

"Who can accept the genocide that has been going on in the Gaza Strip for so long?... and the UN no longer functions."

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva

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DHAKA SUNDAY OCTOBER 26, 2025

Plus 12-page special supplement on The Global Classroom, Total 32 Pages

REGD. NO. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 273

KARTIK 10, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

JAMADIUL AWWAL 3, 1447 HIJRI

20 PAGES: TK 15.00

## JULY CHARTER IMPLEMENTATION Commission races against time to find out ways

Talks on to make adoption binding for JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With only six days remaining before its extended tenure ends, the National Consensus Commission has yet to find a viable mechanism to ensure that the proposed constitutional reforms under the July charter will be implemented.

At a lengthy meeting yesterday, the commission discussed with legal experts the ways to ensure the charter's implementation as it is preparing to submit its final recommendations to the government.

Commission members acknowledged that the main challenge lies in the absence of any legal or historical precedent, either in Bangladesh or abroad, for binding a future parliament to specific constitutional actions.

A legal expert who attended the meeting told The Daily Star that under a parliamentary democracy, no legislature can be compelled in advance to act in a predetermined way.

Questions also arose over whether granting the next parliament "constituent power" would make it legally bound to approve the charter's reform proposals as they stand.

The unpredictable composition of the next parliament has also contributed to the challenges. The next government may not have a two-third majority, without which passing constitutional reforms would largely depend on political goodwill and cooperation.

The commission is scheduled to meet again this morning and may hold further consultations with constitutional experts if necessary.

### 2 OPTIONS ON TABLE

According to commission sources, two options were discussed in detail.

The first would stipulate that if the reform proposals are not implemented within 270 days, the parliament would be dissolved.

The second would make the reforms automatically effective and incorporated into the constitution after that period.

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- ➊ First option is to dissolve JS if reforms aren't implemented within 270 days
- ➋ Second option is automatic implementation of reforms after 270 days
- ➌ Both proposals legally, politically problematic: experts



The century-old paddle steamer PS Mahsud, newly renovated with modern facilities and safety features, will be officially relaunched on the Dhaka-Barishal route on November 15 as a tourist service. Built in 1928 during the British colonial period, the vessel stands as one of Bangladesh's oldest and most iconic paddle steamers. The photo was taken from the Buringanga Bridge-2 in the capital's Babu Bazaar yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## CHALLENGES IN POLICING 1 Police stations buckling under budget strain

SHAEEN MOLLAH and  
MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Acting on information, a team from Ashulia police rushed to a garbage dump near Jahangirnagar University on September 28 morning to recover the decomposed body of an unidentified man, aged around 30.

Three cleaners from a private firm were hired for Tk 2,100 to disinfect the body with chemicals and put it in a sack. The body was then sent to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical

College morgue by ambulance.

"We already spent Tk 9,100, including Tk 7,000 for the ambulance, before even starting the murder investigation, for which the allocation is only Tk 6,000," said Sub-Inspector Manas Bhadra of Ashulia Police Station, highlighting the financial constraints under which police personnel carry out routine duties.

"I had to pay from my own pocket. I'll now inform the officer-in-charge of the station about the

expenditure, but I don't know when I'll be reimbursed," he said, adding that additional costs would follow at the morgue before the body is handed over to a charity for burial.

"All these expenses are incurred even before we begin probing the murder itself, tracing suspects and making any arrests," he said.

Several other officers said that faced with such shortfalls, they occasionally rely on complainants or victims' families if they are

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Workers navigate perilously narrow bamboo bridges along the Water Works Road in the capital's Rahmatganj area yesterday, as Dhaka South City Corporation's prolonged drainage work disrupts lives and endangering safety.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## RMG belt caught in cycle of extortion

A section of BNP men allegedly involved in Gazipur, Narayanganj, Savar

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

On October 20, four local BNP leaders allegedly demanded Tk 1 lakh from a garment factory owner in Gazipur's Manipur Bazar. "They said they needed money for the upcoming election," the owner told The Daily Star, seeking anonymity.

When he offered Tk 20,000, they threatened to shut down his factory. "I was forced to give the full amount. If I complain and the party gets angry, will the police stand by me?" he said, adding that a previous complaint to BNP's central office over a similar incident yielded no response.

Such incidents are not isolated. On October 17, the convener of Ward-20 BNP allegedly demanded Tk 65,000 in monthly extortion from a business owner in Gazipur city's Tek Kathora area. After refusal, the establishment was shut down.

**Businesspeople in Gazipur, Narayanganj and Savar -- home to over 6,000 garment factories employing 32 lakh workers -- say extortion and intimidation have not seen any decline despite the extortions linked to the Awami League fleeing after the previous government's fall on August 5 last year.**

A complaint has since been lodged with Gazipur Metropolitan Police.

In Narayanganj's Shibpur area, businessman Sohel Mia was attacked on October 2 by a Chhatra Dal leader

for refusing to pay Tk 2 lakh. The assault left two of his teeth broken and his right hand permanently paralysed. A case has been filed.

Businesspeople in Gazipur, Narayanganj and Savar -- home to over 6,000 garment factories employing 32 lakh workers -- say extortion and intimidation have not seen any decline despite the extortions linked to the Awami League fleeing after the previous government's fall on August 5 last year.

The sector, which generates 80 percent of Bangladesh's export revenue, is now witnessing a troubling continuation of politically backed coercion.

Factory owners say the lucrative trade of "jhut" -- fabric remnants and scraps from garment production -- has become a battleground.

Previously dominated by Awami

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## SPEAKERS



**Ruhul Quddus Khan**  
CEO and Managing Director, Unilever Bangladesh



**Ewa Wasiluk**  
Head of Supply Chain Operations, AMEA Syngenta



**Ejazur Rahman**  
Regional CEO, ISCEA (Asia)



**Syeda Tahya Hossain**  
Chief Human Resources Officer, Grameenphone



**Farah Zabeen**  
Global Operational Excellence Director, Coats



**Md. Shakhat Hossain**  
CEO, Neural Semiconductor



**Mahmud Hassan Khan**  
Chief Supply Chain Officer, Shanta Holdings



**Syed Shakil Ahmed**  
Head of AI Strategy & Development, Grameenphone

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## Jubo Dal man shot dead in Ctg's Raozan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A little over two weeks after the killing of a BNP activist in Hathazari upazila, a Jubo Dal activist was shot dead in broad daylight in Raozan upazila of Chattogram yesterday afternoon.

The victim, Mohammad Alamgir, alias Alam, 40, of Ward No. 9 in Raozan Municipality, was gunned down around 5:00pm on Rashid Para Road, near the Chattogram-Rangamati highway, police said.

"Unidentified assailants on a motorcycle opened fire on Alamgir, leaving him critically injured before fleeing the scene," said Balayat Hossain, assistant superintendent of police (Raozan circle).

Locals rushed Alamgir to the Raozan Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead. Police later recovered the body and took it to the local police station.

A police official, requesting anonymity, said Alamgir was accused in five cases, including robbery, filed with the Raozan Police Station.

In a statement, Golam Akbar Khanakter, former president of the BNP's Chattogram North District unit, strongly condemned the killing, calling it a "brutal murder" near Alamgir's home beside the Kaikobad Jame Mosque.

The statement added that Alamgir had recently been released from prison after nearly 12 years of imprisonment during the Awami League regime.

On October 8, businessman and BNP activist Abdul Hakim was shot dead in a similar daylight attack in Hathazari's Madunaghata area when armed assailants blocked his private SUV.



People inspect the wreckage of a vehicle targeted by an Israeli strike in the southern Lebanese village of Haruf yesterday. Lebanon's health ministry said one person was killed and another wounded in the strike.

PHOTO: AFP

## 60 UN members sign cybercrime treaty

Tech companies, rights groups warn of expanded state surveillance

AFP, Hanoi

Countries signed their first UN treaty targeting cybercrime in Hanoi yesterday, despite opposition from an unlikely band of tech companies and rights groups warning of expanded state surveillance.

The new global legal framework aims to strengthen international cooperation to fight digital crimes, from child pornography to transnational cyberscams and money laundering.

More than 60 countries were seen to sign the declaration yesterday, which means it will go into force once ratified by those states.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres described the signing as an "important milestone", but that it was "only the

beginning".

"Every day, sophisticated scams, destroy families, steal migrants and drain billions of dollars from our economy... We need a strong, connected global response," he said at the opening ceremony in Vietnam's capital yesterday.

The UN Convention against Cybercrime was first proposed by Russian diplomats in 2017, and approved by consensus last year after lengthy negotiations.

Critics say its broad language could lead to abuses of power and enable the cross-border repression of government critics.

"There were multiple concerns raised throughout the negotiation of the treaty around how it actually ends up compelling companies to share data," said Sabhanaz Rashid Diya, founder of the Tech Global

Institute think tank.

"It's almost rubber stamping a very problematic practice that has been used against journalists and in authoritarian countries," she told AFP.

Vietnam's government said this week that 60 countries were registered for the official signing, without disclosing which ones.

But the list will probably not be limited to Russia, China, and their allies.

"Cybercrime is a real issue across the world," Diya said. "I think everybody's kind of grappling with it."

The far-reaching online scam industry, for example, has ballooned in Southeast Asia in recent years, with thousands of scammers estimated to be involved and victims worldwide conned out of billions of dollars annually.

## Police stations buckling under budget strain

FROM PAGE 1  
solvent. But in most cases, they turn to "special funds" of police stations.

When asked about "special funds", several inspectors and sub-inspectors said that to meet the expenses, they collect money through various channels such as donations from businesspeople and payments for releasing accused from custody promptly upon bail. In some cases, complainants are asked to bear investigation costs.

According to police, Tk 6,000 is allocated for probing a murder or dacoity case; Tk 5,000 for a case over abduction or human trafficking; Tk 4,000 for an unnatural death case; Tk 2,000 for a case over women and child repression, rape, narcotics and cybercrimes; and Tk 3,000 for a case over acid attacks, anti-terrorism, possession of arms and explosives, and money laundering.

They said the actual cost of investigations is several times higher than the allocated amounts in almost all cases.

When contacted, Md Akram Hossain, additional inspector general

80,000 for refreshments per month."

He further said the station requires around Tk 1.5 lakh each month for supplies like paper, printer ink, bulbs, and toiletries but receives Tk 70,000 every four months. The allocation has recently been increased to Tk 40,000, but after paying taxes and VAT, the station received a little over Tk 1,00,000 this month.

The government also supplies police stations with some of the items they request each month, but only a portion of the demand is met.

According to a document obtained by this newspaper, one police station sought six printer toners, five keyboards, 20 rims of A4 paper, 20 rolls of toilet tissue, 15 cans of mosquito aerosol, 10 bottles of Savlon, and 10 packs of mosquito coils, among other items.

In response, it received three printer toners, no keyboards, seven rims of A4 paper, eight rolls of toilet tissue, three mosquito aerosols, two bottles of Savlon, and three packs of mosquito coils.

Besides, cleaners are hired from private firms, and technicians need to be called in when fans or other electrical

"The allocation of 15 litres of oil for each patrol vehicle per day is grossly inadequate. Moreover, we sometimes have to hire cars to conduct operations and pay for them from the same allocation," the OC said.

Officers of several other stations in the capital said they have no other choice but to depend on donations from local influential people to meet

shortfalls.

"If there were adequate allocations, police would not need to rely on such donations, which undermine the force's independence and damages its image," said an inspector.

"True reform of the force will remain elusive unless these shortfalls are addressed."

Contacted, Additional IG Akram Hossain said, "We are preparing a budget proposal to be sent to the home ministry, seeking to increase funds for police stations."

The Daily Star contacted Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury on September 29 and asked him whether the government has any plan to increase budgets for police stations. He declined

## Commission races against time

FROM PAGE 1

However, the meeting members could not agree on either option as both were seen as problematic, legally and politically.

Another constitutional expert who attended the meeting said the core disagreement was over what should happen if the reforms are not implemented within the 270-day deadline.

"Legally, dissolving parliament might be valid, but politically it would be unacceptable. It could trigger another constitutional crisis and possibly require a new national election, an outcome that would be costly and impractical."

The expert said automatically incorporating the reforms into the constitution without parliamentary approval would also be unrealistic. "We are not preparing any draft reform bill. Such a bill should be debated and passed by elected representatives in parliament," the expert said.

A third option -- forming a Constitution Reform Assembly before convening parliament -- was also discussed but rejected as unfeasible since it would require the interim government to stay in power longer.

"That would be politically unacceptable. So far, we have not found any solution that is both legally valid and politically acceptable," the expert said, hinting that the commission might retain the 270-day deadline without specifying consequences for non-compliance.

On the proposed referendum, the expert added, "It could be held on the same day as the national election or

earlier. That decision will rest with the government."

When asked about international precedents, the expert said, "In theory, if a parliament fails to complete such work, it should be dissolved and a new Constituent Assembly elected. That would be logical, but not necessarily practical in our situation."

The commission is also planning to propose that the government first issue a July Charter Implementation (Constitutional Reform) Order, followed by an ordinance to conduct a national referendum.

Once a new parliament is formed, it will function as a Constitution Reform Council for its first nine months, debating and approving the constitutional reforms while continuing its regular legislative duties.

### MEETING WITH NCP

A five-member delegation of the National Citizen Party (NCP) met the commission yesterday morning and demanded that the legal basis, and content of the July charter's implementation order be made public.

Speaking to reporters at the LD Hall of the parliament, NCP Member Secretary Akhter Hossen said, "The text, content, and scope of its effectiveness should be explained to the nation."

He confirmed that the commission is drafting the order to operationalise the charter, calling it a positive step, but noted that the draft text has yet to be presented to the party.

Akhter stressed that the implementation order must be "free from political bias" and "belong to the

entire nation".

Explaining why the NCP has not yet signed the July charter, he said, "Signing is only a formality. Without implementation, it is meaningless. The July charter represents the sovereign will of the people, not a mere political document."

He added that Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus would issue the implementation order, followed by a referendum allowing the next parliament to exercise constituent power. "After that, the parliament will incorporate the proposed reforms into the constitution and announce the reformed 2026 constitution," he said.

"Without a clear understanding of the order, the referendum alone cannot ensure proper implementation."

"We believe that full implementation of the July charter is the only way to overcome the current national crisis," he added.

On possible electoral alliances, Akhter said the NCP has not yet begun formal talks with any party, but it is open to such discussions "if necessary for the national interest".

Contacted, Prof Ali Riaz, vice president of the consensus commission, told The Daily Star that the NCP representatives have expressed willingness to sign the document but sought clarifications on several proposals.

"We have sent these points to legal experts for review," he said. "We are proceeding carefully after considering both the positive and negative aspects. The main goal is to get all parties to sign."

### GAP BETWEEN ALLOCATION AND ACTUAL COST

	ALLOCATION	ACTUAL COST (estimated)
Recovery, autopsy of unidentified body	Tk 6,000	Tk 25,000
Murder investigation	Tk 6,000	Tk 30,000
Case over abduction or human trafficking	Tk 5,000	Tk 15,000
A meal for a detainee	Tk 30	Tk 80
Operational expenses at a police station	Tk 70,000 (every four months)	Tk 1.5 lakh (monthly)

(finance) at the Police Headquarters, admitted that the allocations for investigations are far below what is required.

"It takes around Tk 30,000 to recover and bury an unidentified body, whereas the allocation is only Tk 6,000. We've already analysed investigation expenses and will soon submit a proposal to the Pay Commission to raise the allocations."

In reply to a question, Akram said, "We will seek Tk 25,000 for a murder case investigation, and similar adjustments for other cases."

### EXPENSES AT POLICE STATIONS

These correspondents visited police station under the DMP's Tejgaon Division multiple times between September 27 and 29 to get a clear picture of its daily expenses.

Seeking anonymity, the OC of the station said they receive Tk 40,000 a month as "source money" from the authorities for investigations and daily operations.

"The bulk of it goes to refreshments for visitors and 131 staff in my station. Around 200 guests, including political leaders and businesspeople, visit the station every day," said the OC.

"On average, we need more than Tk

items break down.

We have to pay a cook Tk 15,000 and a cleaner Tk 10,000 per month. An electrician or mechanic charges around Tk 600 per visit," said the OC.

Food allowances for detainees are capped at Tk 30 per meal whereas a proper meal now costs around Tk 80, said the OC.

In many cases, the police station has to pay for meals so that prisoners don't starve if their families fail to provide support.

Asked how the station manages to pay for all these, the OC said the money comes from a special fund, not from any formal channel.

"The high-ups are aware of the situation... How can we meet people's expectations when we have to rely on donations to meet our expenses?" said the officer.

At the station, four of the eight

vehicles malfunction frequently while the remaining ones are old and unable to keep pace with fast moving cars or motorbikes, the OC said.

"A police station must operate round the clock to carry out patrols and deal with all sorts of cases. But the funds fall far short of what is needed to sustain this workload."

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Highest budget for edn if BNP returns to power  
**Pledges Tarique**

UNB, Dhaka



BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said if his party is voted to power, it will prioritise education by giving the sector the highest budget allocation to enhance its quality and develop skilled, ethical human resources.

"We have a plan, as we did before. During the tenure of Khaleda Zia, education used to get the highest allocation in the national budget. Inshallah, if BNP gets the responsibility of running the country again, we will ensure the highest allocation for education," he said.

Tarique made the remarks while virtually addressing the Khandaker Shamsul Alam Foundation's Merit Scholarship Examination and Results and Prize-Giving Ceremony held at Pakundia Government High School field in Kishoreganj.

Tarique said the party's plans include repairing and improving dilapidated primary schools so that students can study in a better environment.

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**'Minority rights a crucial element of democracy'**

**Analysts call for just and fair polls in Bangladesh**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As Bangladesh goes through a transition and heads for elections by February next year, political analysts have called for a just and fair process where all people, regardless of caste, creed, and gender, can participate.

They made the remarks at a workshop "Inclusive Democracy", organised by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) in collaboration with FES Bangladesh.

**Women make up nearly 50 percent of the population, yet their representation, along with that of other minorities, has been notably limited in this historic process [July charter].**

Zillur Rahman, CGS President

It held at a city hotel to encourage ideological dialogue and democratic practice among young politicians, said a press statement.

Feljan Gerdes, resident representative of German-based think tank Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Bangladesh, said the issue of minority rights remains a crucial element of democracy worldwide, as "the tyranny of the majority is not necessarily better than the tyranny of the minority".

CGS President Zillur Rahman said

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## A healing home for Dhaka's trees

**DNCC to open tree support centre next month**

DIPAN NANDY

The smoke, dust, and concrete walls of Dhaka seem to be closing in, making it harder to breathe each day. In this bustling city, catching sight of greenery feels like a rare stroke of luck. Yet, the answer to relief lies close -- in trees. A little shade, a breath of oxygen, a moment of peace.

With this vision, a unique initiative is taking shape in the capital -- the Tree Service and Rooftop Garden Support Centre.

Located at the northwest corner of Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Memorial Park in Gulshan, the initiative by Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) aims to build a modern and sustainable system for tree care and preservation within urban life.

According to DNCC sources, the tree "hospital" will begin operations next month. Environmental organisation Green Savers will operate it

jointly with the DNCC.

The centre will provide treatment and care for plants. Citizens can bring their sick or weak plants to the Tree Hospital, where specialists will diagnose



Clinic where people can learn about soil composition, watering schedules, and the right balance of light and nutrients.

One of the most innovative features is the Plant Foster Hub. In

diseases, test soil quality, and offer guidance on proper care.

A Plant Pharmacy and Laboratory will teach organic methods of plant treatment. There will also be a Plant Care

the rush of city life, many people struggle to care for their plants regularly, and some must leave them behind when travelling for long periods. This centre will offer a safe space for them.

People can leave their plants here for a few days, and trained staff will look after them.

