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Work with integrity, dedication

Army chief tells corps of engineers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army Chief General Waker-uz-Zaman yesterday expressed hope that army engineers will continue to play a vital role in the country's development with honesty, integrity, and dedication.

He was addressing the "Annual Commanders' Conference 2025 of the Corps of Engineers at the Engineer Centre and School of Military Engineering (ECSME)" in Qadirabad Cantonment, Natore, according to a press

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Police intercept and detain a group of graduates with disabilities at Shahbagh yesterday as they march towards the chief adviser's residence, Jamuna, to press home a five-point demand, including employment opportunities. The protesters, under the banner of "Chakri Pratyashi Protibondhi Graduate Parishad", have been demonstrating for inclusive and sustainable development for all job-seeking graduates with disabilities.

PHOTO: STAR



Rezaur Rahman passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Renowned scientist Rezaur Rahman passed away at LabAid Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He was 81.

Rezaur left behind his wife, retired teacher Halima Rahman, and two daughters, Nilanjana Rahman and Manjulika Rahman.

Family sources said Rezaur suffered a severe heart attack at his Dhanmondi residence on October 13 and was admitted to LabAid Hospital that night. He underwent open-heart surgery on October 15 and was being treated in the ICU. His condition worsened again from October 22.

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JATIYO CHHATRA SHOKTI

'Rebranding for returning to resistance roots'

Central convener Baker pledges to revive anti-establishment student politics

SHARIF M SHAFIQUE and SADI MUHAMMAD ALOK

Jatiyo Chhatra Shokti aims to pursue anti-establishment and oppositional politics, following its rebranding from BGCS.

"Students will engage more with us if we pursue this oppositional politics," said Abu Baker Mojumdar, central convener of the organisation, while talking to The Daily Star.

On October 23, Baker announced the reorganisation of Bangladesh Gonoratrik Chhatra Sangsad (BGCS) and outlined its future political strategies.

The name "Chhatra Shokti", however, is not new in student politics.

Baker previously served as member secretary of the Dhaka University unit of "Gonoratrik Chhatra Shokti", formed about nine months before the July uprising.

"Before the uprising, we organised various programmes

TIMELINE

Oct 4, 2023: Gonoratrik Chhatra Shokti launched, focusing on campus safety, democratic rights

August 5, 2024: Fall of AL govt

Sept 14, 2024: Gonoratrik Chhatra Shokti dissolved

Feb 26, 2025: Bangladesh Gonoratrik Chhatra Sangsad launched

Oct 23, 2025: BGCS announced its rebranding as Jatiyo Chhatra Shokti, with plans to shift towards anti-establishment politics

under the banner of Gonoratrik Chhatra Shokti, opposing the then-ruling Awami League and its student wing, Chhatra League. We always promoted pro-Bangladesh and centrist politics, and that is what we aim to strengthen now with Jatiyo Chhatra Shokti," he said.

Gonoratrik Chhatra Shokti

was formally launched on October 4, 2023, in front of the Ducus building, with Akhter Hossen as its convener and Nahid Islam as member secretary. Akhtar is now member secretary of National Citizen Party (NCP), while Nahid is convener.

Gonoratrik Chhatra Shokti's founding manifesto focused on campus safety, democratic rights, and rebuilding student politics to ensure a better educational environment.

However, within hours of its inauguration, its activists were attacked by members of the now-banned Chhatra League while returning from a rally at TSC.

At that rally, leader Akhtar declared that Chhatra Shokti would fight to reclaim students' rights from a culture of fear imposed by the ruling quarters.

"We had been preparing since 2020 through research, study circles, and activism," Baker recalled.

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Don't make proposals that could risk govt legitimacy

Salahuddin Ahmed urges NCP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday urged the National Citizen Party to refrain from making proposals that could later cast doubt on the legitimacy of the interim government.

"My brothers have formed a new political party, the NCP, and made various statements. But those must be grounded in reality," Salahuddin said at a discussion marking the fourth anniversary of the Gono Adhikar Parishad, held at the Diploma Engineering Institute in Dhaka.

