

ACC won't need approval to sue govt officials

Draft ordinance scraps Hasina-era amendment

DIPAN NANDY

The Anti-Corruption Commission will no longer require government approval to file cases against judges and public servants, according to the draft ACC Ordinance 2025.

Approved in principle by the advisory council on Thursday, the draft seeks to repeal section 32 (Ka) of the ACC Act 2004, which mandated compliance with section 197 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) before initiating legal proceedings against such officials.

Section 197 of the CrPC stipulates that no court can take cognisance of an offence alleged against a judge or government official without prior government approval.

The proposed ordinance reflects recommendations made by the ACC Reform Commission in its report, which suggested abolishing the section and was submitted to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on January 15.

It noted that section 32 (Ka), inserted into the ACC act through an amendment in 2013 by the then Hasina administration despite objections



Surveillance cameras are being installed on a metro rail pillar to monitor the condition of bearing pads near the Farmgate Metro Rail Station. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

JULY CHARTER
Commission for immediate rollout of some reforms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The consensus commission will submit its recommendations on implementation of the July charter today, with a proposal that some parts of the constitutional reforms may take immediate effect upon issuance of the July charter implementation order.

The July Charter Implementation (Constitutional Reform) Order 2025 will specify which parts are to be implemented right away, said a source.

The commission will formally submit

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

BADC constructing lab on water retention pond

4-storey structure in Gabtoli has no DoE, Rajuk permit

HELEMUL ALAM

Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) is constructing a four-storey structure on a retention pond, a critical component of Dhaka city's drainage system, in violation of environmental laws and building regulations.

The 117-acre Goidartek pond in Gabtoli area has been marked as a water retention zone in Rajuk's Detailed Area Plan (DAP) 2010. Yet, BADC started building a laboratory on 11 acres of the protected site in 2023 without approval from Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) and the Department of Environment (DoE), said Rajuk and DoE officials.

The construction violates the Environment Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2010, which prohibits filling or altering the classification of land if it has been designated as a water reservoir, regardless of provisions in other laws, according to DoE officials.

BADC also breached the Building Construction Act, 1952, and the Building Construction Rules, 2008, which make it mandatory for any individual or entity to obtain Rajuk's permission before constructing any building within its 1,528sqkm jurisdiction.

Visiting the site on September 4, this correspondent found that the main structure of the four-storey laboratory was almost complete. Several single-storey structures and boundary walls were being constructed around it.

BADC has continued the construction

even though a petition, filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) seeking to stop the work, remains pending with the Supreme Court, BELA Legal Coordinator S Hassanal Banna said.

He noted that Goidartek is designated as a water-regulating pond in the zoning plan of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) as well.

Following the filing of a case by BELA, the High Court on January 28 last year declared the construction illegal and ordered BADC to restore the waterbody within three months.



However, the SC on July 3 last year stayed the HC order after BADC filed a petition with it.

"We have submitted an application to the apex court for vacating the stay order. The hearing has yet to take place," Banna said.

Asked, Mohammad Azaz, administrator

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

FALL OF BEARING PAD
Investigators digging into documents

Focus on construction, maintenance flaws

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

A probe committee yesterday began looking into Sunday's tragic incident, where a bearing pad fell from a metro rail pillar near Farmgate station, killing a pedestrian and injuring two others.

Investigators say they will examine whether substandard materials, construction flaws, or maintenance issues contributed to what they described as a "very unusual" incident – occurring less than two years after the metro rail service was launched.

The committee, led by Bridges Division Secretary Mohammad Abdur Rouf, held its first meeting and visited the spot yesterday.

After a 23-hour suspension, metro rail services resumed in full at 11:00am yesterday, giving relief to the thousands of daily commuters.

On Sunday, around noon, a bearing pad fell from metro rail pillar number 433 near Farmgate station and fatally struck Abul Kalam Azad, 35. Two others were hurt at the time.

Azad, from Shariatpur, worked at a travel agency in the capital's Uttara. His wife, Irene Akter, filed an unnatural death case with Tejgaon Police Station on Sunday night.

Considering the fact that another bearing pad fell near the same spot 13 months ago, transport experts

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

POLLS STRATEGY

BNP mulls keeping backup candidates

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP is considering to have multiple candidates selected in each constituency for the upcoming polls as part of the party's strategy.