The centre will also include a Plant Library and Research Zone, housing books, guides, and research papers on plant life, sustainable agriculture, and the relationship between nature and urban living.

Ahsan Rony, chief executive officer of Green Savers, said, "We don't just want to plant trees -- we want to learn how to care for them. Our goal is a Dhaka

where every person loves trees, nurtures them, and considers them a part of life."

Contacted, DNCC Administrator Mohammad Azaz said, "The entire facility

will be built using eco-friendly architectural design. It will be lightweight, energy-efficient, and low in carbon emissions. The design will include open spaces that allow natural light and air to flow freely, creating an ideal environment for plant care."

Will ensure expat representation in parliament  
**Says Jamaat chief**

STAR REPORT



Jamaat-e-Islami Amer Shafiqur Rahman has said that if his party comes to power, it will ensure the representation of expatriates in the national parliament.

Currently visiting the US, Shafiqur made the remarks while delivering the keynote speech at a civic reception in New York on Friday local time.

He recalled how many expatriates withheld remittances during the July uprising as a protest against the fallen Sheikh Hasina-led government. "Your decision not to send remittances shook the ground beneath the oppressor's feet."

He also outlined his party's priorities in various sectors, including education, economy, employment, judicial system, and international relations, if elected to power. He emphasised that both dignity and security of women would be ensured.

The Jamaat chief urged expatriates to exercise their right to vote. "Do not forget to cast your vote -- vote for whoever you like, whichever party or candidate you prefer. What matters is that you vote."

## 'His ideals still relevant for post-uprising Bangladesh'

Speakers tell discussion marking Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq's 152nd birth anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq's politics of rights, agrarian reform, and electoral legitimacy remain crucial for post-July uprising Bangladesh, as the country struggles to redefine justice and democracy, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

Marking the 152nd birth anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla, The Daily Star organised a discussion titled "The Daily Star Itihas Adda: Sher-e-Bangla's Relevance in Today's Bangladesh" at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Writer and researcher Altaf Parvez said the present time demands a critical and impartial reading of Sher-e-Bangla's life.

Describing Fazlul Huq as a multidimensional and experimental leader, Parvez noted that despite his elite background and early association with the Nawabs and the Muslim League, Huq went on to form the Krishak Proja Party to represent peasants and tenants.

"In the 1930s, the main contradiction was between cultivators and zamindars.

Through land reform and debt relief, Huq awakened Bengal with a new consciousness," he said.

Parvez described 1937 as a "disastrous turning point", when

**July charter's core agenda of ending discrimination overlooked those who suffered the most -- workers, peasants, Dalits, minorities, women, and students.**

Altaf Parvez

Writer and researcher

**Sher-e-Bangla's life shows that compromise is not weakness but a necessity in leadership. No society can move forward without some level of give and take.**

Perween Hasan

Academic and historian

Congress's refusal to back Huq forced him into an alliance with the Muslim League. Despite setbacks, he said Huq's 1937-39 ministry implemented major reforms such

as free primary education, the Debtors' Relief Act, and job quotas for Muslims.

Referring to the July charter, Parvez said its core agenda of ending discrimination overlooked those who suffered the most -- workers, peasants, Dalits, minorities, women, and students.

"Did we pay the debt of blood, or did we betray it?" he asked.

Constitution expert Arif Khan described Fazlul Huq as an "organic intellectual" devoted to education, land rights, and debt relief.

Calling him "a founder of the state of Bangladesh", he said Huq's vision of regional distinctiveness and self-determination predated later nationalist movements.

"The state that was supposed to deliver justice did not do so," Arif said. "We were turned into subjects, like in a kingdom. Sher-e-Bangla gave the subjects back their rights as citizens."

He added that Huq never tolerated authoritarianism. "He believed in elections and not in coming to power by any other means," he said.

Writer and academic Prof

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**Police probe slap on child during father's arrest**

**Viral video sparks outrage**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have launched an inquiry into an incident in which a girl was slapped as she clung to her father during his arrest at Geneva Camp in Mohammadpur on Thursday.

In the footage, the child was seen crying and holding onto her father while someone in the crowd slaps him, hitting the girl in the process as several uniformed police officers stand nearby.

Police yesterday said the man, identified as Rustam, was arrested during a raid in connection with a clash between two drug trading groups in the area.

Earlier that day, 20-year-old Md Zahid was killed in a crude bomb explosion during the clash.

After the video went viral, many criticised the police, saying that while they have the right to arrest suspects, such actions were unacceptable.

Jewel Rana, additional deputy commissioner of DMP's Tejgaon division, told The Daily Star, "We have seen the video. Someone from the crowd slapped him; only the hand was visible. We will investigate further."

He said it has not yet been confirmed whether the person who struck the man and the child was a police officer or a civilian.

**Institutional reforms key to ending enforced disappearances**

**Says law adviser**

Law Adviser Dr Asif Nazrul yesterday said institutional reforms were required alongside legal ones to prevent enforced disappearance, calling the crime worse than murder.

He was addressing the inaugural session of a day-long workshop on the issue at a city hotel.

The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances organised the workshop with assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations.

Nazrul said a courageous and justified role of judges is essential for ensuring justice as "the impartial and bold stand of the judiciary will uphold the culture of enforced disappearance from Bangladesh".

Amid heavy traffic, pedestrians in Dhaka's Tejgaon area struggled to use the footpath as several motorcyclists drove onto it to avoid the gridlock. The walkway, already in poor condition, is being damaged further, leaving pedestrians with little space to walk safely. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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## NARSINGDI MUNICIPALITY Police, admin at odds over road tolls

JAHIDUL ISLAM, Narsingdi

Police and the local administration in Narsingdi municipality are locked in a dispute over toll collection from roads.

While police say the practice is illegal, the local administration has allowed it by inviting tenders, creating confusion and chaos in the town's transport system.

Documents show that Local Government Deputy Director Mousumi Sarkar Rakhi, then administrator of Narsingdi municipality, floated tenders on February 27 for leasing nine locations -- including markets, bus and truck terminals, and several roadside CNG and auto-rickshaw stands -- for collecting tolls.

BNP leader Md Alamgir Hossain, vice president of the party's Narsingdi city unit, won the lease by depositing Tk 25.20 lakh into the government treasury.

Police, however, said such toll collection amounts to extortion and violates a High Court directive that prohibits the practice.

The conflict escalated on October 4, when Additional Superintendent of Police (Sadar Circle) Md Anwar Hossain and his team were attacked by 40-50 men while attempting to arrest illegal toll collectors at Arshinagar intersection. Two detainees were forcibly freed during the assault, leaving Anwar seriously injured. He was later taken to Rajarbagh Central Police Hospital in Dhaka for treatment.

Police have since filed a case naming five people, including BNP leader Alamgir Hossain, and 25-30 unidentified others. Seven suspects have been arrested so far.

On April 21, 2022, the HC issued a directive prohibiting toll collection from any road or highway without designated terminals. The Local Government Division later issued a circular on September 25, 2022, reinforcing the order.

Under Section 98(7) of the Municipal Act, collecting tolls or parking fees outside officially approved terminals is entirely illegal.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1



The Law Department of Rajshahi University yesterday celebrated its 72nd anniversary and reunion with a colourful ceremony marking its long and illustrious journey. The main event began at 9:30am in front of the department and was inaugurated by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed as the chief guest. Around 3,000 alumni, including 29 judges of the Supreme Court and High Court Divisions, district and sessions judges from across the country, and many lawyers, attended the programme.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

PATUAHKHALI, COX'S BAZAR

## Fishers set sail again as 22-day hilsa ban ends

STAR REPORT

Fishermen in Patuakhali and Cox's Bazar districts are eagerly preparing to set sail for the deep sea as the 22-day ban on hilsa fishing came to an end at midnight today.

The ban, imposed from October 4, was aimed at ensuring the safe spawning of mother hilsa, prohibiting the catching, selling, and transporting of the fish across the country.

A visit to fishing villages in Patuakhali's Kalapara upazila, including Alipur and Mohipur, revealed a festive atmosphere among the communities despite the financial strain many endured during the ban.

Most fishermen in the district

spent the past weeks idle, grappling with debt and waiting for the ban to be lifted.

The fishing terminals of Mohipur and Alipur, after 22 days of silence, finally gave way to bustling activity



yesterday, with boat owners and crews putting the finishing touches on their preparations -- painting trawlers, repairing and sorting nets, and loading daily essentials -- all hopeful for a bountiful hilsa catch.

Abdul Aziz, a fisherman at the Mohipur BFDC terminal, said, "During the ban, the government provided only 25 kilogrammes of rice per fisherman. While it is difficult to run a family with that aid, everyone did not even receive it. Many of us have fallen into debt. Only a good catch can now change our days."

Shafiq Hossain, a fisherman from Nilganj in Kalapara, said, "All preparations are complete. Many trawlers are already anchored near the Khaprabhanga river estuary. At midnight, we will cast our nets into the sea. If we don't get a good hilsa catch, it will be a big worry for us."

Kamrul Islam, district fisheries officer in Patuakhali, said the

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Bank Asia

### NOTIFICATION OF BANK ASIA EARNINGS DISCLOSURE PROGRAM Q3, 2025

This is for information of all concerned that an Earnings Disclosure Program on Un-Audited Third Quarter (Q3) Financial Statements 2025 of Bank Asia PLC. will be held at 4:00 p.m. on 29 October 2025 through a digital platform, as per the BSEC notification dated 20 June 2018. All concerned shareholders, existing and potential investors across the globe, research analysts, financial reporters and individuals involved in capital market activities are cordially invited to participate in the program through the live webcast facility at following link :

<https://meetbd.live/BankAsiaQ3-2025>.

User name : **BankAsiaQ3-2025**, Password : **basia@321**.

Dated: Dhaka  
23 October 2025

## Minority rights

FROM PAGE 3

an election alone does not guarantee democracy, but without elections, the democratic process cannot begin. Bangladesh is heading towards a national election, and it remains to be seen how that process unfolds.

"The question of who is marginalised in this country is a complex one. Data shows that although there are around 55 registered political parties, only 18 have signed the July charter," he said.

Zillur said women make up nearly 50 percent of the population, yet their representation, along with that of other minorities, has been notably limited in this historic process. Therefore, how this consensus was

reached remains a matter of reflection.

CGS Executive Director Parvez Karim Abbasi said in past electoral processes, those who came to power became immensely powerful after the elections, while those who lost almost disappeared from the scene.

"When we discuss political minorities, the issue of religious minorities naturally comes up. Economic marginalisation is also a major challenge, where the same groups continue to enjoy privileges repeatedly."

"At the same time, cultural marginalisation has become increasingly evident, often imposed through coercion and, at times, with the support of the state," he said.

Writer and researcher Maha Mirza moderated the workshop, which was attended by representatives from various student political organisations.

### Highest budget

FROM PAGE 3

"We also want to ensure that teachers can focus fully on teaching. At the same time, we will provide social and economic support to teachers so that they do not have to think about doing other jobs and can devote their full attention to educating children," he said.

Tarique said lessons on rejecting and protesting against corruption must be included at the primary level of education. "Through primary teachers, such values should be instilled in students so they understand from an early age that corruption is an evil practice."

He advised students that there is no shortcut to success in life and warned them not to waste time on electronic gadgets and social media.

Tarique said his party has a plan to identify and nurture talents in all fields -- academics, recitation, mathematics, and sports -- and help them grow.

He expressed hope that upon returning to Bangladesh from London, he would sit face-to-face with the youth to discuss how to rebuild and advance the country together.

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## বনজন্দুব্য বিভাগের দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (খাড়া/ অন্যান্য উৎস হতে আহরিত গাছ)

এতোরা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবস্থার জন্ম জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড ও এলজিডির বিভিন্ন প্রকল্প এলাকায় অপরিহার্য হিসাবে অপসারণ যোগ্য বিদ্যমান গাছ উন্নয়নমূলক কাজের স্বার্থে অপসারণ ও উপকূলীয় বন বিভাগ, ভোলা আওতায় বিভিন্ন রেঞ্জ/কেন্দ্রের খাড়া গাছ ও অন্যান্য উৎস হতে আহরিত বনজন্দুব্যের লটসমূহ বিভাগের নিমিত্তে দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী মোতাবেক বন্ধ থামে দরপত্র আহরণ করা যাচ্ছে।

দরপত্র সিভিউল বিভাগের তারিখ ও মূল্য	দরপত্র সিভিউল বিভাগের ছান	দরপত্র দাখিলের ছান, তারিখ ও সময়	দরপত্র দোকানের ছান / তারিখ ও সময়
০৩/১১/২০২৫ খ্রি. হাত	১। রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, সদর রেঞ্জ, ভোলা;	১। রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, উপকূলীয় বন বিভাগ, ভোলা।	
১০/১১/২০২৫ খ্রি. পর্যন্ত (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে)	২। রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, চৰকাশন রেঞ্জ, ভোলা;	২। রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, প্রশাসক, ভোলা এবং কার্যালয়।	
প্রতিটি রেঞ্জের জন্য সিভিউল মূল্য ৮০০.০০ (চারশত টাকা) অন্তর্বর্তী	৩। রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, মনসুরা রেঞ্জ, ভোলা;	৩। উচ্চজ্ঞান নির্ধারী কর্মকর্তা এর কার্যালয়, চৰকাশন, ভোলা।	
	৪। ভারতান্তর কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় এসএফএনটিসি, ভোলা;	৪। ভারতান্তর কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয় সময়: ১১/১১/২০২৫ খ্রি। সময়: সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ০১:০০ ঘটিকা।	

দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্বে সংশ্লিষ্ট লটের বনজন্দুব্য অবস্থার স্বেচ্ছায়ে নিতে হবে। দরপত্র দাখিলের পর বনজন্দুব্য না দেখার অভ্যর্থনা কেননা আহরণ করা যাবে।

জেলা প্রশাসক এবং কার্যালয়ে অবস্থার শর্তাবলী ও অন্যান্য উৎস হতে আহরণ করা যাবে। দরপত্র দাখিলের সময়ে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে অতি বন বিভাগের অধীন সংশ্লিষ্ট

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e-mail: dfobhola@gmail.com

## Six-month-old Ludo feud ends in deadly clash One killed, 30 hurt in Brahmanbaria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

What began as a simple Ludo game during Ramadan in March this year has turned into six months of simmering hostility -- finally erupting into a deadly clash that left one man dead and at least 30 others injured in Brahmanbaria Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The victim, identified as Nasir Mia, 65, of Birampur village, was killed when two rival groups -- the "Harun chairman group" and the "Iqbal-Anis Member-Sachhu group" -- clashed with local weapons around 5:00am yesterday, said Mohammad Azharul Islam, officer-in-charge of Brahmanbaria Sadar Police Station, quoting locals.

Police sent the body to Brahmanbaria General Hospital morgue for autopsy.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

During the hours-long clash, several houses and shops were vandalised and at least four homesteads were set on fire, he added.

## US 'fabricating' a new eternal war Warns Venezuela's Maduro as Pentagon deploys top aircraft carrier to LatAm

AFP, Washington

The Pentagon on Friday ordered the deployment of an aircraft carrier strike group to counter drug-trafficking organizations in Latin America, a major escalation of a US military buildup that Venezuela's leader warned was steered at "fabricating a war."

US President Donald Trump, who campaigned on a promise of ending foreign military interventions, in early September launched a military campaign targeting boats allegedly used to smuggle narcotics, destroying at least 10 vessels in a series of strikes.

But the American military buildup as part of that campaign — including 10 F-35 stealth warplanes and eight US Navy ships — has sparked fears in Venezuela that Washington's ultimate goal is the overthrow of President Nicolas Maduro, and the decision to send the carrier is certain to add to those concerns.

Late Friday, Maduro accused the Trump administration of stoking "a new eternal war."

The US-Venezuela standoff has also pulled in Colombia's Gustavo Petro, a sharp critic of the American strikes who was sanctioned by Washington on Friday for allegedly allowing drug trafficking to flourish.

Pak threatens 'open war' if Afghan peace talks collapse

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan's defence minister said yesterday he believes Afghanistan wants peace but that failure to reach an agreement during talks in Istanbul would mean "open war," days after both sides agreed to a ceasefire following deadly border clashes.

The talks in Istanbul, which began yesterday and are expected to continue into today, mark the latest attempt by Pakistan and Afghanistan to prevent a relapse into violence after the worst border fighting since the Taliban's 2021 takeover of Kabul.

The talks are meant to devise a mechanism to enforce the Doha ceasefire longer term.

Khwaja Muhammad Asif said there had been no incidents in the four to five days since it was agreed, and both sides were complying with the truce.

"We have the option, if no agreement takes place, we have an open war with them," he said in televised remarks from Pakistan. "But I saw that they want peace."

The clashes erupted earlier this month after Islamabad demanded that the Taliban curb militants it says are attacking Pakistan from sanctuaries inside Afghanistan.

Pakistan launched airstrikes across the border and both sides exchanged heavy fire, killing dozens and prompting the closure of key crossings that remain shut.

## Ukrainian strike damages a dam in Russia's Belgorod

Says region's governor; Russian missile strikes in Kyiv, other regions kill 4; 20 hurt

AGENCIES

The governor of Russia's Belgorod region said yesterday that Ukraine had struck a dam on a local reservoir, causing damage.

In a statement on Telegram, Vyacheslav Gladkov said that repeat strikes on the dam could risk flooding, and advised residents of parts of two border settlements, Shebekino and Belzyudovka, to leave their homes for temporary accommodation.

Belgorod region borders Ukraine's eastern Kharkiv region, and has come under attack by Kyiv's forces since the outbreak of full-scale conflict between Russia and Ukraine in 2022. There was no immediate comment from Kyiv, reports Reuters.

Separately, Russia's Defence Ministry said that its forces had downed 121 Ukrainian drones overnight, including seven that were flying towards Moscow.

Meanwhile, Russian overnight drone and missile strikes killed four people and wounded some 20 others in the Ukraine capital Kyiv and several other regions, authorities said yesterday.

"One rescuer was killed and another wounded as a result of a repeated missile strike on the Petropavlivska community in the Dniproptetrovsk region," the internal affairs ministry said on social media.

A woman was also killed, and seven people were injured in the eastern region, the ministry added, reporting damage to fire trucks, residential buildings, and shops, reports AFP.

Moscow also targeted Kyiv, killing

two people and wounding 12 others, mayor Vitali Klitschko said.

AFP journalists heard the distinctive whirring of missiles and powerful blasts at around 4:00 am (01:00 GMT).

Emergency services shared photos of firefighters battling flames as major fires broke out in the Desnyansky and Darnitsky districts.

Russia fired nine Iskander-M ballistic missiles and 62 attack drones, the Ukrainian air force said, adding it had downed four ballistic missiles and 50 drones.

The US and the European Union announced new sanctions this week on Russian energy.

US President Donald Trump's administration has prepared additional sanctions it could use to target key areas of Russia's economy if

President Vladimir Putin continues to delay ending Moscow's war in Ukraine, according to a US official and another person familiar with the matter.

US officials have also told European counterparts that they support the EU using frozen Russian assets to buy US weapons for Kyiv, and Washington has held nascent internal conversations about leveraging Russian assets held in the US to support Ukraine's war effort.

While it is not clear whether Washington will actually carry out any of those moves in the immediate term, it shows there is a well-developed toolkit within the administration to up the ante further after Trump imposed sanctions on Russia on Wednesday for the first time since returning to office in January.



Protesters hold signs as they attend an anti-Trump rally against US President Donald Trump's tariff policy ahead of his visit to South Korea for the APEC summit, in Seoul, South Korea, yesterday. Trump headed to Asia for high-stakes trade talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping, saying he would also like to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during the trip.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Thailand's Queen Mother Sirikit dies at 93

REUTERS, Bangkok

Thailand's Queen Mother Sirikit, who brought glamour and elegance to a postwar revival in the country's monarchy and who, in later years, would occasionally wade into politics, has died aged 93, the Thai Royal Household Bureau said yesterday.