Urging all political parties to stay within legal boundaries, the BNP leader said, "Many people, driven by emotion, claim

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2,307 dolphins found in the country's rivers

Says survey by Wildlife Conservation Society

STAFF CORRESPONDENTS

Despite pollution and the widespread use of gill nets shrinking their habitat by nearly 30 percent, a recent survey has found 2,307 Gangetic river dolphins across Bangladesh's river systems.

Experts revealed the findings at a discussion yesterday, organised by the Forest Department in the capital's Agargaon, marking International Freshwater Dolphin Day.

The baseline survey, conducted by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and funded by the World Bank, covered 45,893km of 45 rivers between 2024 and 2025.

Experts said dolphin numbers are very low in some rivers, particularly those flowing around Dhaka city, due to severe pollution.

"Dolphins in these rivers are mainly facing a food crisis. They are surviving on sucker fish," said Dr Zahangir Alom, country director of WCS, who led the survey.

The survey identified 25 dolphin hotspots, some of which require immediate conservation, he added.



- KEY ISSUES**
- Study covered 45,893km of 45 rivers in 2024-25
 - Dolphins face food crisis, mainly surviving on sucker fish, especially in Dhaka's polluted rivers
 - 25 dolphin hotspots identified, with urgent conservation needed in some areas
 - Voluntary networks to be formed in districts to support wildlife protection efforts

The team surveyed 305km of the Buriganga, Turag, Bongshi, Surma, and Kalni rivers, where they found a total of 27 Gangetic dolphins, despite heavy pollution. They recorded seven dolphins in the Bongshi, five in the Turag, three each in the Kalni and Buriganga, and nine in the Surma rivers.

Speaking as chief guest, Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan said dolphins are vital indicators of river health, and their survival is closely linked to that of rivers and people.

"When river water becomes polluted, it threatens both dolphins and humans. Keeping rivers clean is crucial for the survival of both," she added.

The adviser also said, "A voluntary network will be formed in every district to support the Forest Department so that quick action can be taken in rescuing and protecting wildlife."

She said protecting wildlife requires not only laws but also psychological and behavioural change.

LIFE IN BARISHAL STEAMERGHAT POLICE OUTPOST

On a damp floor, under a leaky roof

SUSHANTA GHOSH and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Water leaks through the tin roof during every rainfall, leaving the floors damp for days, while foul-smelling water overflows from the drains around the compound. This is the daily reality for police personnel at the Steamerghat Police Outpost in Barishal.

Located within the boundary of the Barishal deputy commissioner's office, the outpost was established in the 1960s, when the launch terminal area, known as Steamerghat, was the



busiest part of the city, bustling with passengers day and night.

It was built to ensure the safety of launch and steamer travellers, but over the years, it has become a neglected post, plagued by dampness, filth, and decay.

A visit to the outpost recently revealed a dismal scene. The entrance was waterlogged, with dirty water

pooling in front of the building and garbage piled in the open space nearby. The outpost consists of two tin-shed rooms situated on low-lying ground.

The main structure, roughly 70 to 80 feet long and about 20 feet wide, is divided into four rooms. The central room serves as the main barrack, with twelve beds placed close together. During the day, some officers were

resting while others ate their meals sitting on the cots.

The adjacent room functions as both a storeroom and a living space, while the remaining two are used as the office and the room of the in-charge.

Behind the main building, another tin structure, measuring about 30 feet by 8 feet, stands, with rainwater leaking

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Suicide prevention needs multi-pronged efforts: experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mental health experts at an event yesterday emphasised the need for a multi-pronged approach to suicide prevention, including restricting access to lethal means, promoting responsible media reporting, improving care for high-risk groups, and strengthening mental health services at the primary level.

They also recommended that films, dramas, and similar productions should not portray suicide as a solution but instead depict it negatively.

The remarks were made at a programme titled "Dissemination Programme: Resource Book on Suicide Prevention for Filmmakers and Others Working on the Stage and Screen in Bangladesh," held at a city hotel.

The event was organised by the National Institute of Mental Health and Hospital (NIMH) in association with the World Health Organization (WHO).

In his keynote presentation, Muntasir Maruf, associate professor at NIMH, said that according to WHO data, 4,714 people died by suicide in Bangladesh in 2021.

However, local estimates suggest that the actual

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- RECOMMENDATIONS**
- Promote responsible media reporting
 - Strengthen mental health services
 - Improve care for high-risk groups
 - Increase public awareness