Senior party leaders said that as grassroots leaders have faced numerous cases against them during the Awami League regime, they believe having multiple candidates will provide flexibility and strength in each constituency.

"If someone's nomination is cancelled on legal grounds or other issues, it opens up a chance for another candidate. That's why we are considering selecting multiple candidates," said a standing committee member asking not to be named.

In the 2018 general election, the BNP nominated multiple candidates for each seat to ensure no seat would be left without a BNP candidate in case any nomination was cancelled by the ruling Awami League government, said party leaders.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَنْبُوَّلَمْ أَيْمَمْ أَحْسَنْ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ

He is the One who created life and death in order to test which of you is best in deeds.

And He is the Almighty, All-Forgiving. (Surah Mulk, Verse 2)



Mir Mustafizur Rahman
(Jan 7, 1935 - Oct 28, 2021)

M. Mustafizur Rahman, a former renowned senior Government official, passed away four years ago, on Thursday, October 28, 2021 at his residence in Gulshan, Dhaka. He was 86 years old.

He was born in a respectable Muslim family in 1935 at Fakirbari, Barisal. He completed his B. A. and M. A. in Economics from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and another M. A. in Development Economics from Williams College, Massachusetts, USA.

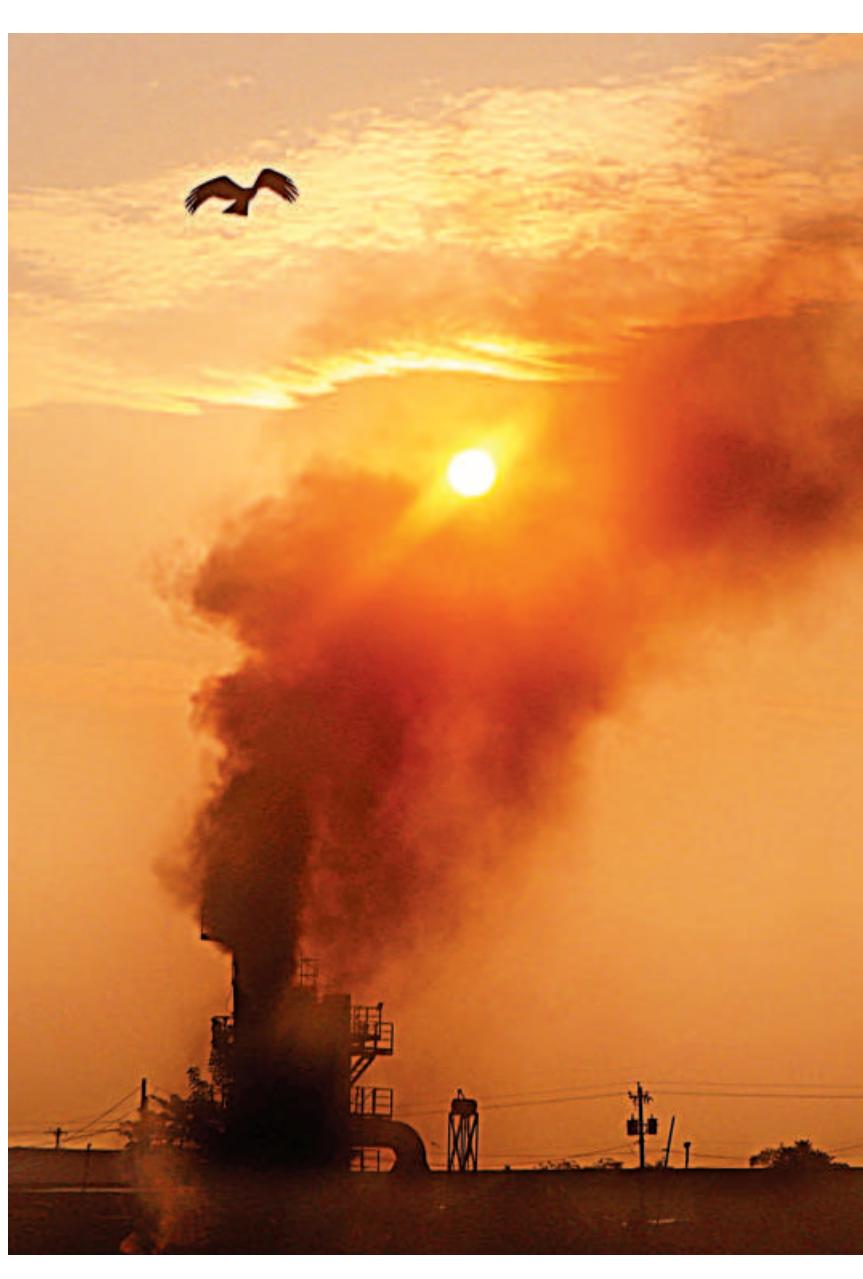
Mr. Rahman qualified in the Civil Service examination in 1959, and served the Government in different capacities including Chairman, Water Development Board, Secretary, Civil Aviation and Tourism, Information and Broadcasting, and Education. He was also Finance Secretary, President's Principal Secretary, Alternate Executive Director of World Bank and the first Executive Chairman, Board of Investment, Government of Bangladesh. He was the Chairman of the Revenue Reform Commission (2003) and Chairman of the 7th Pay Commission (2009) appointed by the Government.