Sirikit had been out of the public eye since a stroke in 2012.

The palace said she had been hospitalised since 2019 due to several illnesses and developed a bloodstream infection on October 17 before passing away late on Friday.

A mourning period of one year has been declared for members of the royal family and household. The government said public offices would fly flags at half-mast for a month and asked government officials to observe mourning for one year. Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul cancelled his trip to the Asean summit in Kuala Lumpur due to the Queen Mother's death. He told reporters he would travel to Malaysia to sign a ceasefire agreement with Cambodia today but return to Thailand afterwards.

## বাংলাদেশ মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি

বাংলাদেশের একমাত্র প্রাচীন  
মেরিটাইম ইউনিভার্সিটি

১৪/৬-১৪/২৩, পল্লবী, মিরপুর-১২, ঢাকা-১২১৬

### ২০২৫-২০২৬ শিক্ষাবর্ষে ১ম বর্ষ মাত্রক (সম্মান) শ্রেণিতে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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১. ফ্লাকাল্টি অব অর্থ আভ ওশন সায়েন্স	৩. ফ্লাকাল্টি অব মেরিটাইম গ্রান্টস আভ পলিসি
• বিএসসি (অনার্স) ইন ওশনেন্ট্রাফি	• এলএলবি (অনার্স) ইন মেরিটাইম লি
• বিএসসি (অনার্স) ইন ফিল্ডেজিজ	
(ক) বিজ্ঞান শাখা হতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সম্মানের পরীক্ষায় নূনতম G.P.A. ৪.০০ সহ উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে।	(ক) যেকোন শাখা হতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সম্মানের পরীক্ষায় নূনতম G.P.A. ৩.৫০ সহ উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে এবং সকল বিষয়ে নূনতম "B" Grade থাকতে হবে।
(খ) উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সম্মানের পরীক্ষায় গণিত, ইরেজিজ, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন এবং জীববিজ্ঞান এ পাসিত বিষয়ে যথেষ্টে যেকোন এতে "A" Grade এবং অন্যান্য সকল বিষয়ে নূনতম "B" Grade থাকতে হবে।	(খ) ইরেজিজ মাধ্যম এর শিক্ষাবর্ষের ক্ষেত্রে O-Level এ নূনতম ০৫ (পাঁচ) টি বিষয়ে কৃতকার্য হতে হবে। (বুই) ০২ এর অধিক বিষয়ে "C" Grade আবেদনকারীর অযোগ্যতা হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবে।
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(গ) ইরেজিজ মাধ্যম এর শিক্ষাবর্ষের ক্ষেত	

## Election must be held on time

### No obstruction should be tolerated

As things stand, the nation seems firmly headed towards an election in February 2026, while the Election Commission (EC) plans to announce the schedule in November. This is the most important event for post-uprising Bangladesh as it strives to make a proper, smooth democratic transition. Nothing, therefore, should be done to disrupt it in any way, and any attempt to do so should be condemned. An election, despite all the challenges it entails, is the best way forward for the country to chalk out its future directions.

The NCP's demand for a new EC is both disruptive and poorly conceived. The party's claim that the EC is not neutral—because it refused to approve their demand for "Shapla" as a party symbol—is as partisan as possible. The EC has repeatedly explained that the flower is a national symbol enshrined in our constitution, and no one party can be permitted to use it for election purposes. Jamaat's concerns over EC neutrality seem similarly unsubstantiated.

The latest amendment to the Representation of the People Order (RPO)—which makes it mandatory for members of an electoral alliance to contest under their own party symbols, rather than the coalition leader's—is something that we welcome. We agree with the law adviser that using one's own party symbol gives the voter a far better idea about the candidate and what their party stands for. Fighting under a bigger party's symbol does not give voters a clear understanding of individual candidates and parties. The fear expressed by some—that if BNP's coalition partners, for example, do not fight under its symbol of "sheaf of paddy", they may not win seats—is precisely why they should not be allowed to do so. If a party or candidate does not command the support of voters, then why should they be allowed to ride on the shoulders of a bigger party? If a party cannot win even in one constituency under its own symbol, it is clearly indicative of their actual strength and support among voters.

In fact, parties should welcome a shift where alliances are formed *after* the election is held, so that any partnership forged is among groups that have proven the strength of their support base and, as such, can rightly claim their place in the governance process. BNP's discomfort with this idea is understandable, but it also shows the value of the party symbol, and it should not be allowed to be misused.

We urge the interim government to use its full force, which it appears to have, to ensure a proper election process leading to a fair and participatory election on time. This is the most important national priority at the moment.

## Protect the rivers surrounding Dhaka

### Resolve legal and other complications in river demarcation project

It is disappointing to see the poor state of the four rivers surrounding Dhaka amid continued disregard for environmental laws, regulations, and directives. In June 2009, the High Court ordered the relevant authorities to demarcate the original boundaries of the Buriganga, Turag, Balu, and Shitalakkhya rivers to prevent their encroachment and pollution. The Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) was assigned to install over 10,000 boundary pillars and build 220 km of circular walkways along both banks of the rivers. However, since the project began in 2014, BIWTA has completed only 72 km of walkways and installed 6,200 pillars so far, falling far short of the target. That such a crucial conservation project could not be completed even in 16 years is alarming, to say the least.

Reportedly, the first phase of the project cost the government Tk 142 crore. The second phase began in 2018, with an estimated cost of Tk 845.55 crore. However, in July 2022, the deadline was extended to June 2024, raising the cost to Tk 1,181.10 crore. But that deadline was also missed, leading to further cost escalations. The new deadline is now June 2026, with the project cost revised up to Tk 1,275 crore.

Besides inflated budgets, another effect of delayed project implementation is that the walkways that were built along the riverbanks are already in bad shape. During a recent visit to Shyampur, our correspondent found that due to poor maintenance, the boundary walls along some parts of the walkways had collapsed. Environmentalists blamed corruption for this situation, claiming the authorities had carried out faulty river demarcation and conducted only sporadic eviction drives to reclaim encroached areas, leaving the foreshores and riverbanks mostly in the hands of grabbers, which is most unfortunate. The project director has, however, claimed that the work has remained suspended as grabbers obtained court orders to halt construction in many areas, and that they have sought HC intervention in this matter.

We urge the government to take initiatives to complete this crucial river protection project. It must probe the causes of delay and hold to account those responsible for it. Most importantly, the legal complications hindering the completion of the work must be resolved without delay. These time and cost overruns in development projects have long been an issue in the country, particularly during the tenure of the ousted Awami League regime, when the practice of indefinitely delaying important public projects became commonplace. This must not be the case any longer. We must protect the four rivers surrounding Dhaka, as well as others across the country, for our own survival.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

### Stonehenge gifted to the British

On this day in 1918, Baronet Cecil Chubb, the last private owner of Stonehenge, gifted it to the British people. He had purchased the monument for £6,600 at an auction in 1915.

# EDITORIAL

## Women's political rights and a revolution deferred

IFFAT JAHAN ANTARA  
is an independent researcher.

### IFFAT JAHAN ANTARA

The national conference of the Forum for Women's Political Rights (FWPR), held on October 9, functioned less as an event and more as a political intervention. It brought together activists, scholars, labour organisers, civil society actors, and political party leaders who have long challenged the gendered boundaries of Bangladesh's democracy. The discussion unfolded within a feminist framework that views women's political representation not as benevolent inclusion, but as a struggle over who counts as a political subject and whose voice shapes the national agenda.

The presence of two women advisers of the interim government—both veteran campaigners for women's rights—was symbolically significant yet analytically revealing. It underscored a paradox at the heart of Bangladesh's democratic transition: that women may occupy certain spaces of power, counsel, and activism, but remain marginal to actual decision-making. The question is: how can a democracy claim renewal while half of the citizens remain structurally excluded from political power?

Since the release of our reform commissions' reports and subsequent debates within the National Consensus Commission, women's parliamentary representation has remained a key site of contention. The Election Reform Commission had proposed 100 reserved seats for women to be filled through rotation-based direct elections—an arrangement that could have conferred genuine democratic legitimacy on women's participation. Yet the consensus commission, dominated by political parties, rejected the proposal. What eventually appeared in the July National Charter was a diluted compromise: maintaining 50 reserved seats, gradually increasing to 100, and requiring parties to nominate only five percent women in general seats, rising incrementally to 33 percent by 2043.

This approach reflects what scholar Nira Yuval Daviss calls the "gendered logic of citizenship", a system that welcomes women's symbolic presence but limits their real participation in power. When women make up 50 percent of the population, offering only five percent representation is not inclusion; it is a new form of exclusion. Against this backdrop, the FWPR's demands were both principled and practical—direct election of 100 women's seats in the next parliamentary cycle—arguing that once women gain voter-based legitimacy, the need for separate quotas will naturally diminish. The FWPR also insisted that all political parties be legally required to nominate at least 33 percent female candidates, rising

to 50 percent through amendments to the Representation of the People Order (RPO). Complementary measures, such as state funding for women candidates, legal protection against political and online violence, and decentralisation of power, were proposed as structural correctives to the patriarchal logic of party politics.

Underlying these proposals is a core feminist insight: women's exclusion from decision-making is not an accidental absence but a product of institutional design. Representation, therefore, cannot be seen as a favour extended to women; it is a vital measure of constitutional equality and democratic legitimacy for all.

The discussions and demands of the FWPR conference also foregrounded intersectionality as central to democratic reform. Working-class women, informal sector workers,

their advice to "stay organised, train young leaders, and sustain pressure" sounded as much like encouragement as an admission of limited power. This exposed a recurring feature of Bangladesh's political order: women are visible as advocates and advisers, yet remain excluded from the central spaces where decisions are made. Their limited influence over the charter reveals the deep gendered boundaries of reform, even within moments that claim to be transformative.

The July Charter reproduces the same patriarchal structures that continue to hinder women's political empowerment. By retaining the reserved-seat system and indirect nomination, it preserves an undemocratic mode of selection in which women's access to parliament depends on party loyalty rather than public legitimacy. This sustains the

also reflected how deeply divided Bangladesh's political class remains on women's participation. Most agreed that party "mindsets" must change, yet none said what their respective party would do to achieve the change.

Jamaat e Islami, for instance, boasted of having many women organisers but rejected the idea of direct elections—a textbook case of presence without power. Several left-leaning parties expressed support for rotation-based or direct elections but failed to hold their ground during the consensus commission's negotiations. These contradictions show how even progressive rhetoric often collapses under the weight of patriarchal political culture.

The challenge, then, is not just quantitative but also qualitative. A nominated woman represents her patron; an elected woman represents



VISUAL: ALIZA RAHMAN

women with disabilities, and Dalit or Indigenous women face overlapping barriers to political participation. One participant from the Dalit community described being repeatedly denied electoral nomination by political parties, revealing the systemic nature of exclusion. For these women, the promise of reform often remains abstract. Without addressing class, caste, and regional inequality, representation risks reproducing the very hierarchies it claims to dismantle. Gender justice, therefore, must intersect with social justice, requiring electoral mechanisms that make political participation accessible to women beyond elite networks.

The two advisors present at the conference, Farida Akhter and Sharmin Mursid, voiced strong support for FWPR's proposals. They endorsed the call for direct elections but could not say whether they would be able to influence the July Charter or ensure the reforms were carried through.

culture of patronage politics, where representation is mediated through male party elites. The charter also maintains the gatekeeping power of male leadership—a "fraternal contract" that determines who is deemed electable. Without sanctions for non-compliance, parties can nominate women in unwinnable constituencies, turning quotas into performance rather than reform. Equally troubling, the charter lacks any intersectional vision, treating women as a single category and erasing class, caste, and regional inequalities.

Taken together, these features make the charter not a rupture, as many had expected it to be, but a reassertion of patriarchal continuity. Its drafting process mirrored its outcome, with negotiations led by male party elites. Major political parties chose caution over courage, signalling that even in transition, reform remains bound by male consensus. Political party representatives at the conference

her people. Direct election grants women independence and legitimacy. Take the cases of Nepal and Rwanda, where direct election and parity laws not only increased women's presence in politics but also transformed policy priorities, expanding health budgets, land rights, and local accountability. By contrast, Bangladesh continues to choose symbolic participation and concession while excluding women from real political power. Sadly, instead of addressing this reality, the July Charter only serves to perpetuate it, leaving women's representation confined within the same procedural limits that have long defined post-independence politics.

The path ahead lies not only in revising the charter but also in re-politicising citizenship—making women's representation a core measure of democratic health. Until this happens, Bangladesh's reform moment will remain what the FWPR aptly called it: a revolution deferred.

## An investment boom hidden in plain sight



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SUMAIYA MAHJABIN

Bangladesh's rural economy is now experiencing a significant influx of capital from returning migrant workers, who are largely invisible in official data. The same remittance that policymakers have regarded for decades as a foreign exchange lifeline is emerging as an informal driver of rural enterprise, as returnee savings become a primary source for newly established businesses.

In the FY2024-25 alone, Bangladesh received a record remittance of \$30.32 billion, coinciding with funds flowing into major rural districts such as Sylhet, Noakhali, Cumilla, and Jashore. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, about 466,666 expatriates permanently returned over the two years around 2021-22. The World Bank's Bangladesh Return Migration Survey (BRMS) revealed that a large share of returnees prefer self-employment, with many starting small businesses and micro-enterprises such as grocery shops, mills, transport services, and fisheries, financed by foreign earnings.

A socio-economic survey conducted in 2024 shows that in some upazilas, 54.3 percent of returnees invested their savings in small businesses, and

one in every three new businesses is established by returning migrants. If even a fraction of the savings that returnee migrants bring home were systematically channelled into small enterprises, the economic impact could be substantial. These returnee-financed ventures form part of the rural grey economy—legal but operating outside formal registries and policy frameworks. Such ventures create a ripple effect of diversified incomes, local employment, and new rural supply chains. However, because these entities remain unregistered, they are not included in national investment statistics, receive no formal credit, and make little contribution to GDP.

The major problem lies in the absence of policies. There is virtually no structure for reintegration once a worker returns. In one study on 270 returnees, 74 percent had brought back savings of at least Tk 100,000, and over 80 percent expressed a desire to set up businesses in their village. However, most face the common barriers of no collateral for loans, no policy recognition or entrepreneurial training.

While some commendable support

programmes exist to assist returnees, they are very few in number and have the capacity to reach only a fraction of the returning migrant population. Even for the beneficiaries who receive seed funding or formal training, the ventures they establish tend to remain small. This is largely because the broader economic system offers no clear pathway for these micro-enterprises to scale up.

Conservative estimates suggest the informal returnee capital formation is now significant enough to rival the country's entire foreign direct investment (FDI). While Bangladesh attracted approximately \$3 billion in FDI in 2023, the cumulative, on-the-ground investment from its own returning citizens is believed to be operating on a comparable scale.

To put this potential in perspective, total remittances soared to a record \$30.32 billion in the 2024-25 fiscal year, contributing over six percent of the nation's GDP. While most of this income supports families, the savings brought back by permanent returnees represent a massive, untapped pool of investment capital. This indicates that while Bangladesh actively pursues foreign investors, a domestic investment boom could be ignited simply by recognising and empowering its own returning citizens.

If policymakers are serious about efforts to reduce rural inequality and dependence on Dhaka-centric industries, returnee investment must be focused on as one of the central economic policies. The Recovery and Advancement of Informal Sector Employment (RAISE) project, a

government-led initiative supported by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the World Bank, aims to create welfare centres and a database of returnees. A comprehensive data registry must also include metrics on savings amounts, vocational skill sets, investment preferences, asset ownership, and business sectors. The government's "Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)" under the RAISE project also offers support to a large number of returnees to validate skills gained overseas. Expanding RPL and combining it with business training will significantly reduce failures among new businesses and increase access to formal markets.

Additionally, lending schemes must be simplified and tailored to returnee needs to minimise the disparity between informal savings and formal investment, especially in rural regions. Financial instruments must also include matched grants for start-up capital, low or zero-interest small business loans, possibly via Probashi Kallyan Bank, and a returnee SME credit window. Small rural enterprises founded using returnee capital should be subject to simplified or tiered registration regimes, reduced fees, and tax relief.

While economists debate how to attract more foreign investors, Bangladesh's own investment opportunities are hardly recognised due to the lack of acknowledgement in policy frameworks and economic statistics. For a nation aspiring to upper-middle-income status, this is an economic necessity that can turn into a powerful homegrown strategy.

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# Fazlul Huq and his political rivals

ALTAF PARVEZ

slogan was: "Land belongs to the one who ploughs."

In 1925 the death of C.R. Das and, a year later, widespread communal riots in Calcutta triggered fresh communal polarisation in Bengal. The nascent organisers of the Praja Party began to raise demands for Muslim tenants in the field. The long term fruit of this was the emergence of the Krishak Praja Party by about 1936. After the 1937 election the party emerged in Bengal as the principal organisation of the Muslim community. Its assemblies even included many Namasudra [historically underprivileged] peasants.

Why Suhrawardy chose to join the League instead of the Praja Party can be partly explained by his shifting outlook after the 1926 riots. His thinking increasingly centred on the question of political power for India's Muslims.

#### SYAMA PRASAD & FAZLUL HUQ: A MEANINGFUL BUT FLEETING ALLIANCE

In the elections of 1937 and 1946 although Syama Prasad Mukherjee was a member of the provincial Legislative Assembly, it was under the indirect support of the Congress at the University of Kolkata seat of Graduate electors where he stood unopposed. His

led by Fazlul Huq. In fact, the League reacted fiercely, making Fazlul Huq its principal target. Jinnah virtually declared war against him, while Suhrawardy, Nazimuddin, Ispahani, and Akram Khan carried that battle into the villages. The British administration, too, took deliberate measures to weaken the coalition.

The Huq-Mukherjee coalition stood little chance of survival under the twin pressures of the League and the colonial administration. Unsurprisingly, the government proved short-lived.

After the 1936 election in Bengal, Fazlul Huq formed the province's first government through the Krishak Praja Party. When the Muslim League withdrew its support and the fall of the Huq Ministry seemed inevitable, Syama Prasad Mukherjee stepped in to help sustain it. That act alone marked him out as an adversary in the eyes of the League. Moreover, Mukherjee's Hindu-oriented policies clashed with the League's advocacy of Muslim interests. This tension gradually evolved into the Mukherjee-Suhrawardy rivalry, bolstered by Congress support.

By 1947, Mukherjee had come to be viewed in Bengal as the chief defender of "Hindu interests," while the League positioned itself as the champion of Muslims. In

Chief Minister's office came from Suhrawardy. This escalation began after 1941 when Huq's relationship with the League was severed.

By September 1941, Huq's relationship with Jinnah had deteriorated. Following his expulsion from the League in December, Suhrawardy was soon seen rallying public opinion in Calcutta against him. In 1943, Suhrawardy finally succeeded in driving Fazlul Huq from power.

Interestingly, the two men were distantly related by marriage—Suhrawardy's maternal uncle, Hassan Suhrawardy, had married the sister of Huq's first wife. Yet, as events proved, political ambition outweighed kinship.

At that time the British Raj increasingly began to recognise only the Congress and the Muslim League as representative all-India forces. Faltering beneath that marginalisation, Fazlul Huq's centrality in Bengal politics declined from 1944 onward. Direct evidence of this is the 1944 Calcutta Corporation election — no candidate nominated by Huq succeeded.

After the 1946 election, when Suhrawardy became Chief Minister, politics and society in Bengal were being reshaped. The British Raj's negotiations with the Congress and League over the Partition of India had deeply absorbed the local society; the 1946 riots added fuel to this trend.

