Pakistan's Fatima Sana walked past each other without any display of friendliness following the toss. Once the action started, it was India who dominated, winning the match by 88 runs.

## Javier Cabrera confident of win against HK

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh head coach Javier Cabrera remains "absolutely convinced" that his side can secure all three points in their upcoming home fixture against Hong Kong, China in the Asian Cup Qualifiers despite a growing injury list.

With just one point from their opening two matches, Bangladesh face a must-win situation in the back-to-back clashes against joint leaders Hong Kong (four points) – at home on October 9 and away on October 14.

However, Cabrera has had to contend with several injury setbacks. Forwards Mohammad Ibrahim and Sumon Reza have already left the camp due to injury, while another forward, Mohammad Al Amin, along with key defenders Topu Barman and Tariq Kazi, are yet to resume training.

"We did everything we could to get Sumon and Ibrahim ready in time, but unfortunately, it wasn't possible," Cabrera told reporters before training on Sunday. "Tariq and Al Amin are expected to return to training today. Hopefully, Topu will join soon as well."

The squad is set to receive a boost with the arrival of Leicester City midfielder Hamza Choudhury on Monday morning. However, Cabrera expressed concern over Canada-based Shमित Shome's late arrival.

"Hamza will have three training sessions if everything goes as planned," said Cabrera. "For Shमित, it will be more difficult – he arrives the day after tomorrow evening, so he'll only be available for the final training session before the match."

Despite the setbacks, Cabrera is backing his team to rise to the occasion.

"Our belief is high. We are absolutely convinced we can get the three points. If we stay united, have the right mentality, and sacrifice for each other, we can get the result."



Vinicius Junior scored a brace as Real Madrid got back to winning ways in LaLiga, reclaiming the top spot with a 3-1 win over Villarreal on Saturday. Mbappe was also on target on the night in a much-needed win for Los Blancos after their 5-2 thrashing away to Atletico Madrid in the previous matchday.

PHOTO: REAL MADRID

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## ICT to probe AL for crimes against humanity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) is set to begin a primary investigation into allegations of crimes against humanity against the Awami League as a political party, Chief Prosecutor Mohammad Tajul Islam said yesterday.

This is the first time in history that the ICT prosecution has decided to probe a political party for allegations of crimes against humanity.

On May 10, President Mohammed Shahabuddin promulgated an ordinance amending the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, to empower the tribunals to try a political party facing charges of genocide and crimes against humanity and punish it if found guilty.

The move followed complaints and investigation reports bringing allegations against state forces

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Idle fishing trawlers line the shore near the Fishery Ghat in the port city yesterday, as the hilsa fishing ban began at midnight Friday. The 22-day ban, lasting till October 25, is enforced every year to protect brooding hilsa.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

## DENGUE OUTBREAK 9 dead, over 1,000 cases in one day

Doctors concerned over patients seeking treatment late

HELEMUL ALAM

At least 1,042 new dengue cases were reported yesterday -- the highest in a single day this year -- taking the confirmed number to nearly 50,000 so far.

Nine people died from the Aedes mosquito-borne disease yesterday, the second highest single-day toll this year. With them, the total death count is now 212, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). Bangladesh saw its deadliest day of the year on September 21, when dengue claimed 12 lives, the highest single-day death toll recorded so far.

As of yesterday, 49,907 people have been hospitalised with dengue this year. Last month alone, 15,866 were infected and 76 died. In just the first five days of this month, 2,565 new cases and 14 deaths have already been reported.

Experts have warned that cases and fatalities will rise sharply if urgent measures are not taken.

HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, told The Daily Star that patient numbers have risen steeply in the past week.

"We started operating a separate ward in the hospital about eight days ago. Just a day earlier, we had 29 patients there, but the number nearly doubled to 60 today. Most are admitted in critical condition."

He mentioned that most patients arrive with low blood

» Total cases this year: **49,907**

» Total deaths this year: **212**

» **76** people died of dengue last month



## Gaibandha woman dies with anthrax-like symptoms

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A woman from Gaibandha's Sundarganj upazila died with anthrax-like symptoms at Rangpur Medical College Hospital last night.

The deceased was Rozina Begum, 45, wife of Abul Hossain of Paschim Belka village. Her nephew Ashraful Islam said she died shortly after 9:30pm.

Dr Mokhlesur Rahman, head of the medicine department at the hospital, told The Daily Star, "Rozina did not die while undergoing treatment. Her condition was already critical when she was brought to our hospital last night."

"Based on the symptoms, we suspected her to be an anthrax patient. But her relatives wanted to take her away from the hospital, and she died within the hospital premises."