On retirement from Government service, Mr. Rahman involved himself in the development of life insurance, leasing, credit rating agency and private university in this country.

Seeking prayers for the departed soul, are:

Prof Salma Rahman, (Retired Professor of English, former Director, Secondary Education and Project Director, Female Secondary Education Stipend Project)

Nahid, Runa, Saadia, Mahfuz, Kamran, Murad, Shaheen and Grandchildren & Brothers, Sisters.



Smoke rises from a temporary factory preparing materials for road construction in Paraikchak area of Dakshin Sylhet, obscuring the setting sun. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR



SOCIAL LIVES YOU DON'T SEE Dhaka's domestic workers un-filtered

RRB

Have you ever given a thought to the social life of Dhaka's toiling masses? Our service helps, our guards, drivers, office staff, cleaners, grocer, fishmonger, and vegetable vendor -- people who make up the backbone of our household management system, and office too.

They are the foot soldiers, doing the menial job of supporting our ritzy lifestyle from behind the scenes.

Parul is a lively 23-year-old, extremely smart, and eager to learn. She is married and works as a house help, earning close to TK 15,000. Her husband is yet to find his footing in this city of dreams.

Her friends are Sultana, a migrant worker, who returned home and married the boy she was in love with. Then Rupa, who had been working in Singapore as a child caregiver,



PHOTO: LS ARCHIVE

came back, got married, and now has her own child. Tripti, a chirpy, happy girl from the foothills of Garo Pahar in Haluaghata, Mymensingh. Tripti married a vagabond and has a beautiful, healthy girl. Parul has lots of such friends, who all have an income and job in the service help industry, but unfortunately, they are all married to vagrants, while these girls are all doers.

This is the story of most of the mid to lower-income group of girls. But today, I will not dwell on their decisions, and hardships; instead, I will tell you the fascinating social life of the likes of Parul and her fellow mates.

Money or no money, their social status depends on their social media personality; the main objective is to look fashionably pretty and happy in the photos. The megapixels of cell

phone cameras, up-to-date information on beauty products, and fashion trends matter the most for these girls and boys doing blue-collar jobs. Dhollywood, Bollywood, and access to the internet have changed their previous plain-Jane lifestyle to this happening one.

I am intrigued by Rahima's success. Rahima, who is working as a part-time house help in three houses, earns close to TK 32,000. She lives in a flat, not the slums, with her driver husband, her son, who is trying for overseas employment, and is now idling his time as a delivery boy. Her ailing mother, and a divorced daughter with a grandkid, burden her finances.

Yet, Rahima has had a bank savings deposit scheme running for years now. She has a bank balance. She hires taxicabs and takes her family to

recreational parks and goes to 300ft for the viral duck and chapti experience.

On the other end of the spectrum are girls like Rabeya, a 15-year-old with a fairy-like, surreal beauty. She came to Dhaka from a madrasa background in hijab and all, and now, she is doing a job in shooting studios. She got off the track.

Then there is Hasan, a 40-year-old guard, who lives his life on credit, and yet, his social life is full of merriment, weddings, birthdays, and Nobanno celebration all go on in his tiny room at the garage he lives in.