At the same time Fazlul Huq was discussing, at various levels, a concept of an all-party government in Bengal. As part of that he met Gandhi at Haimchar (now Chandpur) on February 27, 1947. Yet everyone, including Gandhi, knew Huq was no longer the driving force of Bengal politics. He was in Calcutta at the time of the riots. But the focus of communal violence diverted attention away from him. The League considered him a "fifth column".

When the vote was cast in the provincial council in June 1947 on Bengal's geographic future, Fazlul Huq was wholly absent — a striking fact. He took no major initiative to prevent Bengal's partition, which remains surprising.

When Partition of Bengal was virtually assured and mass refugee movements began from both sides, it was only on August 1, 1947 that Fazlul Huq came to Barisal and urged Hindus not to leave.

It was during this tug of war over Bengal's partition that the long separation between Suhrawardy and Fazlul Huq occurred. We would see them again on the same platform when the United Front (Jukto Front) was formed in East Bengal in 1954.

Half a century later, in a 2004 survey by the BBC asking for the greatest Bengali person of all time, both Fazlul Huq and Suhrawardy were ranked among the top twenty: the former coming fourth and the latter twentieth.

Altaf Parvez is a researcher specialising in history. Translated by Samia Huda. Read the full article online.

## MY DISCOVERY OF Sher-e-Bangla

TARUN YOUSUF

Almost unnoticed, the 150th birth anniversary of Sher-e-Bangla A.K. Fazlul Huq has gone by, and this year marks his 152nd. As I sit down to write about him, I cannot help but echo the words of B.D. Habibullah, the biographer of Huq Saheb — is it at all possible for an ordinary man like me to write about such a great soul? Yet, I gather the courage to do so, perhaps because I share a subtle, indirect connection with Sher-e-Bangla himself.

It so happened that I became coincidentally involved in the recovery of several letters, telegrams, proposals for candidate selection, and lists of United Front nominees — all sent to Sher-e-Bangla in connection with the 1954 election.

I work in the Deposit Insurance Department of Bangladesh Bank, within a sub-division known as the Defunct Bank Monitoring Unit. Its main task involves tracing and managing the remaining assets (if any) of certain banks from the British and Pakistani periods that ceased to exist following the Partition of British India or after Bangladesh's independence.

Our department holds numerous cupboards, sacks, and boxes filled with old documents, which are occasionally inspected for this reason. We even have a dedicated team whose sole duty is to examine these papers. One member of that team, Ariful Islam was the first to come across a set of old letters and brought one of them to me.

Reading the letter, I realised it dated back to the 1954 United Front election — a correspondence addressed to Sher-e-Bangla. The writer was Abu Mohammad Toaha, a name that immediately sounded familiar; I knew of a politician by that name. I asked Ariful where he had found it. He said, "It was inside a sack among our old documents on the twelfth floor." He added that there were many more letters, including one supposedly signed by Sher-e-Bangla himself.

The 21-point manifesto of the United Front reflected the aspirations of East Pakistan's rising middle class, self-reliant peasants, and emerging industrial and business communities. The manifesto pledged not only social and economic rights through the development of education,

Bangla and Bangladesh Bank or this department. Yet, there exists an indirect one that deserves explanation. Bangladesh Bank was appointed as the official liquidator for defunct banks in 1977. Before that, the responsibility was laid with lawyers of the High Court Division.

If we look into the life of Sher-e-Bangla A.K. Fazlul Huq, we know that he was a distinguished lawyer. In 1953, when the general elections were announced in East Bengal, he was serving as the Advocate General of the Dhaka High Court. It is therefore quite plausible that some of the lawyers who worked as official liquidators for defunct banks had close professional ties with him.

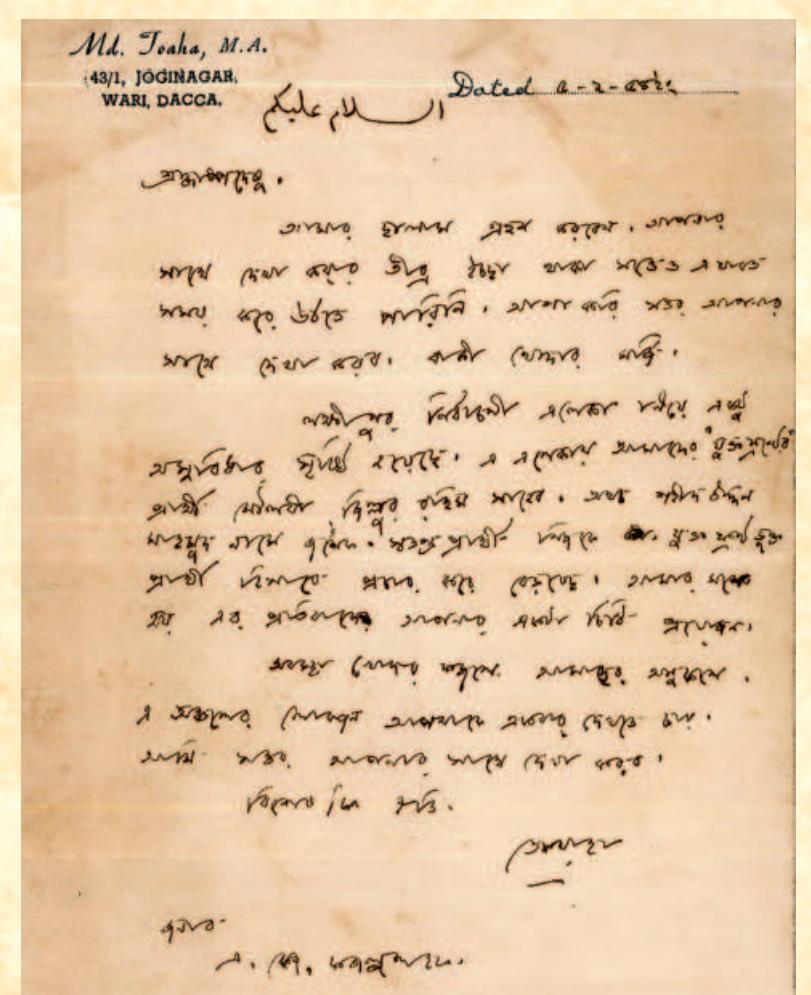
Moreover, some of them might have been members of the Krishak Sramik Party or active supporters of the United Front. Perhaps, through one of them, these letters and documents accidentally found their way into the archives of a defunct bank — and from there, into our department.

Of course, all of this remains conjecture.

Among the recovered materials were letters, telegrams, reports of the Fact-Finding Committee, lists of potential candidates sent from different regions, the official list of United Front nominees, and various leaflets. All these letters, telegrams, leaflets, and reports were addressed to Sher-e-Bangla A.K. Fazlul Huq.

Sher-e-Bangla A.K. Fazlul Huq and the 1954 United Front election are inseparable from one another. The political coalition emerged primarily to free the people from the oppressive misrule of the ruling Muslim League and to establish the right of self-determination in East Bengal.

The 21-point manifesto of the United Front reflected the aspirations of East Pakistan's rising middle class, self-reliant peasants, and emerging industrial and business communities. The manifesto pledged not only social and economic rights through the development of education,



This immediately caught my attention. I said, "Let's go see where those letters are — we must retrieve them." We rushed down from the sixteenth floor to the twelfth. I asked the peon working there about the letters. To my dismay, he replied that they had been torn up and discarded. My heart sank. I ran to the dustbin where the torn papers were usually thrown. There I found scraps of paper, but not the kind of letters I was looking for.

Then, moments later, our peon Momim came and said, "Sir, the papers you were looking for have been found. Shamim — another peon — kept them aside following Arif's instructions." What a relief! I immediately brought them in for inspection.

What we found was not only letters but also telegrams, leaflets, and several confidential reports prepared by a fact finding committee that had been formed to evaluate candidates for the United Front election. The committee's job was to gather information about potential candidates and submit detailed reports. All these letters, telegrams, and confidential reports were addressed to Sher-e-Bangla himself.

How did these United Front election documents end up in our department? Could there be any connection between Sher-e-Bangla and this division — or even with Bangladesh Bank?

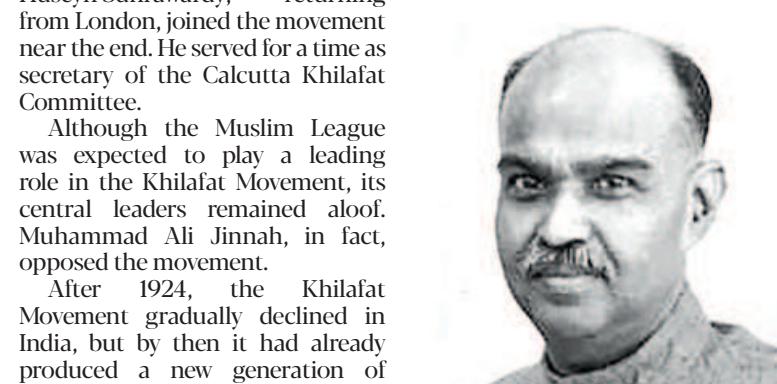
In truth, there is no direct or institutional link between Sher-e-

agriculture, and industry in East Bengal, but also a commitment to democratic governance.

The 1954 United Front election was a turbulent moment in history, and at its centre stood Sher-e-Bangla. Every letter addressed to him was related to the election. The subjects of the letters, telegrams, reports, and leaflets included the persecution of United Front workers by Muslim League supporters and government officials, campaign strategies, the status of candidates in different constituencies, internal conflicts among nominees, requests for candidate changes, appeals for financial assistance from the party to conduct campaigns, and disagreements among leaders regarding nominations. The documents also vividly portray the hopes, struggles, and movements surrounding that election, as well as the deep respect and devotion that political leaders and ordinary citizens alike held for Sher-e-Bangla.

The discovery of these rare documents offers deeper insight into history, revealing new information while verifying past accounts and vividly bringing the story of the United Front election to life. I have published a book titled *Sher-e-Bangla o Juktofront Nirbahan: Kichu Dushprappo Dalil* ('Sher-e-Bangla and the United Front Election: Some Rare Documents'), based on these materials.

Tarun Yousuf is a poet and author.



Syama Prasad Mukherjee

Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy

party, Hindu Mahasabha, in Bengal secured 2 seats out of 250 in 1937 and 1 seat in 1946.

FAZLUL HUQ — SUHRAWARDY: A SELF-DESTRUCTIVE RIVALRY

In the politics of Bengal among Bengalis the role of the individual has always been a crucial element. Accordingly, in the mid-20th century Bengal Muslim League's development featured two sub-factions. One, the "Calcutta Group" led by Suhrawardy; the other the "Dhaka Group" led by Khaja Nazimuddin. These two sub-groups symbolised different socio-economic interests: the former representing the rising middle class within the League, the latter representing wealthy landlords and zamindars. Although these two groups were constantly embroiled in intra-party struggle, their common political adversary was Fazlul Huq.

Although Fazlul Huq was actually the primary opponent of both League sub-factions, the most aggressive efforts to sideline him and remove him from the

party, Hindu Mahasabha, in Bengal secured 2 seats out of 250 in 1937 and 1 seat in 1946.

THE ALL-BENGAL PRAJA ASSOCIATION'S FAZLUL HUQ

In 1920-21, Fazlul Huq was active in the Barisal region of Bengal, holding mass meetings on agrarian and land issues. In this way the foundation of his future party, the Krishak Praja Party, was being laid. At that time he and his associates worked under the name of the All Bengal Praja Association (Nikhil Banga Praja Samiti). Its president was Sir Abdur Rahim. Fazlul Huq became vice-president; Akram Khan was general secretary. Among the vice-presidents was Abdullah Suhrawardy, maternal uncle of Huseyn Suhrawardy.

Since many tenants (praja) were Muslim and their socio-economic adversaries mostly non-Muslim, the "praja-mobilisation" appeared as a viable alternative to communal Hindu-Muslim politics. It could also be read as a new kind of class politics. The Praja Association's



26 October 2025

Creating Global Citizens with Islamic Values

**Islamic University of Technology (IUT)**  
A Subsidiary Organ of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)




**CHIEF ADVISER**  
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

10 Kartik 1432  
26 October 2025

On the momentous occasion of the 37th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT), I convey my heartfelt congratulations to the graduating students, to their proud parents and guardians, and to the esteemed faculty and staff.

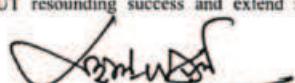
As a distinguished subsidiary organ of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the IUT has remained steadfast in its noble mission of empowering the youth of the Ummah through knowledge, innovation, and moral excellence. Today's convocation marks the culmination of that enduring commitment.

IUT stands as a shining emblem of Joint Islamic Action and Islamic Solidarity—an institution that embodies our collective aspiration for intellectual and technological advancement across the Muslim world. As the host country, Bangladesh remains deeply devoted to nurturing this beacon of excellence, ensuring it receives every moral, material, and intellectual support necessary for its continued growth and distinction.

We convene at a defining juncture in human history, when the digital age is redefining how we live, work, and connect—unveiling vast new frontiers of opportunity. In harmony with this forward march of progress, the Interim Government is resolutely committed to harnessing the potential of science, technology, and innovation in building a modern, knowledge-based nation.

This graduating cohort now steps onto the global stage. Fortified by Islamic values and the professional excellence instilled at IUT, these graduates are poised to become the architects of the future. I am confident that they will remain lifelong learners and innovators, applying their talents for the advancement of Bangladesh, the Muslim Ummah, and all humanity.

I wish the 37th Convocation of IUT resounding success and extend my sincerest prayers for the graduates' future.

  
Professor Muhammad Yunus

**IUT at A Glance**

The Islamic University of Technology (IUT), a subsidiary organ of the OIC, unites 57 member states across the world. Established in 1981, IUT is Bangladesh's first international university, offering accredited engineering, technology, and business programmes recognized by the Washington Accord.

With students from 24 OIC countries, IUT maintains a 14:1 student-teacher ratio, over 90% employability, and strong collaboration with industry and academia. Ranked in the QS World University Rankings, it provides a diverse, research-driven environment supported by scholarships and modern facilities.

**Graduating Students' Statistics 2025**

Graduating Students Academic Year 2023-2024	MPE ME+IPE	EEE	CSE CSE+SWE	Postgraduate	International
522	79	121	127	33	49
	CEE	TVE	BTM	Undergraduate	Bangladeshi
	104	37	54	489	473
				Male 378	Male 378
				144 Female	144 Female

**Graduate Alumni**

36 Member States      8357 Graduate Alumni      90% Employability



visit: [www.iutoic-dhaka.edu](http://www.iutoic-dhaka.edu)

**Secretary General**  
Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)  
Chancellor  
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

On the occasion of the 37th Convocation of IUT, 2025, it is with great pleasure and deep pride that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all graduates of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT). This ceremony is not merely a celebration of academic success; it represents the culmination of years of perseverance, intellectual curiosity, and dedication to excellence.

As the higher education arm of the OIC, IUT has remained steadfast in its mission to nurture talent and empower young men and women across our Member States. Guided by the principles of Islamic solidarity, innovation, and service to humanity, the University continues to equip its graduates with the knowledge, skills, and values required to contribute meaningfully to their societies and to the wider world.

Today's graduates stand at the threshold of a world that is evolving rapidly—marked by technological transformation, environmental challenges, and the need for more inclusive and sustainable development. Your education at IUT has not only prepared you with technical expertise but has also instilled in you the virtues of integrity, compassion, and social responsibility. I encourage you to apply these values as you face the complex challenges of our time and to serve as catalysts for progress, peace, and cooperation within and beyond your communities.

The OIC takes immense pride in IUT as one of its flagship institutions—a shining example of Joint Islamic Action and a testament to our collective vision of advancing education and human resource development across the Muslim world. I express my sincere appreciation to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for its unwavering support in enabling IUT to fulfill its noble mission. I also commend the dedication of the University's leadership, faculty, and staff whose tireless efforts have shaped the future leaders we celebrate today.

To the graduates, I say: this is both an ending and a beginning. As you step forward into new horizons—whether in advanced study, research, or professional life—remain lifelong learners and embrace innovation, empathy, and ethical leadership. Remember that your achievements carry the hopes of your families, your nations, and the wider Ummah.

On behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, I offer my warmest congratulations once again to the graduating class of 2025. May your journey ahead be defined by purpose, perseverance, and the pursuit of excellence, and may you always be guided by the values that lie at the heart of our faith and our shared humanity.

I wish you every success in your future endeavours.

  
Hissein Ibrahim Taha  
Secretary General of the OIC  
Chancellor of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

**ADVISER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Dhaka

It is a privilege to convey my sincere greetings and felicitations on the occasion of the 37th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT). I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the graduating students for their academic achievements. This milestone marks not only personal success but also the beginning of your responsibilities as future leaders, professionals, and contributors to your nations and to the wider Muslim Ummah.

At a time when humanitarian crises, especially in regions such as Palestine, continue to remind us of the need for justice, peace, and solidarity, your role becomes ever more vital. As graduates of a distinguished institution under the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, you are uniquely positioned to apply your skills in advancing technology, innovation, and ethical leadership for the collective good.

IUT has emerged as a symbol of unity, diversity, and excellence in technical education. I commend its continued efforts to foster collaboration among OIC member states and build human capital that addresses the pressing challenges of our time.

May the Almighty guide the graduates in their pursuits and grant continued success to IUT in its mission to serve the humankind through knowledge, integrity, and service.

  
(Md. Touhid Hossain)

**ADVISER,**  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Dhaka

It is indeed a great honour and pleasure to extend my heartfelt felicitations to all graduating students of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) on the auspicious occasion of its 37th Convocation Ceremony. This is a moment of great pride—not only for the graduates and their families, but also for the faculty, administration, and all who have contributed to shaping the future of this esteemed institution.

IUT stands as a distinguished symbol of unity, excellence, and shared progress within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Since its inception, the University has played a vital role in developing technically proficient and ethically grounded professionals who are capable of addressing global challenges with innovation and compassion. Bangladesh takes immense pride in hosting this unique centre of learning that continues to foster international collaboration, research excellence, and leadership among the youth of the Muslim Ummah.

Dear Graduates, you are stepping into a dynamic world undergoing transformation driven by technology, climate change, and the pursuit of sustainable development. As engineers and professionals educated under the values of Islam and guided by a global vision, you are entrusted with the noble task of applying your knowledge for the welfare of humanity. Let your work reflect integrity, curiosity, and a sense of service. Always remember that true success lies not only in personal achievement but in your ability to uplift communities and protect our planet.

The Government of Bangladesh remains deeply committed to advancing education and innovation as the foundation of national and regional progress. Under the leadership of the Honourable Chief Adviser, Dr. Muhammad Yunus, we are striving to build a society rooted in integrity, inclusiveness, and creativity. In this journey, institutions like IUT play an indispensable role in preparing the next generation of thinkers, innovators, and changemakers.

As you embark upon your professional careers, I urge you to be visionary in thought, ethical in conduct, and compassionate in action. Continue to learn, adapt, and collaborate—across disciplines and borders—for the collective good of the Ummah and humanity.

May Almighty Allah bless you with wisdom, perseverance, and humility in all your future endeavours. May He grant continued progress and success to the Islamic University of Technology in its noble mission of empowering minds and transforming societies.

  
Professor Dr. Chowdhury Rafiqul Ahsan  
Education Adviser  
Ministry of Education  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

**Chairman, Governing Board**  
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

In the name of God most gracious most merciful

Excellences, honored guests, graduates, families and relatives of graduates, all respected attendees

I feel extremely happy and privileged to address you at the 37th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT), which is a subsidiary organ of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). On this occasion, we commemorate not only your glorious academic success but also the enduring contribution of IUT, which was established for the development of the Ummah through engineering and technological education. For decades, IUT has opened up the gates of its vibrant and picturesque campus, rich with cultural diversity and expectation for new thoughts, for students from 57 OIC member states.

