

Police block
march of
graduates with
disabilitiesProtesters seek jobs
thru executive orders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday blocked a procession of graduates with disabilities near the National Museum in Shahbagh, Dhaka as they marched towards the chief adviser's residence, Jamuna, demanding recruitment through executive orders and other facilities.

Under the banner of "Chakri Pratyashi Protibondhi Graduate Parishad", graduates from universities and colleges began their pre-announced march from Raju Memorial Sculpture on the Dhaka University campus in the afternoon.

Many of the demonstrators were seen carrying white canes, while some joined the protest on crutches.

As the procession reached near Shahbagh, police intercepted it when the protesters attempted to break through the barricade. Amid resistance, demonstrators staged a sit-in at the spot which continued for more than two hours.

"We are graduates, not beggars. Employment is our right. We have repeatedly tried to draw the government's attention, but our demands have gone unheard," said one of the protesters. Talking to The Daily Star around 5:30pm, Khalid Monsur, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, said the protesters were still demonstrating near the National Museum.

Hefazat
demands ban
on Iskcon at
Ctg rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Hefazat-e-Islam Bangladesh staged a rally in Chittagong city yesterday, demanding ban on the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (Iskcon).

The organisation also condemned the killing of lawyer Saiful Islam Alif in the port city last year, as well as the recent attempted murder of a mosque khatib in Gazipur.

The rally was held after the Juma prayers on the Anderkilla Shahi Jame Mosque premises.

Speakers at the rally said when incidents occur in the hills or against minority communities, the chief adviser reacts promptly on social media, but when an imam or khatib is attacked, there is no response.

The event was presided over by Hefazat's central Nayeb-e-Ameer, Ali Usman. Central joint secretary generals Harun Izhari and Nasir Munir, among others, were present at the event.

After the rally, Hefazat activists brought out a procession from the mosque premises.

On November 26 last year, 32-year-old Alif, a member of Chattogram District Bar Association, was killed during clashes between police and followers of former Iskcon leader Chimoy Krishna Das in the Chattogram Court Building area.

ব্যবহৃত ফ্ল্যাট বিক্রি
বাসানী রুক্মি, ২৭ নং রোড
১৭৫০ ব.সু. এর ১টি ব্যবহৃত ফ্ল্যাট
ও পার্কিং, গ্রাম বিক্রয় সংযোগ
সহকারে বিক্রি করা হচ্ছে।
যোগাযোগ: ০১৭২০২১০৯২

Bangladesh Earthquake Society (BES) এর Life
Member দের জ্যাতীয়ের
আগামী নির্বাচিত নির্বাচিত উপায়ক আপনার বাস্তু হাস্তানাম করার জন্য আপনার নাম, ছবি, বর্তমান
চিকিৎসা, ছাত্রী চিকিৎসা, জ্যাতীয় পরিবহনের মুদ্র, সঙ্গে মুদ্র, ইমেইল এডেম্স এবং মোবাইল মুদ্র নির্মাণ
করে দেওয়া হচ্ছে। এই নির্বাচন ২০২৫ এর মধ্যে প্রাপ্তীয়ের অনুমতি করা হচ্ছে।
যোগাযোগ: ড. মো. আব্দুল্লাহ আলম
যোগাযোগ: b.earthquakes.s@gmail.com
যোগাযোগ: ০১৬১৩-৩৮২৮৩



Labourers in the process to produce cocopeat from coconut coir at Rahimabad village in Bagerhat, Khulna, yesterday. Local entrepreneurs collect, dry, and refine coconut husks to make cocopeat, a popular soil substitute in agriculture, nurseries, and rooftop gardens for its excellent water-retention properties.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

54 health centres without essential medicine supply

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

For the past 14 months, 54 union-level health and Family Welfare Centres (FWCs) across Patuakhali district have been operating without any supply of essential medicines.

Most of these facilities are also struggling with acute manpower shortages, leaving thousands of marginalised people deprived of basic healthcare.

According to the Family Planning Department, each union is supposed to have one such centre to provide healthcare for rural communities. However, 54 out of 77 unions in the district currently have functional FWCs.

Each FWC is meant to provide 26 types of essential medicines for common ailments such as fever, cough and skin diseases, as well as for maternal and child healthcare. But supply of essential drugs to these 54 centres has been suspended since August 2024.

Lamia Begum, 23, of Bakulbariya village, who brought her 18-month-old child to Bakulbariya Union Health and Family Welfare Centre in Galachipa upazila with fever and cold, said she received no medicine.

"The doctor prescribed some medicines but said none is available here. We are poor; we come here because treatment and medicine are supposed to be free. Now I'll have to buy

medicine from outside," she said.

Another patient, Sumi Akter, 21, who brought her two-year-old son with fever, echoed the same.

"The nearest upazila-level hospital is 15 kilometres away, and going to the district town costs even more. My husband is a day labourer -- we can't afford frequent trips for treatment," she said.



The Bakulbariya FWC, established in 2018, is also facing a severe manpower crisis. Of its six sanctioned posts, only two are currently occupied.

Family welfare assistant Ranjita, who manages patients at the FWC besides additional duty in a neighbouring union, said, "We haven't received any medicines for 14

months. The number of patients has dropped considerably."

A similar situation was found at Auliapur Union Health and Family Welfare Centre under Patuakhali Sadar upazila, which is running without essential drugs while five of its seven sanctioned posts remain vacant.