Interestingly, unlike the previous generation of housekeepers, service people, or housemaids, the current batch of migrants coming to work as domestic workers in Dhaka have etched their mark and found financial stability and a better life. Mind you, they too belong to Generation Z.

With all their shackles and harsh realities, this new generation of house helps of Dhaka, living in urban slums and shacks, is making the best of their lives. Let's not forget the fact that they, too, must deal with health problems, parental responsibilities, and other troubles life gives them, like us.

And please, we should also modernise our mindset regarding our service personnel. This is not the 1950s, when you could beat them for breaking your crystal glass. You are no one to give them the freedom or permission to live life on their own terms. They work hard to deserve a good life, and you learn to respect their slogan in modern Dhaka.

I just want to say that Dhaka, with its enormity and kindness, has embraced these young aspirants and villagers. I think this is the true spirit of Dhaka; everyone here finds a comfort zone.

ACC won't need Investigators digging approval

FROM PAGE 1

To qualify, candidates must have at least 20 years of experience in law, education, administration, judiciary, auditing, law enforcement, financial institutions, or anti-corruption work. Disqualifications include permanent residency or citizenship in another country or unauthorised foreign investments, the draft added.

Contacted by this newspaper, Iftekharuzzaman, head of the ACC Reform Commission, said the draft ordinance is an improved version of the existing law. "However, some strategically important recommendations made by the ACC Reform Commission have been carefully omitted."

For example, he said the reform commission had recommended the creation of a "Selection and Review Committee" to ensure transparency in the selection process of commissioners and accountability of the commission.

He added that the government dropped the provision requiring disclosure of the names of shortlisted candidates for public information.

"They've also dropped the provision of reviewing the performance of the ACC on a half-yearly basis to ensure accountability."

"The proposal to increase the number of commissioners from three to five has also been ignored," said Iftekharuzzaman, also the executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

He added that these dropped recommendations had gained support from almost all political parties. "The government arbitrarily rejected the recommendations because some quarters within it hold different views."

"This is a frustrating and anti-reform precedent created by a government that wants to be known as a reformist, for which it formed reform commissions and sought national consensus on reform proposals."

The draft ordinance also proposes the establishment of special judge courts in every district where the ACC has offices.

These courts will be set up immediately after the ACC establishes its offices. District offices will be empowered to conduct preliminary scrutiny of complaints, which, once vetted by any ACC office -- district, divisional, or headquarters -- will not require re-evaluation.

The ordinance expands the ACC's jurisdiction to include corruption involving Bangladeshi citizens abroad, as well as foreign nationals residing in the country. It defines "known income" as lawful income and broadens the commission's powers to include case filing, investigation, and inquiry.

and engineers expressed concerns over the safety of this highly technical mode of transport.

WHAT'S A BEARING PAD?

On elevated structures such as bridges and metro rail lines, bearing pads are placed between the viaduct and the pillar. In this case, four bearing pads were installed on each pillar.

Experts said elastomeric bearings transmit loads from the superstructure to the pillars and absorb vibrations caused by the movement of metro trains.

These pads, each weighing around 100kg, are installed without mechanical anchorage, relying on the compressive force from the superstructure's dead load to generate adequate friction and resist lateral movement under service conditions.

On September 18 last year, one of the four bearing pads fell from pillar number 430, disrupting metro rail services on the Agargaon-Motijheel section for around 11 hours. However, no casualties were reported.

PROBE LAUNCHED

The road transport and bridges ministry initially formed a five-member committee yesterday, and it was

instructed to submit a report within two weeks.

However, the appointment of Abdur Rouf as head of the committee drew criticism, as he was serving as the managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL) when the September incident happened.

To address this concern, the ministry later added the chief engineer of the Local Government Engineering Department, bringing the total number of members to six, and placed the committee under the supervision of Sheikh Moinuddin, special assistant to the chief adviser for the road and railway ministries.

Contacted, Abdur Rouf said as per the committee's terms of reference, they will examine whether the recommendations provided in the probe report of the September incident were implemented, identify the causes behind Sunday's incident, determine who may be responsible, and provide recommendations to prevent recurrence.

"We have sought design and other relevant documents from DMTCL, including details of the contractors and consultants," he told The Daily

Star last night. "We will look into all aspects of the incident."