Your time at this international university—of late study nights, collaboration, and support for each other—demonstrates your efforts and the close-knit community that distinguishes this institution. Today, I wish to extend special thanks to the teaching faculties, administrative staff, operational teams and family members for supporting you in all aspects with generosity; their support and encouragement have been critical for your success in school.

IUT has consistently enhanced its academic and research capabilities guided by the Governing Board. IUT always aims to advance international cooperation and raise talent. I am particularly proud of the advances that have been achieved by our students at national and regional levels and of the increasing volume of study by our faculty and researchers in new fields such as sustainable energy, civil infrastructure, technology management, and AI-based solutions. These achievements attest to IUT's commitment towards making a significant contribution to the development imperatives of the Ummah and beyond.

As you enter the second half of your lives, do not forget that education is not merely a terminal but a launching pad. The knowledge, discipline, and compassion that you have acquired here will enable you to design responsibly, bring human beings closer, and do good for your communities with integrity and love.

On behalf of the Governing Board, faculty, and staff of IUT, I extend warm congratulations and best wishes on your success. Your triumphs inspire others, making your families, your countries, and this university proud, which will always be your academic home and alma mater.

**H.E. Prof. Dr. Nasser M. Al-Aqeel**  
Chairman, Governing Board  
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)  
A subsidiary organ of OIC

**Special Guest**  
Assistant Secretary General  
Science and Technology  
Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to convey my heartfelt congratulations to all the graduating students on the momentous occasion of the 37th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT). This day marks the culmination of years of your perseverance, dedication and hard work. You have not only earned degrees but also prepared yourselves to serve your communities, nations and the Ummah with integrity and excellence.

I also extend my warm appreciation to the parents and families of the graduates. Your sacrifices, encouragement, and prayers have been instrumental in shaping their success. Today's celebration is as much yours as it is theirs.

To the Vice-Chancellor, faculty, and staff of IUT, I express my sincere gratitude for your continued dedication to academic excellence, innovation, and service to the OIC Member States. Through your tireless efforts, IUT has established itself as a centre of excellence in engineering, technology, and applied sciences—embodiment of the OIC's vision for promoting science, technology, and innovation across the Muslim world.

As our graduates step into the professional world, I urge them to be ambassadors of knowledge, ethics, and collaboration. In an era defined by rapid technological change, the challenges facing humanity require not only technical expertise but also moral courage, compassion, and a spirit of cooperation. I am confident that they will carry forward these values and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development and global progress.

The OIC, through its Science, Technology and Innovation Agenda 2026, remains committed to empowering youth, fostering innovation, and strengthening institutions like IUT that prepare the next generation of scientists, engineers, and innovators of the Ummah.

I commend IUT for its remarkable achievements and express my confidence and hope that, under its capable leadership, the University will continue to serve as a beacon of excellence and a source of pride for all OIC Member States.

Congratulations once again to the graduating Class of 2025. May your journey ahead be filled with purpose, achievement, and success.

  
Amb Aftab Ahmad Khokher,  
Assistant Secretary General (Science and Technology),  
Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

**Convocation Speaker**  
Former Professor,  
Department of Mechanical Engineering,  
National University of Singapore (NUS)

It is a great honor to join you on this auspicious occasion, the 37th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT). Today, you stand at a proud milestone in your life's journey. Years of effort, sacrifice, and faith have brought you to this moment of achievement. You are now prepared to embark on a new chapter filled with challenges, opportunities, and the responsibility to serve humanity.

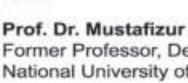
As graduates of IUT, an institution under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), you carry a legacy that extends far beyond borders. You are part of a global community bound by shared values of knowledge, unity, and service. Islam places great emphasis on seeking knowledge. The very first revelation to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) began with the word "Iqra" meaning "Read." This divine command reminds us that learning is not merely for personal gain but for the betterment of society and the upliftment of the ummah.

In an era marked by rapid technological change and complex global challenges, your education has equipped you with both technical competence and moral clarity. The true measure of your success will not lie only in what you achieve for yourself, but in how your knowledge and skills benefit others, and how you uphold justice, compassion, and integrity in all that you do.

Be innovators, but also be servants of humanity. Let your work reflect excellence (Ihsan), your decisions reflect honesty (amanah), and your conduct reflect humility (tawadu'). Carry forward the vision of IUT and the OIC to create a world where knowledge is guided by ethics and progress is rooted in faith.

May Allah guide you in every step of your journey, grant you wisdom in your choices, and bless you with the strength to contribute meaningfully to your nations and to the ummah at large.

Congratulations once again on your achievements. The future is now in your hands. Serve with sincerity, lead with integrity, and let your faith be your compass.

  
Prof. Dr. Mustafizur Rahman  
Former Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering  
National University of Singapore (NUS)

**Vice Chancellor**  
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

It is with profound pleasure that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all associated with the 37th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT). On this momentous occasion, I convey my warmest congratulations to our graduating students for their dedication, perseverance, and remarkable achievements, which have culminated in this significant milestone of their academic journey.

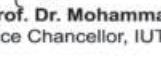
At IUT, we pursue excellence in education, research, and innovation through the unwavering commitment of our distinguished faculty and staff, who foster an environment that inspires intellectual curiosity, creativity, and lifelong learning. Our vision is to nurture competent professionals who are not only technically proficient but also guided by moral integrity and a deep sense of responsibility toward humanity.

This commitment to academic rigor is reflected in our sustained implementation of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) at IUT, a testimony to our dedication to continuous improvement and global academic alignment. Through OBE, our curricula are regularly reviewed and refined to meet the evolving needs of modern industries and emerging technologies, ensuring that our graduates remain fully equipped to thrive in an increasingly dynamic world.

In recent years, IUT has achieved notable progress in its academic standing, research output, and international recognition, marked by its inclusion in the QS World University Rankings 2026 within the 1201–1400 global band, placing it among the top two engineering and technology-specialized universities in Bangladesh and within the 421–430 range in Asia. This milestone reaffirms our collective resolve to advance the frontiers of knowledge and contribute meaningfully to the shared development goals of the OIC Member States.

As our graduates embark on new professional and personal journeys, I urge them to uphold the values of diligence, integrity, and excellence that define their time at IUT. May they continue to bring honor to their alma mater and serve as ambassadors of unity, innovation, and progress for the Ummah.

On this auspicious occasion, we express our sincere gratitude to Almighty Allah (SWT) for His infinite mercy and guidance. May He continue to bless IUT with enduring success and enable us to serve the noble cause of education and the advancement of the Muslim world.

  
Prof. Dr. Mohammad Rafiqul Islam  
Vice Chancellor, IUT

**Congratulations to All the Graduating Students in the Academic Year 2023-2024 of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) on the Occasion of the 37th Convocation 2025**



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## NEWS

## Keep Ctg port under national control

Protesters urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Leaders of labour, student, and professional groups in Chattogram yesterday warned against any move to lease out terminals of Chattogram Port, including the New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT), to foreign companies.

Speaking at a protest rally, they threatened intensified action if the government proceeds with the plan.

The demonstration, held at Agrabad Badamtoli intersection under the banner "Bondor Rokkhay Chattogramer Sramik-Chhatra-Peshajibi-Nagorikbrindo", drew sharp criticism of the administration.

Speakers alleged that despite the port's profitability and operational capacity, a conspiracy is underway to transfer control to multinational corporations and foreign powers, undermining national interests.

They also claimed that the government has imposed a one-

month ban on rallies and public gatherings in the port area to suppress opposition and facilitate the signing of "anti-national" agreements.

Freedom fighter and Gonomukti Union President Raja Miah presided over the rally, which was addressed by Trade



Union Centre President Khorshed Alam, SKOP Joint Coordinator Rizwanur Rahman, Shafi Uddin Kabir Abid of the Socialist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist), Chattogram Bondor Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal General Secretary Ibrahim Khokan, and Dock Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal General Secretary Akhtar Hossain Selim.



Imran Howlader arranges aluminium motorboat propellers on display in his shop for sale to fishermen. Available in various sizes, the propellers are priced between Tk 150 and Tk 400. The photo was taken in Barishal Sadar upazila yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## Fishers set sail

FROM PAGE 4

district has around 65,000 hilsa fishermen. "The ban has been fully successful. Fishermen will resume fishing tonight," he added.

A similar scene was witnessed in Cox's Bazar.

Syed Ahmed, a fisherman from Maheshkhali upazila, said, "The last 22 days were very difficult. I had to borrow money to run my family and repair my boat. Since I don't know any other work, I have to remain in this profession."

Cox's Bazar has around 5,000 fishing trawlers, most of which have already been prepared to resume operations.

Nazir Ahmed, president of Shahapur Island Fishing Trawler Owners' Association in Teknaf, said, "Around 100 trawlers from our dock will set sail tonight."

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, in a special weather bulletin, said a low-pressure area over the southeast Bay of Bengal has intensified into a depression.

[Our Patuakhali and Cox's Bazar correspondents contributed to this report.]

## Parties eager

FROM PAGE 12

of social fascism still persist, warning that without fostering dialogue and connections among the streams of Islam in the country, the state would continue to face uncertainty.

He added that though 90-92 percent of Bangladesh's population is Muslim, the community is divided into different tariqas (orders).

Political leaders, Mahfuj said, have done little to promote unity among them. "Instead, some have aligned with Qawmi groups and others with Sunni groups, using religious institutions as instruments of politics."

He further said several people had been arrested in connection with the attacks on multiple mazars (mausoleum or shrine), and that surveys would soon be carried out to facilitate their renovation.

Urging the management committees of attacked mazars to file cases, the adviser warned that if the current culture continues, one group's version of Islam could target another's places of worship.

"Today it is the Sufis;

tomorrow it could be the Qawmi community."

Mahfuj acknowledged a sense of frustration over the lack of progress over the past year, warning that retaliatory actions driven by such resentment would yield no positive outcome.

"Over the past 15 years, an alliance of convenience developed between Sufi circles and the Awami League, despite their earlier ideological differences."

The understanding, he said, was that the AL would offer protection while the Sufis would support the party at the polls. "This dynamic has kept religious politics stagnant."

Mahfuj also observed that the Qawmi groups were no exception, as different political parties have also used them for their own benefit.

He said there have been claims of people being removed from mosques.

"This is not unique to the interim government. It has been happening for the past 50 years," he added, pointing out that mosque committees, as well as the Islami Foundation's governing body, tend to change whenever a new government comes to power.

## North Korea is 'sort of a nuclear power': Trump

AFP, Aboard Air Force One

US President Donald Trump said Friday that North Korea was "sort of a nuclear power" as he left the United States for Asia on a trip that could include a meeting with Pyongyang's leader Kim Jong Un.

Asked aboard Air Force One whether he was open to North Korea's demand to be recognised as a nuclear state as a precondition for dialogue with Washington, Trump replied: "Well, I think they are sort of a nuclear power."

"When you say they have to be recognized as a nuclear power, well, they got a lot of nuclear weapons, I'll say that."

Trump is expected in South Korea on Wednesday for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum.

US media have previously reported officials from his administration have privately discussed setting up a meeting between Trump and North Korean leader Kim, who he last held talks with in 2019.

Trump has said he hopes to meet Kim again – possibly this year.

Kim said last month he had "fond memories" of Trump and was open to talks if the United States dropped its "delusional" demand that Pyongyang give up its nuclear weapons.

On Friday, South Korea's unification minister Chung Dong young said he believed there was a "considerable" chance that Trump will meet Kim during his visit to the peninsula next week.

But a senior US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told reporters in a call Friday that a meeting "is not on the schedule for this trip."

While no official announcements of the duo's meeting have been made, South Korea and the United Nations Command halted tours of the Joint Security Area (JSA) from late October to early November.

Kim and Trump last met in 2019 at Panmunjom in the JSA in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the

two Koreas – the only place where soldiers from both sides face each other on a regular basis.

Minister Chung said North Koreans have been spotted "sprucing up" areas near the JSA for the first time this year – cleaning, pulling weeds, tidying flower beds and taking photos.

Kim met Trump three times for high profile summits during the US leader's first term.

The duo's last and impromptu meeting at Panmunjom was hastily arranged after Trump extended an invitation to Kim on Twitter a day prior.

That event saw the two leaders shake hands over the concrete slabs dividing North and South before Trump walked a few paces into Pyongyang's territory – becoming the first US president ever to set foot on North Korean soil.

But talks eventually collapsed over just how much of its nuclear arsenal the North was willing to give up and what Pyongyang would get in return.

## RMG belt caught

FROM PAGE 1

League operatives, it is now largely controlled by local BNP leaders. The industry produces around four lakh tonnes of jhut annually.

A factory manager in Tongi said his factory generates jhut worth Tk 50 lakh a month, but is forced to sell at half the price. In Narayanganj, a trader said medium sized factories produce jhut worth Tk 20-22 lakh monthly, yet political leaders pay only Tk 2-4 per kg, far below the market rate of Tk 40.

Control over jhut ensures a steady monthly income, fuelling violent turf wars. Media reports say 30 people were injured in 15 clashes over jhut trade in Gazipur, Narayanganj and Savar between August 5 last year and October 8 this year.

According to Ain o Salish Kendra, at least 65 BNP leaders and activists were killed and 2,962 injured in internal clashes nationwide in the 12 months till August 5 this year – many linked to jhut disputes.

**FACES CHANGE, EXTORTION CONTINUES**

Factory owners say extortion has become more localised. "Previously, it was centrally controlled; now it's area-based," said Nazmul Kabir, managing director of AR Jeans Producer Ltd in Savar. "We manage and move forward, hoping law and order improves."

In Savar, financial transactions have shifted from central AL leaders to local BNP operatives. In Gazipur, BNP factions reportedly use crude bombs, firearms and arson, while in Narayanganj, intimidation is more discreet.

Taskeen Ahmed, president of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said political figures pressure businesses for "contributions".

"Even scrap materials must be sold at half the market price. Refusal means shutdown. One group left, only to be replaced by another," said Taskeen, who owns a factory in Savar.

Echoing him, businesspeople said extortion persists despite changes in political faces.

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed admitted extortion has increased since August 5 last year. "We are not a political government, so we cannot take harsh actions. Extortion rates have gone up from Tk 1 to Tk 1.5 or Tk 2," he told journalists on September 30.

BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan said such problems intensify after regime changes. "Compared to a year ago, the situation has improved. Though incidents still occur, they are less frequent."

A survey by Innovation Consulting found 56.6 percent of respondents – mostly urban youth and high-income groups – believed extortion had risen in the six months till September 21.

BNP insiders said many grassroots leaders, previously in hiding during AL's 15-year rule, saw an opportunity to profit from jhut trade after the regime change.

Abu Al Yusuf, member secretary of Narayanganj BNP, alleged that Chhatra

## Police, admin

FROM PAGE 4

Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) of Narsingdi Abu Taher Md Samsuzzaman, who served as acting municipal administrator during the leasing period, claimed he did not issue any new tenders.

"I did not sign any new contract. I only reaffirmed previously approved spots. Anyone collecting tolls beyond those terms is violating the agreement," he said.

Asked how seven more stands were designated for toll collection despite having only two approved terminals, he said, "Those were determined before my tenure. False allegations cannot be accepted as facts."

Additional SP Anwar Hossain said, "The HC order is very clear – no toll can be collected from roads or highways that do not have approved terminals."

Contacted, current municipal administrator Md Monowar Hossain said his predecessor finalised the locations while he was on leave.

A three-member probe committee has been formed to review the matter in line with the HC directive. We are preparing to suspend all toll collection from public roads permanently."

## Mamdani defends

FROM PAGE 12

New York is to expect indignity, but indignity does not make us distinct. There are many New Yorkers who face it. It is the tolerance of that indignity that does."

Mamdani, who is currently a member of the New York State Assembly, said that while he had tried to focus his election campaign on his core message of affordability, his opponents in recent days had shown that "Islamophobia has emerged as one of the few areas of agreement".

His speech also came a day after his top opponent, former New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo,

## Kamaruzzaman, SQ Chowdhury

FROM PAGE 12

laughed after radio host Sid Rosenberg said that Mamdani "would be cheering" if another September 11 attack occurred, reports Al Jazeera online.

Cuomo, who is a member of the Democratic Party but lost the Democratic primary election to Mamdani in June, responded in agreement with Rosenberg: "That's another problem."

Basim Elkarr, the executive director of Muslim advocacy group CAIR Action, described Cuomo's appearance on the radio programme as "despicable, dangerous, and disqualifying".

**First Ban-Pak JEC**

FROM PAGE 12

last year, Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan and Interior Minister Mohsin Raza Naqvi visited Dhaka.

During this period, Bangladesh's Religious Affairs Adviser AFM Khalid Hossain also visited Islamabad. "We want a normal relationship with Pakistan. Such visits are part of a normal relationship," Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain told reporters last week.

Dhaka wants economic cooperation with Pakistan, which had been somewhat unilaterally stalled for a long time. "It is in our interest to establish normal relations, especially in the economic field, with Pakistan, and we think we are proceeding that way," Hossain said.

Besides, since August

party system and introduce multi-party democracy, ensuring press freedom.

"We must not forget that the key reforms began during his [Zia's] time and were later carried forward by former prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia," Fakhrul added.

At the same event, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday warned that the nation will not forgive political parties if fascism returns to Bangladesh because of their divisions.

"After the establishment of Baksal in 1975, all newspapers were shut down. I remember that many journalists became unemployed and some even worked as hawkers in front of Baitul Mukarram as there were no newspapers left."

After the political changeover in 1975, BNP founder President Ziaur Rahman was the first to move away from the one-

"I hope in the coming days we will all remain united despite our differences of opinion

and ideology when it comes to the country, its democracy, independence and sovereignty."

It is a sacred duty for all to build a strong democratic state and society for future generations.

Recalling his personal struggles, Salahuddin said: "For writing a few columns, I had to live in exile for nearly nine and a half years, endure torture at Aynagar and spend time in prison."

Sharing a memory, he said: "Once, Amar Desh Editor Mahmudur Rahman and I were kept in separate prison cells at PG Hospital. He was on a hunger strike then. I tried to convince him to break his fast, telling him that if he died, Sheikh Hasina would be happy. Later, senior leaders intervened and he broke the strike after six or seven days."

Salahuddin went on to urge the media to play a constructive role through their writing in building a democratic state.

"I hope in the coming days we will all remain united despite our differences of opinion

and ideology when it comes to the country, its democracy, independence and sovereignty."

Writer Tarun Yousuf said the recent mass uprising had raised hopes of justice and inclusion, but those hopes remain uncertain.

"Sher-e-Bangla becomes relevant whenever the rights of the marginalised remain unfulfilled," he said.

Academic and historian Professor Perveen Hasan

Shamsuddoza Sajen

delivered the welcome speech, while the session was moderated by journalist Emran Mahfuz.

Salimullah said the

society can move forward without some level of give and take," she said.

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## Neurological conditions are the leading cause of ill health and disability

The World Health Organisation (WHO) warned that fewer than one in three countries had a national policy to address the rising burden of neurological disorders, which caused over 11 million deaths globally each year. According to WHO's Global Status Report on Neurology, neurological conditions affected more than 40% of the world's population—over 3 billion people. The leading causes of death and disability in 2021 included stroke, neonatal encephalopathy, migraine, Alzheimer's disease, diabetic neuropathy, meningitis, epilepsy, preterm birth complications, autism spectrum disorders, and nervous system cancers.

Low-income countries had over 80 times fewer neurologists than high-income nations, leaving many patients without care. Only 32% of WHO Member States had national policies for neurological disorders, and just 18% had dedicated funding. Essential services such as stroke units, rehabilitation, and palliative care were often unavailable, especially in rural and underserved areas. Furthermore, only 25% of countries included neurological disorders in their universal health coverage packages.

The report also revealed that few countries supported carers—only 46 offered carer services, and 44 had legal protections. Most carers, often women, remained unrecognised and financially burdened. Weak data systems and underfunded research further hindered progress.

