



Yunus places six proposals at WFF to end hunger



BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof. Muhammad Yunus yesterday placed six proposals for a complete transformation of the global food and economic systems to end hunger.

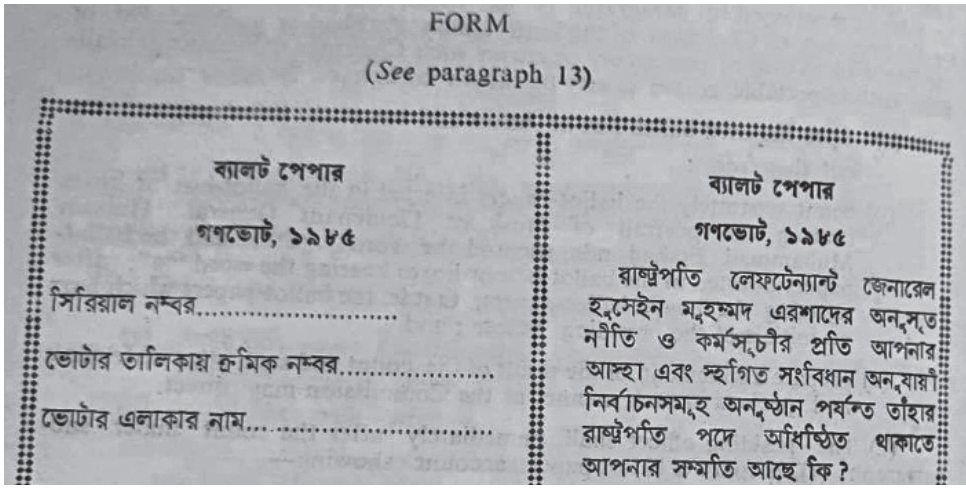
"Hunger is not caused by scarcity. It is caused by the failure of the economic framework that we have designed. . . we must change the system," he said while presenting the keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the annual World Food Forum at the Food and Agriculture Organisation Headquarters in Rome, Italy.

At this time Prof. Yunus placed his six proposals, which are: ending wars and ensuring food access in conflict zones, fulfilling SDG finance commitments and supporting climate resilience, establishing regional food banks to stabilise

SEE PAGE 8 COL 5

A look back at past referendums

From Ziaur Rahman to Ershad to 1991's democratic shift



Amid growing public opposition, HM Ershad held a referendum on March 21, 1985, following the issuance of the Referendum Order, 1985. Photo: Collected



Media coverage of 1991 referendum

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

More than three decades after the last referendum, Bangladesh may see another -- this time over the July National Charter.

All three previous referendums were held during periods of political crisis -- times when rulers sought legitimacy for their regimes or a new form of government.

The referendums in 1977 and 1985 were widely viewed as attempts to legitimise the military regimes of Ziaur Rahman and Hussain Muhammad Ershad, while the third in 1991 was a constitutional exercise that marked Bangladesh's return to parliamentary democracy.

Following the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975, a period of political instability ensued, marked by coups and counter-coups. This culminated in Ziaur Rahman assuming the presidency in 1977.

Following the issuance of the Referendum Order, 1977, the first referendum was held on May 30 that year, with the question: "Do you have confidence in President Major General Ziaur Rahman, BU [Bir Uttam] and the policies and actions he pursued?"

The Election Commission's report on the referendum shows the turnout was around 88.05 percent, with 98.88 percent voting "Yes".

According to the report, voting took place in a secret room where two ballot boxes were placed. One box was marked with Ziaur Rahman's image on all four

sides and labelled "Yes", while the other was labelled "No".

In his book "Electoral Corruption in Bangladesh", Muhammad Yeahia Akhter, the vice chancellor of Chittagong University, wrote that though the official figures showed a very high turnout, the referendum was only "partially successful".

"The opposition camp claimed the figures were exaggerated," he noted.

He mentioned that one analyst attributed the overwhelming vote of confidence to several factors: active participation of bureaucrats in mobilising public support; backing from a majority of newly elected union parishad leaders; support from moderate and right-wing forces; influence of state-controlled media; and the absence of any opposing candidates.

A month before the referendum, Ziaur Rahman, on April 30, presented a 19-point programme that included safeguarding the country's independence and sovereignty, and reflecting the four fundamental principles of the Constitution -- absolute faith in Almighty Allah, democracy, nationalism, and socialism based on social and economic justice -- across all spheres of national life.