Contacted, Sheikh Moinuddin, who is currently in US and coordinating with the committee remotely, said the bearing pad is not supposed to become dislodged within such a short time. "This makes the matter puzzling."

"So, we have to investigate whether substandard materials or construction were involved, or if any flaws went unnoticed when operations began," he told this correspondent over the phone.

He added that they would hire foreign experts if local experts failed to identify the cause. "We will take corrective measures if any flaws are found."

Moinuddin also said they need to examine whether DMTCL has an expert team in place to conduct annual or biennial inspections of vulnerable equipment. "If there isn't one, we have to create one."

The Uttara to Agargaon section of the country's first metro rail was launched in December 2022, while the Agargaon to Motijheel section became operational in November the following year.

who is seeking nomination from the Barishal-2 constituency.

BNP leader Nazim Uddin Alam, who is seeking nomination for Bholai-4, echoed the same.

After completing meetings with two divisions, Tarique then met with district leaders from the Khulna and Sylhet divisions. The meeting took place from 5:30pm to 6:45pm.

Abdul Quiyum Chowdhury, president of Sylhet BNP, who is seeking the nomination, said: "A conspiracy is underway against BNP. For this, everyone must work together in unity. There is no alternative. The party has instructed us to work for the nominated candidate."

From 8:30pm to 9:30pm, Tarique held a meeting with the nomination aspirants of the Dhaka division.

He told them that the list of those selected to contest in the polls with the BNP ticket would be announced through a press note soon.

"We should not allow anyone to take advantage of our stubbornness," said Shah Reazul Hannan, joint convener of Gazipur district BNP and a nomination seeker, quoting Tarique.

The BNP is a big party and differences of opinion are natural.

"But there will be many opportunities for party leaders and workers in the future," he said.

BADC constructing lab

FROM PAGE 1

of DNCC, said there was no need for BADC to build a laboratory on the retention pond as the city corporation offered it land at a different location.

He further said the DNCC sent letters to BADC several times since February this year, asking it not to build structures on the retention pond.

When contacted, BADC Chairman Md Ruhul Amin Khan claimed that the plot of land in question was acquired for the Department of Agriculture in 1958. Covering an area of 68 acres, it is classified as cultivable land.

The land was chosen as the site for constructing a tissue culture laboratory according to the allocation in the Development Project Proposal approved by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), he told this newspaper through BADC's Public relations department.

Iqbal Habib, vice president of Bangladesh Poribagh Andolok (BAPA), said Goidartek

was first marked as a retention pond in the Structure Plan 1997 of the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP). It was later included in the Detailed Area Plan 2010," said, vice president of BAPA.

ENVIRONMENTALISTS SOUND ALARM

Experts warn that failure to preserve Goidartek pond will intensify

'Graffiti book, not altered map'

CA's office bins Indian media reports on gift to Pakistan army official

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Adviser's Office has dismissed Indian media reports claiming that Prof Muhammad Yunus presented a flag, featuring an altered map of Bangladesh incorporating India's northeast, to a top Pakistani military official as "completely false and imaginary".

The clarification came in a statement from the chief adviser's press wing yesterday evening, following reports by leading Indian media outlets alleging that during a recent meeting, Prof Yunus presented the flag featuring the map to General Sajid Shamshad Mirza, chairman of Pakistan's Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Clarifying what was actually presented, CA's press wing said, "In fact, Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus presented to the Pakistani general The Art of Triumph, a collection of colourful and diverse graffiti drawings painted by students on various walls throughout the country, including the capital Dhaka, during the July mass uprising."

The book, published by the July Memorial Foundation, serves as an illustrated document of the uprising and includes "historical images of the revolution achieved through the sacrifices of students and the public."

Addressing the controversy over the map on the cover, the statement said, "On the cover of the graffiti collection, behind martyr Abu Sayed of the July mass uprising, a blood-red map of Bangladesh is displayed."

It noted that while the map's proportions may appear distorted due to the graffiti style, "claiming that any part of India's northeastern region is included in the graffiti map is completely false and imaginary."

A comparative analysis between the actual map of Bangladesh and the graffiti version shows that it "almost exactly reflects the real map of Bangladesh," the statement added.