In response, WHO Member States had adopted the Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders in 2022 to guide countries in improving care, policy, and prevention. WHO urged governments to prioritise brain health, expand access to care, promote prevention across life stages, and strengthen data systems for evidence-based decision-making.

SOURCE: WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION



## How to deal with Diabetic Foot?

DR K K PANDEY

Nowadays you must be hearing the word "Diabetic Foot" from people around. You must have also come to know that your friend's relative or acquaintance had a "Diabetic Foot" and a lot of treatment was done but in the end, the toe or the front part of the foot had to be amputated. After hearing the name "Diabetic Foot" repeatedly, your curiosity must have increased as to what does it mean?

### What is the meaning of "Diabetic Foot"?

Severe pain, tingling, or a burning sensation in the feet can be early signs of Diabetic Foot, a serious complication of diabetes. If blisters appear or a wound caused by a minor injury fails to heal despite antibiotics and dressings, it indicates the condition is worsening. When the toes start turning dark or black, it suggests severe tissue damage. In the most advanced stage, known as Charcot Foot, the foot's shape changes, pain may lessen, and deformities such as bunions, corns, or red pressure marks appear—signs that the bones and joints in the foot have become severely damaged.

### What to do if you have "Diabetic Foot"?

If you are a victim of "Diabetic Foot", then without wasting time consult an experienced vascular surgeon and

get treatment under his supervision. Some important tests are required. Such as X-ray of the foot, Doppler test and CT Angiography. "Diabetic Foot Scan" has to be done to check neuropathy, and identification of pressure areas on soles. The correct treatment is determined on the basis of the results of all these tests. So always go to such hospitals where along with the 24-hour availability of a vascular surgeon, there is also facility of all these special tests.

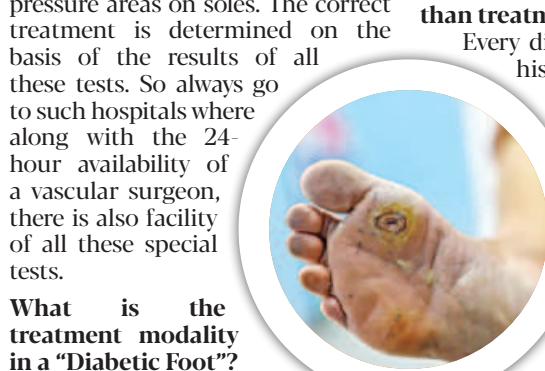
**What is the treatment modality in a "Diabetic Foot"?**  
If a diabetic patient has a wound or a smelly infection on his foot, then first of all the pus and infection have to be cleaned through surgery to prevent the infection from further spreading. Special medicines are given to control the infection. At the same time, angiography of the foot is done to check the present status of blood flow in the leg and foot. If there is a blockage in the blood pipe of the foot, then angioplasty and stenting are done to increase the blood flow in the foot as this will help in healing the wound. Often, the help of a special type of dressing

(VAC dressing) is taken. Sometimes skin grafting is done to heal the wound quickly. An attempt is made to save the foot or toes from being amputated.

### Prevention is more important than treatment of "Diabetic Foot"

Every diabetic patient must try his best not to become a victim of "diabetic foot". That is why its prevention is more important than its treatment. Always avoid wearing chappals, sandals and slippers, either at home or outside. Always use cotton socks and soft shoes during day time. Never wear shoes without socks. Never walk barefooted either inside the home or on the grass in the park. Take a walk of 5 to 6 kilo meters daily. Do not increase your weight at all. Keep your blood sugar under control. Remember that uncontrolled sugar level in the blood plays an important role in causing "diabetic foot".

*The writer is a Senior Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgeon at Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi. E-mail: drpandeykk@gmail.com*



## The hidden connection between the mind and gastric health

RAISA MEHZABEEN

In today's fast-paced world, stress has become an inseparable part of modern life. Deadlines, financial pressures, and social expectations silently strain both mind and body. While stress is often perceived as a purely mental burden, it leaves visible marks on physical health, especially the stomach. Bloating, acid reflux, indigestion, and irritable bowel symptoms are increasingly being recognised as manifestations of chronic psychological stress.

At the heart of this connection lies the gut-brain axis, a two-way communication system linking the brain, gut, and their vast networks of neurones, hormones, and microbes. The gut, often called the "second brain", contains about 100 million neurones. When stress activates the



hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, hormones like cortisol and adrenaline surge, disturbing digestion, gut motility, and even the balance of beneficial bacteria. As a result, mental stress can literally upset the stomach.

Physiologically, stress disrupts normal digestive rhythms. Elevated cortisol slows stomach emptying, while adrenaline diverts blood flow from the gut to vital organs, impairing digestion and absorption. Stress also increases gut sensitivity, making ordinary digestive processes

feel painful. This explains why some people experience cramps, nausea, or irregular bowel movements during tense periods.

To address this growing concern, healthcare must take a more integrated approach. Doctors and nutritionists should routinely assess stress levels when treating gastric complaints. Psychological therapies, such as mindfulness, yoga, and cognitive-behavioural therapy, have been proven to reduce symptoms of IBS and dyspepsia. Balanced diets rich in fibre, probiotics, and lean proteins, alongside lifestyle changes like regular meals and reduced caffeine, can further restore digestive health.

*The writer is the founder & CEO of Nutrition For Change. E-mail: raisameh20@gmail.com*

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY IN ACTION

# Empowering lives through meaningful participation

LAIZU AKTER

It was a sunny morning in Dhaka when little Rafiq, a seven-year-old boy with cerebral palsy, smiled for the first time while learning to hold a pencil on his own. For weeks, an occupational therapist had been guiding his mother on how to help him practice hand movements through play-based exercises using common household objects. That one moment — a small hand holding a pencil — was more than a skill gained; it was a symbol of independence, confidence, and dignity.

Stories like Rafiq's unfold quietly every day in therapy centres, hospitals, and homes across Bangladesh. This is the heart of occupational therapy in action — helping people of all ages engage in the activities that give life

participation, and everyday living.

Across the country, occupational therapists are quietly contributing to community-based rehabilitation, special education, mental health services, and elderly care. Their interventions promote productivity, reduce long-term dependency, and enhance quality of life — aligning perfectly with national

universities can host open sessions or community demonstrations showing how daily activities can be adapted to individual needs.

**Engage policymakers and media:** Advocate for inclusion of occupational therapy in mainstream healthcare systems and national development planning.

**Spread the message online:** Use



goals of inclusion and sustainable development.

To truly empower people with disabilities and support recovery after illness or injury, Bangladesh needs greater investment in occupational therapy education, policy recognition, and service expansion.

### HOW WE CAN CELEBRATE AND SUPPORT THE CAUSE

**Share stories of change:** Highlight people whose lives have been touched by occupational therapy — children who can now write, workers who return to their jobs, elders who regain independence.

**Organise public awareness events:** Clinics, hospitals, and

social media to promote this year's theme — "Occupational Therapy in Action" — and emphasise that participation is a human right.

As Bangladesh embraces the spirit of Occupational Therapy in Action, let us support the growth of this vital profession. Let us recognise the quiet heroes — the occupational therapists — who work every day to bring dignity, participation, and hope into people's lives.

Because when participation happens, life happens.

*The writer is a 4<sup>th</sup> Year student of BSc in Occupational Therapy, at Saic College of Medical Science & Technology (SCMST).*

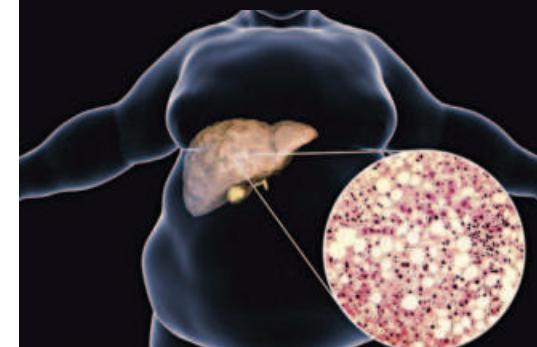
## At-home workouts to keep your liver healthy

You don't need a gym to take care of your liver—simple exercises at home can make a big difference. Regular physical activity helps reduce liver fat, improves metabolism, and prevents fatty liver disease from progressing. Experts recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week, which can be easily achieved through everyday movements.

A great way to start is with 30 minutes of brisk walking or marching in place five times a week. Adding strength training two or three times weekly also helps the liver function better. You can do squats, lunges, or wall push-ups to strengthen your muscles without needing equipment. Simple core exercises like planks or leg raises can further improve overall fitness.

These workouts not only support liver health but also boost energy and control weight—two key factors for preventing fatty liver disease. Alongside exercise, adopting healthy habits is equally important. Choose whole grains, vegetables, and lean proteins, while cutting down on sugar, processed foods, and alcohol.

The key is consistency. Regular movement and a balanced diet can gradually lower liver fat and reduce the risk of inflammation or liver damage. If you have any health concerns or are new to exercise, it is always better to consult a doctor before starting. With small, steady steps, you can protect your liver and improve your overall well-being from the comfort of your home.



## Building markets that last: Rethinking development partnership

**The Daily Star (TDS):** How can development projects create sustainable impact rather than temporary fixes?

**Mohammed Soeb Iftekhar (MSI):** In Bangladesh, while emergency funding and direct delivery mechanisms play a critical role in addressing immediate needs, many interventions are not structured to ensure lasting impact. As a result, progress can slow once external funding concludes. To enhance sustainability, there is an opportunity to transition from a direct implementation approach to a facilitative one, embedding solutions within local markets, private sector systems, and community institutions for longer-term resilience.

For example, promoting a nutritious crop like orange-fleshed sweet potato can only succeed if farmers have a reliable market to sell to. Therefore, our first step is to validate the market concept by linking farmers with buyers and processors, to ensure production is profitable before scaling. Establishing proof of concept prior to wider promotion helps prevent unintended consequences. Similarly, we move beyond simply installing water pumps. Instead, we explore opportunities to develop networks of local retailers and service providers who integrate these products into their business models. Our role is to catalyse and strengthen market relationships, then gradually step back, leaving behind a self-sustaining system in which each actor has both the capacity and the incentive to continue the activity.

**TDS:** What practical tools does iDE use to create system change in sectors like renewable energy, agricultural machinery, and WASH?

**MSI:** While consumers can readily access financing for high-value consumer goods, low-income farmers often lack affordable financing options for productive assets such as solar irrigation pumps. This gap highlights the need for market mechanisms that make essential technologies and services more accessible and sustainable. To address these challenges, iDE applies practical tools that de-risk innovation for the private sector and design commercially viable business models that can scale and sustain impact over time.

For instance, through piloting and partnership models, we have facilitated the emergence of a million-dollar agro-machinery market by engaging both government and private actors. Using the business model canvas, we map every component of a business, from value proposition to customer segments and revenue streams, to ensure commercial viability before expansion.

In WASH, we apply facilitation tools that go beyond building infrastructure. We work to align the incentives of local masons, material suppliers, water service providers, and local governments,



employment. Our approach applies a skills graduation model, a structured pathway that enables individuals to progress from subsistence to sustainable enterprise. This begins with a human-centred design and business model canvas analysis to identify viable opportunities. Participants then receive tailored business capacity-building support through four modules: business analysis, technical knowledge, sales and marketing, and business linkages.

Gender inclusion is integrated at every stage, from project design through implementation, using a gender-lens analysis to address barriers women face in accessing finance, information, and markets. Rather than creating isolated

**Mohammed Soeb Iftekhar**  
Director of Programs, iDE Bangladesh

women's groups, we connect women entrepreneurs to the broader market ecosystem as confident, capable, and competitive business leaders.

**TDS:** What role can local governments and private investors play after donor exit?

**MSI:** They serve as the twin pillars of long-term sustainability. Local governments create the enabling environment by supporting local enterprises, allocating market spaces, and embedding successful models into broader development initiatives. Private investors, in turn, drive scale, transforming successful donor-funded pilots into commercially viable and financially independent enterprises.

*iDE, a global nonprofit organisation in 12 countries since 1984, drives poverty reduction through market-driven solutions in Bangladesh, scaling agriculture, WASH, climate resilience, clean energy, and women's empowerment.*

*This content has been published under 'Catalyzing Markets' - a media campaign jointly initiated by iDE Bangladesh and The Daily Star. This interview was conducted by Shams Rashid Tonmoy.*



PHOTO: AFP

## 'IT WAS FUN'

Indian stalwarts Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli rolled back the years in Sydney, stitching a majestic 168-run stand as India crushed Australia by nine wickets in the third and final ODI on Saturday. Rohit's unbeaten 121 and Kohli's fluent unbeaten 74 lit up their likely final Australian outing -- two legends bowing out together, bat in hand. "It was fun all these years we played here," Rohit said, smiling through memories. Australia won the series 2-1.



PHOTO: AFP/REAL MADRID

## Kings lose 3-2 against Al- Seeb

### SPORTS REPORTER

Bashundhara Kings suffered a 3-2 defeat against Omani league champions Al Seeb in an entertaining opening fixture of the AFC Challenge League at the Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Stadium in Kuwait on Saturday.

The game swung back and forth before Al Seeb came from behind to snatch all three points, overturning a 2-1 deficit early in the second half. A lively crowd was in attendance, including a sizable group of Kings supporters.

The five-time Bangladesh champions fell behind in the seventh minute when Nasser Al Rawahi controlled a clever through-ball inside the box and fired past goalkeeper Mehedi Hasan Sabon with a powerful finish.

Mario Gomez's men responded in the 41st minute as Raphael Augusto latched onto a through-ball from substitute Saad Uddin and unleashed a stunning volley to level the score.

Rakib Hossain then put the Bangladeshi side ahead nine minutes after the restart with a curling left-footed strike from outside the box. However, Al Seeb equalised just seven minutes later through Zaher Al-Aghbari, who skillfully weaved his way into the area before finishing coolly.

Abdul Aziz Al-Maqbali sealed the victory for the Omani side in the 77th minute, combining neatly with a teammate before slotting home as Kings struggled to cope with mounting pressure.

## Four tons launch 27th NCL



**"It looked like the wicket would get spin from the third day, and that's why we targeted to score as much runs as possible."**

— Chattogram Division batter Yasir Ali

### SPORTS REPORTER

The opening day of the 27th National Cricket League (NCL) 2025-26 was marked by four centuries across three venues yesterday.

In Rajshahi, twin hundreds from Mahmudul Hasan Joy and Yasir Ali propelled Chattogram Division to 401 runs in their first innings against Rajshahi Division, who opted to field. Joy (127 off 165 balls, 15 fours, 2 sixes) and Yasir (129 off 138 balls, 10 fours, 6 sixes) shared a dominant 221-run fourth-wicket stand in near run-a-ball. Spinner Tajul Islam (4-159) helped the hosts hit back late, who ended the day in a spot of bother at 1-2.

In Khulna, lower-order batters Sheikh Paeviz Jibon (unbeaten 72 off 91 balls) and Ziaur Rahman (69 off 91) helped the hosts reach 312-9 after electing to bat first against Barishal Division. The day was overshadowed by Barishal's Fazle Mahmud, who suffered a heat stroke in the 19th over and was stretchered off.

Meanwhile, in Sylhet, debutants Mymensingh Division recovered from an early collapse after being asked to bat, thanks largely to Ariful Islam, who went on to score his maiden first-class hundred (101 off 208 balls). Mymensingh closed the day at 268-7, with Sylhet pacer Khaled Ahmed taking three wickets.

Elsewhere in Sylhet, Marshall Ayub's 105 off 161 balls rescued Dhaka Division after they slumped to 13-3 against Rangpur Division but were eventually bundled out for 221. Abu Hasim took three wickets for Rangpur, who replied with 65-2 at stumps.

## HOCKEY JUNIOR WORLD CUP

## Ambitions pivot to 'Plan B'

### SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh youth hockey coach, Siegfried Aikman, expressed disappointment over the scrapped European tour to Switzerland and Austria, which had been planned as preparation for the upcoming FIH Hockey Junior World Cup in India, which runs from November 28 to December 10.

The tour, which included two matches each against the youth Swiss and Austrian teams, was cancelled due to visa complications. Bangladesh Hockey Federation general secretary Riazul explained at yesterday's press briefing that since the tour was not an official international tournament, the Swiss Embassy did not grant visas for all 26 players in a single application.

Despite the setback, Aikman remains focused. When asked about his frustration, the coach replied, "I'm very disappointed. I was very upset, but you always need a Plan B."

His original plan was partly completed by last month's Malaysia tour, where Bangladesh lost four of five matches. Aikman noted, "In Malaysia, the idea was to test our defensive game." The next step, which would have been the Switzerland tour, was intended to "check how the combination from attack and defence



PHOTO: STAR

Junior World Cup goal against their group opponents: Australia, France, and Korea. The Dutchman said he wants to "play competitive matches" against all oppositions and "surprise Korea".

Aikman and his charges are scheduled to depart for India on November 18, where they will train and play practice matches against the Swiss and Chilean teams before the 24-team tournament begins.

## Pride, position, and more at stake

Real Madrid host Barcelona at the Santiago Bernabeu in LaLiga tonight. While Barca would be hoping to leapfrog leaders Real Madrid in the points table, Los Blancos would look for a much-needed victory after a bleak Clasico record last season.



- Barcelona are targeting a fifth straight win over Real Madrid in all competitions, something they have only previously achieved under Pep Guardiola, from 2008 to 2010.
- However, Real have won seven of their last 11 LaLiga clashes with Barcelona (L4).
- Kylian Mbappe has scored 11 goals in eight appearances against Barcelona in all competitions, including five in his four Clasicos (all of which he has lost). This is also his most against a non-French side in his club career.
- Flick's Barca won all four Clasicos last season, scoring a total of 16 goals. These numbers would certainly put extra pressure on Xabi Alonso in his first Clasico as manager.
- Lamine Yamal scored in three of four Clasicos last season.
- Barcelona are two points behind Real Madrid at the summit of LaLiga, and a win for Barca at the Santiago Bernabeu would see Flick's men pull ahead.
- Marcus Rashford will be desperate to get his first taste of El Clasico this week, and his nine goal involvements in all competitions this term (five goals, four assists) are the most of any Barca player, one ahead of Yamal (three goals, five assists).
- Barca have not lost any of their previous 15 away games in LaLiga (W11 D4).
- Seven of the last eight Real Madrid coaches have lost their first meeting with Barca in LaLiga, with the exception being Zinedine Zidane, who won 2-1 at Camp Nou in April 2016.
- Madrid have won their last eight home games in the league and could win nine in a row for the first time since February 2015.

## Tug of war between archery and football

### SPORTS REPORTER

The Asian Archery Championship, scheduled for November 8 to 14 in Dhaka, may be relocated from the National Stadium to accommodate the Bangladesh national football team's fixtures: a FIFA friendly against Afghanistan on November 13 and an Asian Cup Qualifier against India on November 18.

Speaking to reporters during an exhibition football match between advisers and diplomats at the National Stadium on Saturday, Sports Adviser Asif Mahmud informed reporters that the championship, which expects over 400 athletes and officials from around 30 Asian countries, is being planned to be hosted either at the Army Stadium or Kamalapur Stadium.

Bangladesh Archery Federation General Secretary Tanvir Ahmed noted they have not received official instructions from NSC, despite the ground being allotted a year ago and preparations already underway. He said that technical delegates have inspected the venue and that a relocation would raise "compliance issues" and affect the nation's "prestige and image."

Kazi Razibuddin Ahmed Chapal, a former BAF general secretary and an Asian Archery Federation member, proposed holding the tournament up to the semifinals at the National Stadium, then vacating by 6:00 pm on November 12. Otherwise, he warned, they "might face sanctions."

## Can Tigresses avoid bottom finish?

### SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will look to end their ICC Women's World Cup campaign on a positive note when they take on India in their final league-stage match at the Dr DY Patil Sports Academy in Navi Mumbai today.