It aimed to ensure public participation in governance, prioritise agricultural development to achieve food security, uphold women's dignity, encourage private sector growth and foster global friendships, especially with Muslim nations, among other goals.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

3 economists win Nobel for work on innovation, growth



Joel Mokyr

Philippe Aghion

Peter Howitt

REUTERS, Stockholm

Joel Mokyr, Philippe Aghion and Peter Howitt won the 2025 Nobel economics prize yesterday for their work on how innovation and the forces of "creative destruction" can drive economic growth and lift living standards across the globe.

Their research explains how technology gives rise to new products and production methods which replace old ones, resulting in a better standard of living, health and quality of life.

"Over the last two centuries, for the first time in history, the world has seen sustained economic growth. This has lifted vast numbers of people out of poverty and laid the foundation of our prosperity," the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, which awards the prize, said in a statement.

The laureates have also shown that such progress cannot be taken for granted, the Academy said, while two of the prize winners highlighted that U.S. President Donald Trump's trade policies would impinge on growth.

"Economic stagnation, not growth, has been the norm for most of human history. Their work shows that we

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Now govt college teachers go on strike

To boycott classes today over assault; MPO-listed teachers continue protest

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government college teachers would abstain from classes today in protest against alleged assault on their colleagues by students at Dhaka College.

Teachers under the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) General Education Association made the announcement yesterday.

Meanwhile, teachers listed under the government's Monthly Pay Order (MPO) scheme continued their work abstention, demanding higher house rent allowances and protesting alleged police action against them.

At the Central Shaheed Minar, the MPO-listed teachers yesterday announced that they would march towards the Secretariat at noon today if their demands were not met by last night.

Several hundred teachers have been demonstrating and observing work stoppage since Sunday.

Speaking at the Shaheed Minar, Delwar Hossain Azizi,



Teachers continue strike at Shaheed Minar yesterday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

member secretary of the Alliance for Nationalisation of MPO Institutions, said, "We have started our work abstention to protest the police action against teachers. MPO-listed institutions have already become paralysed.

"Until the government issues a circular granting a house rent allowance of 20 percent [of salaries],

Tk 1,500 medical allowance, and 75 percent festival bonus, our programme at the Shaheed Minar will continue. Teachers will not attend any classes."

He warned that if the circular was not issued by last night, teachers and staff from every upazila would march towards the Secretariat at noon today.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 5

'No more talks, strike at the very start'

ICT hears Hasina phone call ordering July crackdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A phone conversation played before the International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday revealed that former prime minister Sheikh Hasina ordered an official to launch an immediate crackdown on demonstrators during last year's July uprising.

In the recording, the caller, identified as Hasina, is heard saying, "They have started gathering in different places -- at Mirpur 10, Uttara, BRAC University, and other areas. You must act right from the beginning. If you chase them, they'll scatter into the alleys. This time, no more talks, strike at the very start."

Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam told the tribunal that experts at the CID lab checked the authenticity of the call record and had identified the officer on the other end of the call as Colonel Rajib, who then served as deputy military secretary to the prime minister. The conversation, he said, took place on July 29 last year.

Tajul said the recording was among several pieces of evidence showing that orders to suppress public protests came directly from the highest level of government.

The prosecution, for the second consecutive day, presented its arguments in the crimes against humanity case against former premier Sheikh Hasina, former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and ex-IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 4

Next JS will decide on PR issue: Fakhrul

BSS, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the next parliament will decide on the application of the proportional representation (PR) system in national elections.

"The decision regarding PR should be left to the next parliament. If the representatives of the next parliament think that they will adopt the PR system and if the people think that they will go for the PR system, then the election will be held using the PR system," he said.

Fakhrul made the remarks at a views exchange meeting with a delegation of the Christian community at the BNP chairperson's office in the city's Gulshan.

"If the upcoming elections are held using the PR system, the public will not understand this process. Consequently, there is a possibility of complications arising."

"The PR system is prevalent in many countries. However, the people of our country are not very familiar with this method. Today, this issue is being brought up suddenly and with ulterior motives and there is an agitation for it," he added.



SO CLOSE YET SO FAR: Bangladesh all-rounder Rabeya Khan celebrates the dismissal of South Africa's Annerie Dercksen during their ICC Women's World Cup fixture in Visakhapatnam yesterday. After posting 232 for six, the Tigresses had the Proteas on the ropes at 78 for five. However, Marizanne Kapp (56), Chloe Tryon (62) and Nadine de Clerk (37*) eventually guided South Africa to a thrilling three-wicket win.

PHOTO: ICC