Dibakar Basak, Sundarganj Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer, said Rozina had two sores on her hand and had been exposed to a sick animal.

"It cannot be confirmed whether she died of anthrax without tests," he added.

Rozina's nephew Ashraful said she had slaughtered and distributed the meat of a sick goat five days before falling ill.

"A few days later, two sores appeared on her hand. Yesterday, her condition deteriorated and her blood pressure dropped significantly. When she was taken to Sundarganj Upazila Health Complex around 3:00pm, doctors referred her to the Rangpur hospital."

Anthrax cases have been detected in Gaibandha after eight people from Pirgachha upazila of Rangpur tested positive at the laboratory of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) late last month.

Two people had died in the upazila last month with symptoms resembling anthrax. However, it could not be confirmed whether they had died of anthrax, as no samples were taken from them.

## 6YR-OLD'S BODY IN SEPTIC TANK She was sexually assaulted before being murdered Shows post-mortem report

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Shariatpur

The post-mortem report of six-year-old Taiba, whose body was found in a septic tank in Shariatpur's Bhedarganj upazila on September 26, confirms she was sexually assaulted before being strangled to death.

The report states that she was strangled, with a horizontal injury mark on the front of her neck. It adds that her reproductive parts were lacerated before her death, while there were bruises on both her inner thighs and upper arms. The report further states the child she had bit her own tongue.

Signed by Resident Medical Officer Dr Mitu Akhter, Medical Officer Dr Lina Sadina, and Dr Amit Sengupta of Shariatpur Sadar Hospital on October 4, the report notes that the sexual assault was homicidal in nature.

Confirming the findings yesterday, hospital Superintendent Dr Habibur Rahman told The Daily Star, "What is written in the report is exactly what happened to the girl. She was sexually assaulted."

Family members said the child went missing around 5:00pm on September 24. Her body was recovered two days later from a neighbour's septic tank.

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## DHAKA-SYLHET HIGHWAY Road of endless misery

Tk 16,919cr megaproject shows only 15% progress in 5yrs

DWOHA CHOWDHURY

Five years since its launch, the Dhaka Sylhet Corridor Project has achieved a mere 15 percent of its objectives, leaving the 210-kilometre

project remains stalled.

Since fiscal 2021-22, 56 of the 66 lawsuits related to land acquisition remain unresolved, preventing contractors from accessing key areas, according to the Roads and

Highways Department. Said Nizam Uddin, a Sunamganj resident who commutes to Dhaka every month for work.

Even a few years ago, his trips would take six to seven hours. Now, the journey takes 12 to 13 hours.

- ▶ Envisioned as a vital link with Asian Highway, BIMSTEC, SAARC countries
- ▶ Meant to facilitate fast, smooth travel between Dhaka and Sylhet
- ▶ Project bankrolled with a Tk 13,245cr loan from ADB, Tk 3,674cr from govt
- ▶ Only 20pc of funds utilised since launched in January 2021



stretch in disrepair and turning millions' journeys into ordeals.

Land disputes and delays in utility relocation have held up the Tk 16,919 crore project, according to its project director AK Mohammad Fazlul Karim. Meeting the December 2026 deadline is impossible now, he said.

While some soil development, bridge and culvert work has begun where land is available, most of the

Highways Department.

The corridor project includes 66 bridges, 305 culverts and overpasses, six railway over-bridges, 37 U-turns, and 26 footbridges. It was divided into 13 packages, each assigned to a contractor.

But without land, the plan remains mostly on paper.

As a result, road travel on the route has become an ordeal.

"The suffering is indescribable,"

Recent visits revealed the road riddled with deep potholes and large craters, making travel both slow and dangerous. Long gridlocks across various sections add to the physical and mental strain, turning each trip into a test of endurance.

"The condition is horrible," said Mohammad Shahid, a driver with Al-Mobaraka Paribahan for 18 years.

Besides potholes, many stretches

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A large portion of a road in Chachoi village of Narail's Lohagara upazila has collapsed under pressure from the strong currents of the Madhumati River. Locals claimed continuous river erosion is also washing away cropland in the absence of a permanent embankment. The authorities concerned have yet to take any preventive measures. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Trusting many of the advisers was a mistake Says Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam



claimed that many advisers in the interim government have established ties with political parties and are now thinking about their "safe exits".

He made the comments about the advisory council members in an interview with Ekhon TV aired yesterday.

He said, "It was our mistake to trust many of the advisers. We should have strengthened student leadership and entered the government with a collective approach."

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