The Tigresses are already out of semifinal contention after managing just one win from six matches. Yet their campaign could have looked much brighter, as they came close to victories against England, South Africa, and Sri Lanka before faltering in key moments.

Despite some promising performances, Bangladesh sit at the bottom of the eight-team points table. While Pakistan failed to manage any wins, and Sri Lanka and New Zealand each have one win as well, those teams gained additional points from rain abandoned matches, whereas Bangladesh endured a series of heartbreaking defeats.

To match their previous World Cup standing, Bangladesh must beat India -- a side they have defeated only once in eight encounters in this format.

"We are now eighth in the points table and it's very disappointing," said batter Sobhana Mostary at the pre-match press conference yesterday. "We won one match against Pakistan and created chances against big teams. The loss against Sri Lanka hurt us a lot."

Sobhana added that the side is focusing on improving batting and fielding. "We are trying to build partnerships, make better use of the Powerplay, and reduce dot balls. It's our last game, and we want to finish the tournament well."



Leg-spinner Rishad Hossain trains at the Bir Shrestha Shahid Flight Lieutenant Motiur Rahman Cricket Stadium in Chattogram yesterday ahead of Bangladesh's three-match T20I series against the West Indies, starting at the same venue tomorrow. Player of the series in the earlier ODI series, Rishad will hope to continue his good run, both with bat and ball, to beat the Windies.

PHOTO: BCB



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## Parties 'eager for conflict' ahead of polls

Says Mahfuj, warns against use of religion for political gain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam yesterday said political parties appear eager for conflict ahead of the upcoming election.

"And you will see it unfold within a few months," he said at a dialogue titled "Mazar Culture: Violence, Crisis, and Future Thinking" held at BM Bhaban in Dhaka's Segunbagicha.

He added that the situation in Bangladesh could worsen if a religious dimension is added to it.

The event was organised by Maqam, a research platform focused on the Sufi community, where Mahfuj attended as the chief guest.

The adviser said that while state-level fascism may have ended, traces



SEE PAGE 9 COL.2



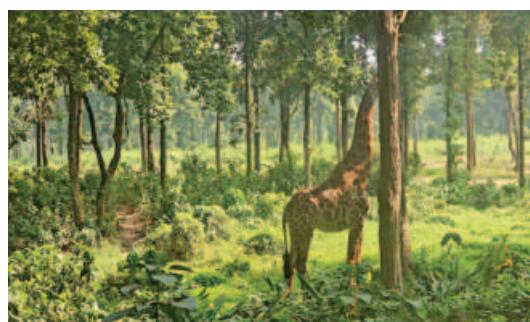
Fishermen prepare their nets and boats at Fishery Ghat in the port city yesterday, ready to sail into the Bay of Bengal as the 22-day fishing ban ends at midnight.

PHOTO: STAR

## Safari park's last giraffe dies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

The only giraffe at Gazipur Safari Park has died while undergoing treatment for tuberculosis (TB). The adult female giraffe, brought from South Africa, passed away on Thursday afternoon, but the news was made public yesterday.



Speaking to this newspaper yesterday, Safari Park Officer-in-Charge Tareq Rahman said the giraffe had been ill for the past week.

"After learning about the illness, the park authorities quickly formed a special medical board and started treatment. After running some tests, the board learnt that the giraffe was infected with tuberculosis (TB)."

The giraffe's body has been sent to the medical board for autopsy, the OC added.

In this connection, Wildlife Inspector Raju Ahmed filed a general diary with Sreepur Police Station on Friday, confirmed Sreepur Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Mohammad Abdul Barik.

In the GD, he mentioned, "An adult female African giraffe died while undergoing treatment at Gazipur Safari Park around 4:00pm on October 23."

Gazipur Tourist Police Inspector Kamal Hossain said that an investigation report has been prepared into the giraffe's death, which was to be submitted to the authorities yesterday.

## First Ban-Pak JEC meeting in 20 years tomorrow

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Pakistan are set to hold the ninth Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meeting tomorrow, 20 years after the last JEC, as the two countries are gearing up to boost bilateral trade and economic cooperation after the July uprising.

Economic Affairs Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed will lead the Bangladesh delegation in the JEC, while Pakistan's Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik will lead the Pakistani side.

The two countries have been discussing a few memorandums of understanding (MoUs) including on agriculture research, Halal food, IT, shipping etc, according to diplomatic sources in Dhaka and Islamabad.

Those discussions were at the final stage, but it is yet to be confirmed if the MoUs will be signed during the JEC, an official at the Economic Relations Division (ERD) told The Daily Star yesterday.

"When it comes to bilateral trade, it is quite imbalanced, with Pakistan

SEE PAGE 9 COL.2

## 1.5m in Gaza need emergency assistance

Says UN as Israel blocks crossings despite ceasefire

AGENCIES

The United Nations said yesterday at least 1.5 million in the Gaza Strip need "emergency assistance", as Palestinians returning to their homes say they are finding only rubble amid a constant struggle for necessities, including food and water.

Many found neighbourhoods razed to the ground, tangled metal and even dangerous weapons where there used to be residential buildings and homes.

Top US diplomat Marco Rubio voiced hope Friday of soon putting together an international force to police the ceasefire in Gaza, as Palestinian factions agreed that a committee of independent technocrats will run the post-war

territory.

The secretary of state visited Israel on the heels of Vice President JD Vance as part of an all-out effort by the United States to persuade both Hamas and Israel to respect the truce.

Rubio said it was critical for the deal to create "the conditions for the stabilisation force to come in as soon as it possibly can be put together".

He expressed optimism for a durable end to the two-year Gaza war as he met Israeli, US and other Western forces monitoring the ceasefire from inside a vast converted warehouse in southern Israel.

The main Palestinian factions, including

Hamas, agreed during a

meeting in Cairo that temporary Palestinian committee of independent technocrats would take over the running of Gaza.

The committee would "manage the affairs of life and basic services in cooperation with Arab brothers and international institutions", according to a joint statement published on Hamas's website.

Meanwhile, Israeli army hindered access of Palestinians to olive trees, reports Al Jazeera online. "Everybody was fleeing because the settlers attacked suddenly, maybe 100 of them," witness Yasser Alkam told AFP news agency, adding that one Swedish activist also had his arm and leg broken by settlers.

"Fighting back would only bring more violence, sometimes with the army's backing," lamented Nael al-Qouq, a Turmus Aya farmer who was prevented from reaching his olive trees that

same day.

Near Turmus Aya, in the village of al-Mughayir, one villager was prevented from harvesting altogether.

According to a poll published by Israel's Channel 12, 52 percent of respondents believe that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should not run in the next elections.

Of them, 42 percent of respondents said that Netanyahu should run for prime minister again as the leader of his Likud party, while 7 percent said they were unsure about his candidacy, reports Al Jazeera online.

## NY MAYOR RACE Mamdani defends his Muslim faith

AGENCIES

New York City mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani gave an emotional speech addressing "racist, baseless attacks" from his opponents, a day before early voting begins in the race he is projected to win.



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## AK Fazlul Huq and his political rivals

P7



Rows of trucks have been parked illegally along this entire stretch of road near the Samakal and Channel 24 offices in Tejgaon, leaving barely any space for traffic. Pedestrian movement is also risky, as pavements have been encroached upon by local businesses. Such irregularities are common on roads across the Tejgaon Industrial Area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

**MORE NEWS**

A healing home for Dhaka's trees

P3

Women's political rights and a revolution deferred

P5

AK Fazlul Huq and his political rivals

P7

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নিজ এনআইডিতে পছন্দমতো ১০টি সিমকার্ড রেখে অতিরিক্ত সিমকার্ড সমূহ ৩০ অক্টোবর ২০২৫ এর মধ্যে সংশ্লিষ্ট মোবাইল অপারেটরের কাস্টমার কেয়ারের মাধ্যমে ডি-রেজিস্টার (নিবন্ধন বাতিল)/মালিকানা পরিবর্তন করুন।

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SECOND EDITION

DHAKA SUNDAY OCTOBER 26, 2025

BLUEPRINT  
FOR  
PROGRESS

REGD. NO. DA 781

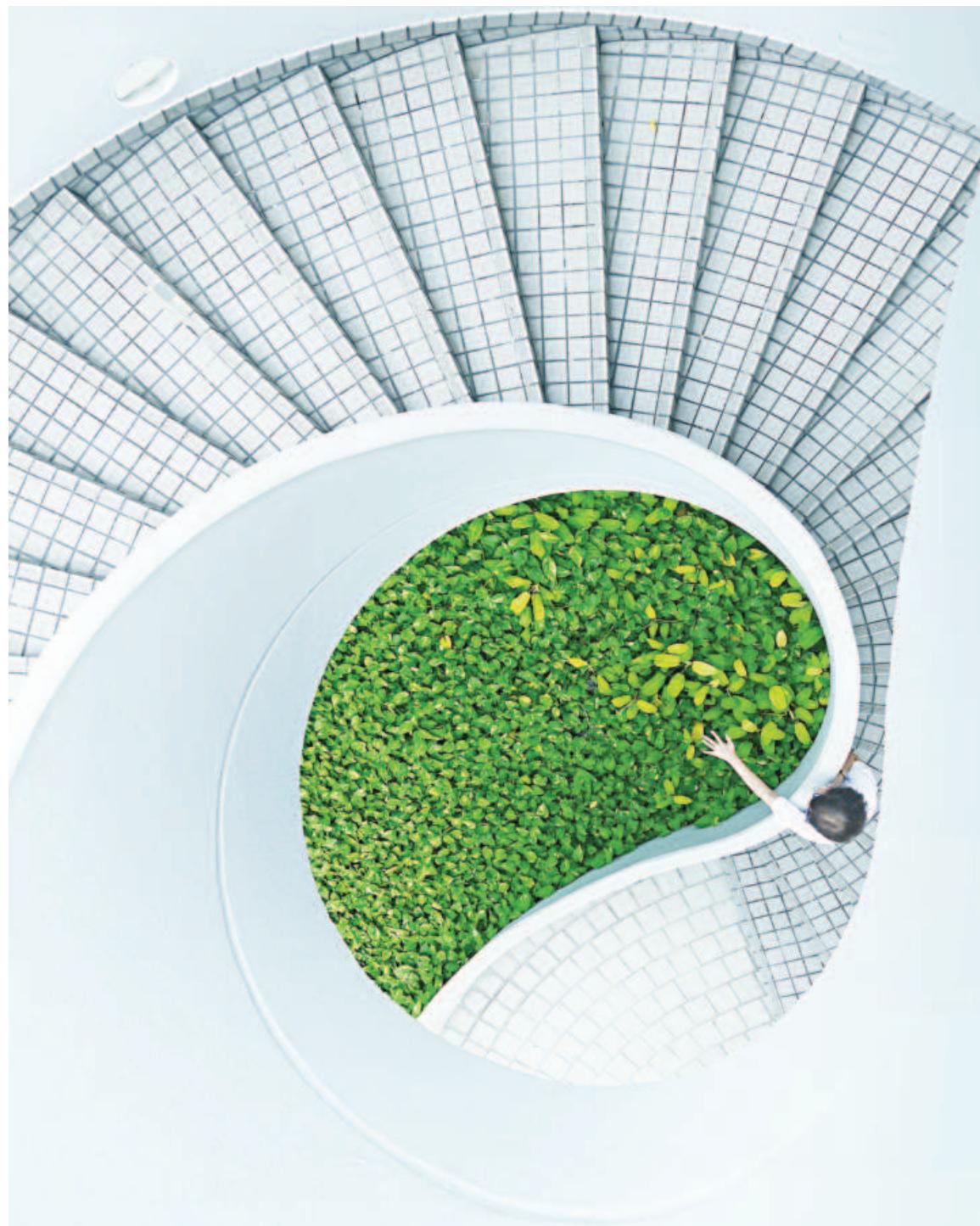
VOL. XXXV No. 273

KARTIK 10, 1432 BS

[www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net)

JAMADIUL AWWAL 3, 1447 HIJRI

32 PAGES: TK 15.00



## BUILDING SMART

### for a Cooler Bangladesh

**The country's latest Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) in climate explicitly calls for low-carbon, resilient buildings and infrastructure. Work is underway to quantify how much construction can save. The Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan noted that by 2035 Bangladesh aims to reduce 84.92 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, and greener construction will contribute to that.**

TAGABUN TAHARIM TITUN

Carbon footprint is the total greenhouse gas emissions caused by an activity or sector. It is a key measure of environmental impact, especially under climate change. Bangladesh's footprint is about 124.793 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> as of 2023. Md Abu Sadeque, Executive Director of Centre of House Building and Research (HBRC) stated to the Daily Star that roughly one-third of Bangladesh's emissions come from construction and building materials, so transforming this sector is essential for meeting climate goals.

A large part of this comes from materials that form the base of development such as bricks, cement, and steel. Bangladesh has pledged to cut 84.92 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> by 2035 in the NDC 3.0. The investment needed to achieve this is about US\$116.8 billion. The plan divides responsibility: 26.7 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> reductions will come from domestic efforts, while 58.2 million tonnes will depend on international finance, technology, and partnerships. These numbers highlight both ambition and the scale of support needed. If this single sector changes how it builds, the nation can move much closer to its climate goals while improving air quality and health.

#### LOW-CARBON MATERIALS THAT WORK

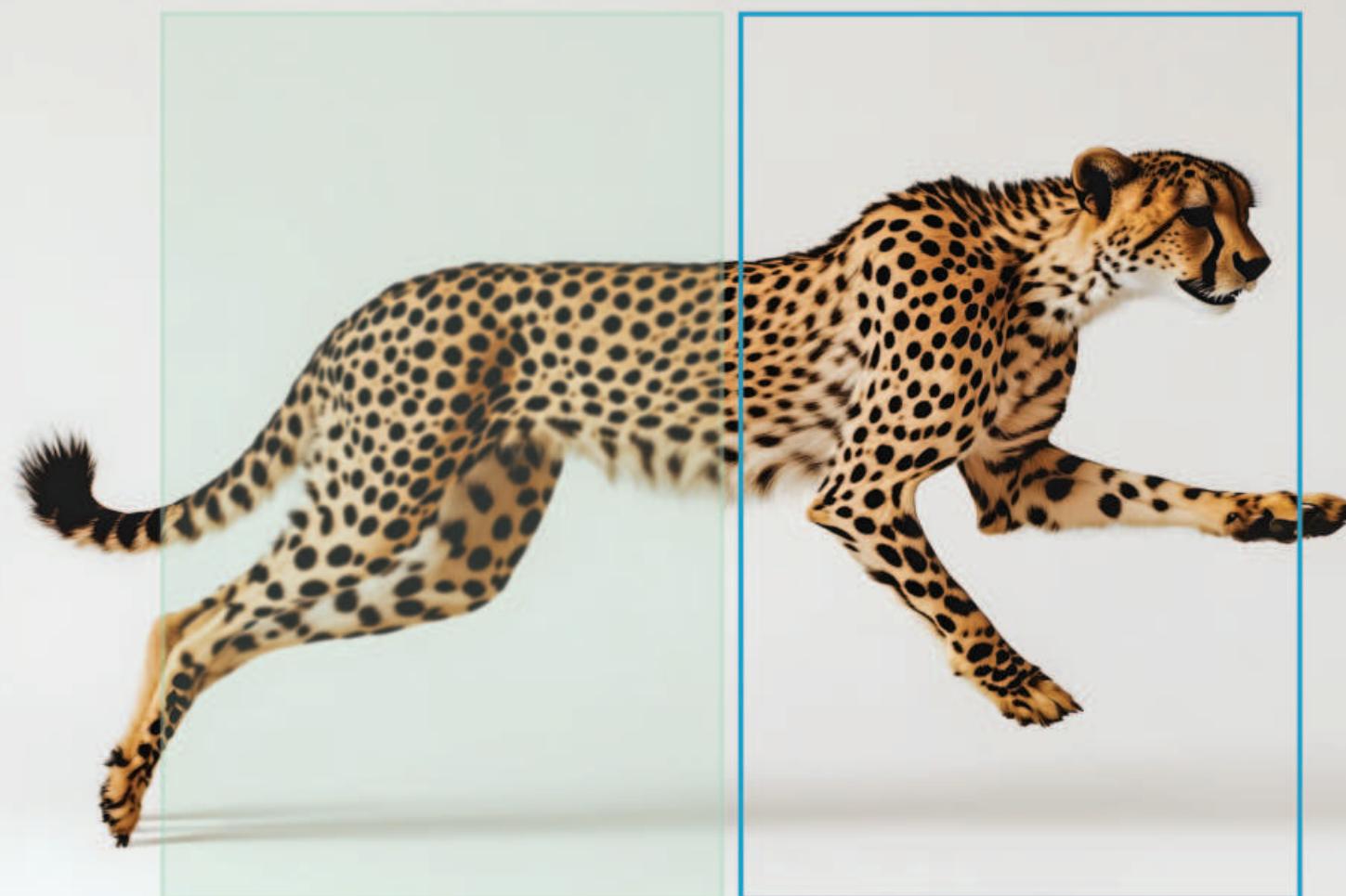
Traditional fired bricks are one of Bangladesh's largest polluters. Each kilogram of brick emits around 300 grams of CO<sub>2</sub>, while concrete blocks emit only 100 grams. A simple switch could reduce two-thirds of current brick-related emissions.

Engineers and builders are already turning to alternatives. Compressed Stabilized Earth Blocks (CSEB), interlocking blocks, hollow concrete blocks, aerated concrete, and ferrocement panels all provide durable, low-carbon options.

SEE PAGE J2

## CLARITY UNMATCHED

THE TRUE 700<sup>PPM</sup> CLEAR GLASS



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## Building Smart for a Cooler Bangladesh

## CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS

by industry



## BRICK KILNS

- » 17% of the country's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- » 7,086 brick kilns are operating, of which 4,505 of them have no clearance



SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT (2024), MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT (2023)

## FROM JI

Modern techniques such as geopolymers, rapid-hardening cement, and bamboo composites can cut construction emissions by 40 to 50 percent compared to conventional methods.

In flood-prone areas, the innovation is even more striking. A recent project named "Amphibious house" was built with sun-dried mud blocks that float when water rises, avoiding kiln-fired bricks altogether. These ideas show that sustainable building can be practical, affordable, and climate smart.

## LOCAL MATERIALS, LOCAL GAINS

One quick win is replacing high-carbon materials with greener alternatives. Engineer S.M. Khorshed Alam, president of the Bangladesh Association of Construction Industry, urges moving away from fired bricks toward options such as compressed stabilized earth blocks, interlocking CSEB, hollow concrete blocks, thermal blocks, aerated concrete and ferro cement panels. A recent project like "Swaner Bari- the amphibious house" for floods use sun-dried mud blocks instead of kiln-fired bricks, cutting embodied emissions. Innovations like geopolymers (non-Portland) cement, rapid-hardening binders and bamboo composites can lower construction and housing emissions by roughly forty to fifty percent. Local sourcing also matters a lot. Because Bangladesh imports

crushed stone aggregate, locally produced compacted earth blocks and ferro-cement panels reduce transport emissions and costs. Reusing waste materials in mixes further shrinks the carbon footprint. In short, switching materials through proven alternatives, recycled inputs and local manufacture is one of the fastest and most scalable ways to cut construction emissions.

## WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING

Another lever is waste management. Construction and demolition generate huge waste streams worldwide, and Bangladesh is no exception. Allowing demolition debris, scrap steel and leftover concrete to be recycled in new projects can cut demand for new cement and steel, saving energy and emissions. Experts call for "life-cycle analysis" in project planning: building longer-lasting structures may cost more upfront but pays off by avoiding future rebuilds. Professor A.F.M. Saiful Amin of the Department of Civil Engineering, BUET points out that a growing recycling industry could fundamentally change construction: "Gradually, many recycling industries will develop to recycle polymers, steel, bricks and concrete and to help grow recycling-based startups. These businesses will transform the construction sector by reducing its carbon footprint." Bangladesh has only just begun to incorporate demolition-reuse policies, but researchers and

industry leaders agree this could be a big opportunity to trim the sector's emissions without sacrificing growth.