Nasima Begum, a family welfare assistant at the centre, said, "We used to get around 23 types of medicines, but for over a year, there has been no supply. Earlier, we treated about 50 patients a day; now only around 10 come. Without medicine, we can only give prescriptions."

According to official data, out of 54 FWCs in Patuakhali, only 33 have sub-assistant community medical officers appointed. Of 21 pharmacist posts, 11 are vacant; so are 24 of the 78 family welfare visitor posts, and 88 of the 317 family welfare assistant posts.

Contacted, Dr Md Shamsuzzaman, assistant director of the District Family Planning Office, said, "Previous 5-year plan ended in June 2024, but the next 5-year plan was not approved timely. So there has been a halt in medicine supply and services have been disrupted to some extent. However, the problem will be resolved soon. We expect to resume medicine supply to all union-level centres within the next week."

Six years on, Babuhrat market remains half-built Traders, locals bear the brunt

KM HABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

Nearly six years after construction began, the new Babuhrat market in Pirojpur's Nazirpur remains only 30 percent complete, leaving traders and thousands of dependents struggling.

Rusting iron rods jut from unfinished floors, concrete pillars rise from bare earth, and empty shop frames stand abandoned where bustling businesses once thrived.

The four-storey market, part of the Countrywide Rural Market Infrastructure Development Project, was awarded in December 2019 to Shimran Mayan Trade International and Efte ETCL (Pvt) Ltd for Tk 3.3 crore, with work originally scheduled for completion in June 2021.

Despite disbursing roughly Tk 1 crore -- nearly one-third of the cost -- most work remains unfinished.

"Over two dozen shops were demolished to make way for the new market," said trader Mamun Bepari. "We expected to return quickly, but the delay forced us to move our businesses elsewhere."

Fellow trader Shahjahan Sarder added, "Thousands in Nazirpur and neighbouring Bagerhat districts rely on this century-old marketplace that sits on Saturdays and Tuesdays every week. Their livelihoods are now at risk."

The project was reportedly awarded to Noore Alam Siddique Shahin, younger brother of then minister SM Rezaul Karim, whose influence allegedly discouraged scrutiny.

A team from the LGED headquarters visited in April 2022, expressed dissatisfaction, and warned the upazila engineering office, but the situation remains unchanged.

Locals said that as Shahin was very powerful, they could do nothing while he delayed the work. He left the country after the fall of the Awami League government last August, leaving the project in limbo.

Contacted, Executive Engineer Mohammad Azizur Rahman declined to comment.

UNO Sajja Sahnaz Tama said they are contacting the LGED to come up with a solution.

Rezwan's floating

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schools into the National Adaptation Plan 2050.

"Education is not only

about reading and writing," Rezwan said. "It is about fostering peace, equality, and resilience. With literacy and knowledge, our youth can build a future where no disaster prevents children from learning."

A photo series titled "Boat Schools of Bangladesh - Future That Floats" is on display at the French National Museum of Immigration History's Migrations and Climate exhibit in Paris through April 5, 2026. The TRT World documentary "Bangladesh Turns Tide on Climate Change with Floating Schools" is a finalist for the Save the Children Global Media Awards 2025.

Rezwan's work is also featured in Julia Watson's book Lo-TEK: Water, which highlights 22 contemporary TEK-based innovations worldwide.

Groom found dead in Faridpur sugarcane field

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Faridpur

A groom was found dead, hours after his wedding, in a sugarcane field in Faridpur's Saltha upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased was identified as Md Jamal Fakir, 28, son of Md Robaz Fakir of Pisonail village in Ballabhdhi union.

Jamal married Rokeya Akter, 23, daughter of Md Liton Bhuiya of Ghonapara in Nagarkanda upazila, at a family ceremony on Thursday afternoon.

After the wedding, Jamal and his bride returned to his home in Pisonail village, said family members and neighbours.

Around 7:00am yesterday, some locals found Jamal's body with a towel tied around his neck, hanging from a bamboo fence in a sugarcane field -- about half a kilometre from his house. They then informed his family.

Speaking to reporters, the bride said she learned about her husband's death when the body was brought home.

Jamal's elder brother, Jalal Fakir, termed the death "shocking and mysterious," saying, "He had no enemies, and we cannot understand why this happened."

Md Ataur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Saltha Police Station, said police recovered the body and sent it to Faridpur Medical College for autopsy.



A farmer tends to seedlings of various winter flowers at a nursery in Alankarkathi village of Nesarabad (Swarupkathi) upazila in Pirojpur. These seedlings are supplied from various nurseries, at both retail and wholesale prices, to different parts of the country. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Mitford hospital stretched to the limit

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"We are trying to increase the ICU capacity to at least 30 beds," he said.

According to the hospital's internal death review, most fatalities occur due to late hospitalisation and underlying health complications.

"People should get tested early," Dr Mollah advised. "If someone develops a fever,

they should take the NS1 test on the first day. After three or four days, the result may turn negative even if the patient has dengue."

HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, noted that four viral infections -- influenza, dengue, chikungunya, and Covid-19 -- are currently circulating simultaneously. This overlap, he said, often causes confusion and delays in seeking treatment.

"Many patients don't

recognise warning signs like severe abdominal pain, breathing difficulty, bleeding, extreme fatigue, or a sharp drop in urine output," he said. "By the time they reach hospitals, their condition is already

critical."

He also highlighted that delays in referring critically ill patients from district hospitals to Dhaka are contributing to rising fatalities.

"District-level hospitals

must follow national treatment guidelines strictly and treat patients locally whenever possible," he urged.

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