## POLICIES AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE

Beyond individual projects, government action is key. Bangladesh has started introducing rules to favor green construction. For example, a recent amendment to the Brick Kiln Act now bans the use of toxic topsoil and firewood in brick-making, effectively phasing out the dirtiest kilns. The forthcoming building code and incentives from regulators will further shift the market. Development banks and donors are also engaged with several international grants that support workshops for masons on alternative bricks and link producers with finance.

The construction industry in Bangladesh holds great potential to shrink the nation's carbon footprint. From using low-carbon materials and better insulation to recycling waste and enforcing green standards, every step can make a difference. Sustainable construction is not only good for the planet but essential for people: only by becoming more environmentally conscious in all aspects of building can future generations continue to enjoy life as we were able to once. With bold measures and cooperation across government, builders and financiers Bangladesh can indeed build its future brick by brick, and leave a much smaller carbon footprint.

## The Fine Glass Maker

**AkijBashir Glass Industries Limited** is one of the leading Bangladeshi manufacturers dedicated to producing one of the finest architectural glasses for both domestic and global markets. Positioned as 'The Fine Glass Maker', the company delivers products of exceptional clarity and premium quality that meet stringent European standards.

The Daily Star (TDS): What inspired AkijBashir Glass to enter Bangladesh's glass industry?

**Mohammad Khourshed Alam (MKA):** Our entry into glass manufacturing originates from a vision to make Bangladesh self-reliant in premium building materials. For years, the country depended on imports for quality architectural glass. As AkijBashir Group carried forward the legacy of building materials industry, AkijBashir Glass was established to deliver world-class float



**MOHAMMAD KHOURSHED ALAM**  
COO, AkijBashir Group

**MKA:** Introducing one of the clearest glasses in Bangladesh, with an ultra-low iron content of only 700 PPM for unmatched transparency, previously available only through import. This bubble-free, perfectly flat glass offers over 91% light transmission, enhancing aesthetics and energy efficiency. Ideal for modern architectural projects, it meets EN 572-2:2012 standards.

**TDS:** Are there any upcoming innovations or new product categories that will redefine how glass is used in construction and modern architecture?

**MKA:** We are continuously investing in research and development to introduce Low Emissivity glass tailored to the needs of Bangladeshi consumers

At AkijBashir Glass, sustainability is a core principle. We generate 71% of our energy from renewable sources like solar panels and steam turbines. We also have fully equipped WTP and ETP systems to ensure that water discharge is safe and does not harm the fertile lands nearby.

and the local climate. This next generation glass will significantly enhance energy performance, promote sustainable living.

**TDS:** How is AkijBashir Glass contributing to future-ready construction in Bangladesh?

**MKA:** We view glass as more than a construction material; it's a catalyst for innovation, energy efficiency, and sustainable design. AkijBashir Glass empowers architects and developers to create smarter, safer, and more climate-friendly structures. Our range from clear glass to reflective, Copper Free Silver Mirror and Tempered variants deliver exceptional clarity, durability, and energy performance while meeting European standards.

**TDS:** Your 700 PPM Clear Glass has been widely discussed. What makes it unique?

Key challenges in Bangladesh's glass industry include high energy costs, raw material shortages, excessive duties and taxes, limited technical expertise, and low consumer awareness about quality glass. Recently, the Department of Environment banned the extraction of all types of sand, including silica sand, the primary raw material for glass. The industry must rely on importing sand if we stop getting the only vital raw materials for glass making, which will significantly cause foreign currency outflow. Ultimately, the production cost will rise by many folds.

## NASIR FLOAT GLASS

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## THE TRANSPARENT REVOLUTION

Once fragile and functional, glass has become one of the toughest, smartest, and most versatile materials of our time. It no longer just lets in the light. It now powers buildings, connects cities, and reflects the changing face of modern design.

### From utility to innovation

In the past, glass was valued mainly for its transparency allowing light into homes while keeping out dust and weather. Today, thanks to technology, glass has become a symbol of innovation. It is used not just for viewing but for insulation, energy efficiency, and aesthetic appeal. Modern architects and designers use glass to create open, bright, and elegant spaces that connect people to their surroundings.

Reflective glass, for example, is widely used in apartments and commercial buildings. It allows sunlight to pass through while ensuring privacy and reducing glare. This reduces the need for blinds or curtains and gives buildings a sleek, modern look. Double-glazed glass, another common type, improves thermal insulation and minimizes outside noise, making indoor spaces more comfortable and energy-efficient. Other variants include:

### Glass in Bangladesh's Urban Growth

The use of glass in Bangladesh has grown rapidly alongside urbanisation from apartments and office towers to shopping centres and public buildings. According to a 2022 report, the local glass industry is expanding at approximately 8-10% annually, with more than 90% of domestic demand now met by local production. Domestic manufacturers now produce around 2,000 tonnes of glass per day and are even exploring exports. This now includes energy-efficient variants—such as double-glazed and low-emissivity (Low-E) glass—well suited to Bangladesh's tropical climate and modern design demands. This shift not only modernises building exteriors but also enhances light flow, ventilation, and aesthetic appeal.

### Challenges and Opportunities

Though the industry continues to advance, it still faces challenges like high production costs and reliance on imported raw materials. Glassmaking demands uninterrupted operations and heavy investment, limiting smaller producers. Yet, rising demand for sustainable, energy-efficient materials is driving innovation and growth.

Today, glass is more than a transparent surface. It is where design meets technology. From double-glazed windows that conserve energy to decorative panels that define modern interiors, glass has become integral to how we build and live. In Bangladesh, the growing use of locally produced, climate-smart glass reflects a shift toward sustainable urban living and a future that's not only brighter, but clearer.

## Beyond transparency

Nasir Group has become one of Bangladesh's largest business conglomerates with a wide range of operations, including in the glass industry. While the adoption of "smart" materials in the country's glass sector is not yet widespread, with a focus on conventional products, the company is beginning to introduce smarter technologies through its production.

**TDS:** How would you describe the current level of adoption of smart materials in Bangladesh's glass industry?

**Nasim Biswas (NM):** The adoption of truly "smart" materials in Bangladesh's glass industry is not up to the mark as we expected. The industry is overwhelmingly focused on the production and use of conventional, commodity-grade glass. Bangladesh's local glass production consists of some Sheet Glasses, such as Float Glass, Tempered/

analysis that shows the long-term financial and environmental savings of using these advanced materials versus conventional ones in a typical urban project?

**NM:** Smart glass can offer long-term financial and environmental savings in urban projects compared to conventional glass, primarily through reduced energy consumption for heating, cooling, and lighting, which lowers utility bills and carbon emissions. Smart windows with daylighting control achieve 23% energy savings. Additionally, the ability to manage peak energy loads can provide flexibility in energy use and increase building comfort. Smart glass can decrease a building's overall energy demand by



**NASIM BISWAS**

Managing Director  
Nasir Group

- My perspective on building materials is rooted in practicality and durability.
- When we look at the next generation of construction, smart materials are not just a trend; they are a fundamental shift towards creating infrastructure that is adaptive, responsive, and self-sustaining.

reducing the need for artificial lighting, heating, and air conditioning.

**TDS:** What kind of government policies, R&D incentives, or changes in building codes are necessary to accelerate the integration of smart materials into mainstream construction in Bangladesh?

**NM:** To accelerate smart material integration in Bangladesh, government policies should incentivise R&D and adoption, update building codes to include performance standards for smart materials, and support both large-scale and grassroots innovation through targeted funding and a streamlined regulatory process. These measures should align with national goals like the Climate Action Roadmap for Buildings and Construction, which focuses on livability, functionality, and resilience through sustainable practices.

## THE GLASS GUIDE

### What Works Where

#### FLOAT GLASS (CLEAR GLASS)

This is the plain, everyday glass found in most windows and doors. Its biggest strengths are clarity, affordability, and easy availability. This is great for spaces that need natural light. However, it's fragile and unsafe for high-impact areas like balconies or railings, as it shatters into sharp pieces when broken.

#### LAMINATED GLASS

Made by bonding two or more glass layers with a plastic interlayer, laminated glass holds together even when cracked. Much like a spiderweb instead of shattered pieces. It's excellent for skylights, windshields, or security areas where safety matters most. The trade-off is cost; it's pricier and slightly heavier than standard glass.

#### SOLAR CONTROL GLASS

This one's built for Bangladesh's sunny climate. It reflects heat while allowing light, reducing the need for air-conditioning and saving energy. However, it can be costlier than clear glass and may slightly dim indoor brightness.

#### ACOUSTIC GLASS

Perfect for Dhaka's noisy neighborhoods, this layered glass minimizes sound transmission while maintaining visibility. It's great for homes near roads or airports, though its cost can be prohibitive for large installations.

#### TEMPERED GLASS

Tougher and safer, this is heat-treated to be four to five times stronger than regular glass. When it breaks, it crumbles into small, dull fragments instead of dangerous shards. Perfect for doors, shower enclosures, and railings. The only downside? It can't be cut or altered once tempered, so exact sizing is crucial before installation.

#### DOUBLE-GLAZED GLASS

Essentially two panes separated by air or gas, this type insulates against both noise and temperature. It keeps rooms cool in summer, warm in winter, and quiet all year. The downside? Higher price and trickier maintenance if moisture seeps between the panes.

#### LOW-EMISSIVITY (LOW-E) GLASS

A high-tech cousin of solar control glass, it uses a thin metallic coating to reflect heat without blocking light. Ideal for energy-efficient buildings but again, more expensive upfront.

#### DECORATIVE GLASS

Where functionality meets art. Etched, frosted, or colored glass adds privacy and personality to interiors. While it won't block heat or noise, it creates atmosphere while turning a practical surface into a design statement.



# Can Self-Healing Concrete Provide the Solution?



ADRIN SARWAR

Bangladesh is in the midst of a remarkable urban transformation. From the capital of Dhaka to emerging cityscapes across the nation, construction is the drumbeat of progress. Yet, this rapid growth comes with a significant challenge: the durability of our infrastructure. Concrete, the backbone of the modern world. Over time, small cracks caused by environmental stress, heavy loads, and

chemical exposure can widen, allowing water to seep in and wear down the steel reinforcement within. This leads to costly repairs, reduced structural lifespan, and potential safety hazards. For a nation building its future, this is a critical vulnerability.

#### Concrete that heals itself

Imagine a material that can heal its own wounds, much like human skin. Such is the promise of self-healing concrete. It is a game-changing innovation that redefines construction. The technology works in two primary ways. The first is autogenous healing, a natural but limited ability of unhydrated cement to react with water and seal very fine cracks.

The more advanced method is autonomous healing. The most promising approach involves embedding specific dormant bacteria within the concrete mix along with their food source (often calcium lactate). When a crack forms and water enters, the bacteria is awoken. They consume the nutrients and, through their metabolic process, produce calcium carbonate, also known as limestone. This meticulously fills the crack, sealing the damage and restoring the concrete's integrity. This autonomous repair system can seal cracks up to 0.8mm wide, preventing water ingress and stopping small problems from becoming major structural failures.

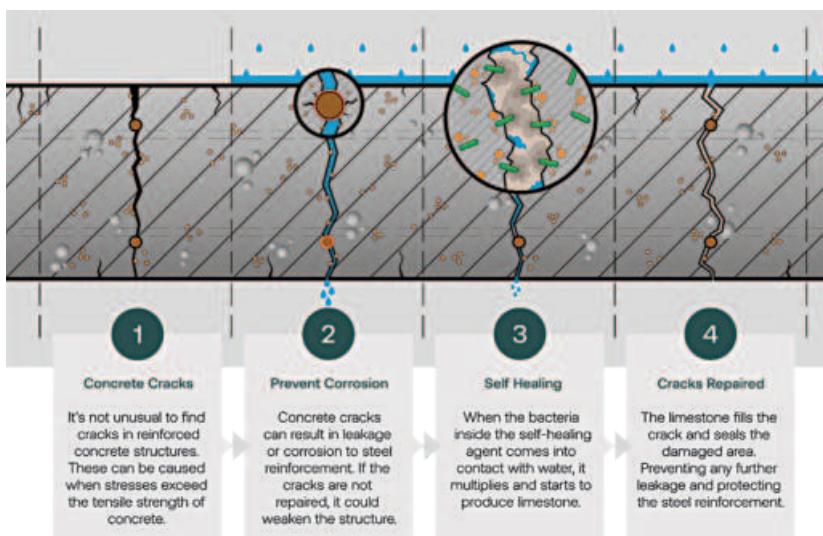
Sensicon, a partner of Basilisk, a Dutch startup that specialises in the development of self-healing concrete solutions for infrastructure projects, produces a self-healing concrete, Sensicrete. The product was invented by Henk Jonkers, a microbiologist and professor at Delft University of Technology. It can be used in any concrete structure that is susceptible to water or moisture exposure, for example, concrete tunnels and sea defence walls. Sensicrete is made from a standard concrete mix with a self-healing agent added to it. The agent

contains a dormant bacterium; once cracks appear and the bacteria come into contact with water, they produce limestone and seal the cracks. The exact healing process is shown below.

#### Extending Lifespan

By autonomously repairing cracks, the concrete prevents water, chemicals, and salts from penetrating the structure. This stops the corrosion of internal steel reinforcement. The result is a significantly extended lifespan

and water tanks, expensive and labour-intensive waterproof coatings or membranes often become unnecessary. This not only saves on initial construction costs but also removes a potential point of failure, as membranes can tear or degrade over time. Some advanced self-healing composites are designed to be more flexible than traditional concrete. It allows them to bend slightly under stress before fracturing.



SOURCE: SENSIICON.CO.UK

#### Projects Using Self-Healing Technology

While the technology is still gaining widespread adoption, it has been successfully demonstrated in several high-impact projects globally. Construction company Heijmans Infra used self-healing concrete to build a pilot project, a railway underpass in Rijen, the Netherlands, for the first time. In this pilot project, construction company Heijmans used self-healing concrete to build a railway underpass wall in the Netherlands. The key innovation was using the concrete's

ability to automatically repair its own cracks to justify a major design change, they successfully reduced the amount of horizontal steel reinforcement by 35%.

The concept of self-healing concrete is relatively new and is still under research in most parts of the world, including the UK. But there have been many successful trials of this new technology in laboratories as well as real-world applications. Basilisk has successfully used self-healing concrete in several commercial projects. For example, they extended the lifespan of a bus lane by 15 years using their product, Basilisk Liquid Repair System ER7. Situated in Schiphol Airport, the bus lane was showing a large number of cracks along the entire route. As of now, there are no large-scale public projects documented in Bangladesh.

#### The Bangladeshi Context

The drive for smarter construction materials is already taking root in Bangladesh. Academic institutions are exploring innovative solutions tailored to local needs. Moreover, the Housing and Building Research Institute (HBRI), has long been a pioneer in researching and promoting alternative and sustainable construction materials. Their work in areas like eco-friendly blocks sets a crucial precedent for adopting next-generation technologies like self-healing concrete, aligning with the national goal of building sustainable and affordable housing.

#### A Wiser Investment for the Future

Although self-healing concrete has a higher initial cost, its long-term economic and environmental benefits are significant.

By dramatically reducing the need for maintenance and repairs, it extends a structure's lifespan, making it a more cost-effective solution over time. This extended life also lowers the demand for new cement production, a major source of CO2 emissions, thereby reducing the material's overall carbon footprint.

# CARBON TO CONSERVATION

## The Promise of Green Construction

**Green construction isn't just about lowering emissions. It is about building a future that lasts.**

TASNIM TABASSUM

Cities are expanding rapidly, transforming skylines and reshaping the way people live, work, and connect. Yet the very structures that define modern life are also among the biggest contributors to climate change. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the buildings and construction sector accounts for roughly one-third of global energy demand. Around 37% of energy- and process-related CO2 emissions when materials are included. As the world confronts escalating climate pressures and dwindling resources, the construction industry stands at a pivotal crossroads. Here, the concept of green construction, which is also known as sustainable or "green building," emerges as both a challenge and an opportunity.



#### WHAT "GREEN CONSTRUCTION" REALLY MEANS

Green construction encompasses design and delivery approaches that reduce environmental impact throughout a building's lifecycle. This includes site selection that protects ecosystems, low embodied carbon materials, efficient HVAC systems, water-saving measures, and on-site waste reduction. According to the U.S. Green Building Council, it is not a single technology but a whole-system mindset focused on durability, reuse, low operating costs, and occupant health.

#### THE NUMBERS THAT MATTER

Operationally, buildings consume about 30% of the world's final energy and produce roughly a quarter of energy-related emissions. When emissions from materials such as cement and steel are included, the sector's share rises toward the high-30s percent range. Those figures underline why decarbonising both new

construction and the existing stock is essential to meet climate targets.

#### PROVEN TACTICS WITH MEASURABLE RETURNS

Many green measures deliver rapid, verifiable returns. High-performance insulation, improved glazing and efficient heating, ventilation and cooling can cut energy use dramatically; renewable energy integration further reduces operating emissions. On water, low-flow fixtures, greywater reuse, and rainwater harvesting are standard, measurable approaches. Evidence from certified projects shows meaningful performance gains – for instance, large samples of LEED-certified buildings report average energy reductions and water savings compared with conventional peers. Still, results vary by climate, operation and certification rigor, so careful measurement is essential.

#### WHY GREEN BUILDINGS MAKE ECONOMIC SENSE

Beyond environmental benefits, green buildings often outperform conventional ones financially over the medium term. Savings on energy and water lower operating costs; healthier indoor environments can raise productivity and lower absenteeism; and market demand increasingly premiums sustainably built assets. While some green technologies add modest upfront cost, many interventions, particularly when integrated early, pay back through lower bills and higher asset value. According to the World Green Building Council, survey data and market studies have repeatedly shown positive business cases for green retrofits and new green projects.

#### THE BIG CHALLENGE

A stubborn reality is that most buildings that will exist in 2050 already stand today. Retrofitting these assets – often built with carbon-intensive materials like conventional cement and steel – is therefore mission-critical. Innovations in low-carbon materials,

circular-economy reuse, and phased retrofit strategies are scaling up, but policy support, skilled labour and financing mechanisms must catch up to unlock the full potential.

#### LOCAL RELEVANCE: OPPORTUNITIES FOR BANGLADESH

For rapidly urbanizing countries like Bangladesh, green construction is both a resilience and affordability strategy. Bangladesh is also embracing green construction and sustainable technologies in the building sector. One example is InnStar Limited, a real estate and construction company that focuses on green-certified, technologically advanced projects. Their developments prioritize sustainability through initiatives such as rainwater harvesting, recycling wastewater from toilets, tree plantation, pavements equipped with motion-sensor lights that only activate when vehicles are present, and garages with electric vehicle charging stations.

Pratik Sengupta, AGM of InnStar, stated, "If you only think 2-4 years ahead, green construction may seem more expensive than traditional methods. But when you consider the future, what we are leaving for the next

generation, how sustainable the project is, and how it contributes to the environment, green construction makes complete sense. It no longer appears costly when you view it as an investment in the future."

#### A PRACTICAL ROADMAP FORWARD

Policymakers, developers, and building owners can accelerate green construction by requiring or incentivizing energy performance disclosure, prioritizing retrofits of high-use buildings,

supporting low-carbon materials and whole-life accounting, and expanding skills training for sustainable practices. Combining clear regulations with financial incentives and technical assistance will make green construction the norm rather than the exception. Beyond lowering emissions and operating costs, sustainable buildings create healthier, more resilient communities. With the right strategies, the construction sector can transform from a major carbon contributor into a key driver of climate solutions, one building at a time.