The collection has also been gifted to other world leaders, including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, former US president Joe Biden, and ex-Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau, the press wing mentioned.

The statement urged the media to refrain from spreading misinformation and encouraged fact checking before publishing any sensitive geopolitical content.

importance of maintaining discipline within the party to ensure a smooth and peaceful election process.

Quoting Tarique, ARM Mamun, a nomination seeker from Jhenaidah-3 constituency, said: "Our leader's instruction is to maintain a peaceful environment between the supporters of the two BNP nomination seekers."

Around 20 nomination seekers attended the meeting across the three constituencies in his district, said Nazrul Islam Khan, convener of the Pirojpur BNP.

"Tarique Rahman directed leaders and workers not to express any excitement or celebrate after receiving the party ticket. He also instructed us to avoid causing any chaotic situations in the area ahead of the polls," said Nazrul, who is also seeking the party ticket.

Nomination seekers from 39 constituencies in the Rajshahi division have been called to the Chairperson's office, said Mizanur Minu, former mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation.

"The message we have received from the party is clear: stay united. We are fighting against a black hole, and in this battle, Tarique Rahman has instructed everyone to maintain unity to secure victory," said BNP leader Kazi Rawnaqul Islam Tipu,

who is seeking nomination from the Barishal-2 constituency.

BNP leader Nazim Uddin Alam, who is seeking nomination for Bholai-4, echoed the same.

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The BNP is a big party and differences of opinion are natural.

"But there will be many opportunities for party leaders and workers in the future," he said.

to hold a formal meeting with Yunus before finalising the draft, since the chief adviser is the commission's chair.

The aim was to ensure consensus and allow for any additions or revisions the chief adviser might have suggested. Yunus did not propose any, a source present in the meeting said.

The chief adviser showed a positive attitude towards the proposals, commission Vice President Prof Ali Riaz told reporters after the meeting.

Yunus stressed the preservation of all documents, videos, audios, and photographs related to the commission's activities, from its formation to final recommendations.

"These are invaluable assets. As a nation, it is essential to preserve and be open to everyone in the long term to understand in what context and through what process, we reached what decisions," he said.

These will serve as living historical records and vital resources for future researchers, he said, adding, "These documents will remain for generations to come. These will be at the centre of future political discussions."

The commission will likely leave it to the government to decide who would issue the implementation order, the president or the chief adviser, and whether the referendum should be held on the day of the next polls or earlier.

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'Will reduce duty hours for mothers to 5'
Pledges Jamaat ameer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahaman has pledged that if his party comes to power, the working hours for mothers will be reduced from eight to five.

Speaking at a reception in New York City on Sunday, organised by the Coalition of Bangladeshi American Associations, the Jamaat chief said the initiative aims to give mothers "a little extra respect."

His remarks have sparked wide discussion on social media.

Shafiqur Rahman said mothers carry immense responsibilities -- nurturing children while also fulfilling professional

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



Commuters queue for tickets at the capital's Farmgate station after metro rail services fully resumed at 11:00am yesterday. Services had been suspended following the death of a pedestrian who was struck by a falling bearing pad from a metro rail pillar in the Farmgate area on Sunday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Undisciplined and demotivated cops to face music

Home adviser, IGP give directives ahead of nat'l polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Months after the July uprising, police officials who are still demotivated, show indiscipline, disobey orders, or display disrespect to the government and the state will face strict administrative and legal action.

It has also been instructed to keep the demotivated officers away from operational duties.

The decisions came from a special crime review meeting at the Police Headquarters yesterday.

Addressing the meeting, Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury urged senior police officials to strengthen professionalism, discipline, and team spirit among their subordinates ahead of the upcoming national election.

Inspector General of Police Baharul Alam, who chaired the meeting, echoed the adviser's directive and said demotivated officers should not be assigned operational duties.

Rangoon DIGs, metropolitan police commissioners, and superintendents of police across the country attended the meeting in person and virtually.

At the meeting, Additional IGP (Crime and Operations) Khondker Rafiqul Islam presented an overview of the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Credible polls, peaceful transfer of power

Demand speakers at roundtable



This time, voters themselves will guard the election. Law enforcement will play a secondary role.

Salahuddin Ahmed
Standing Committee member, BNP



If the election is not fair, the chief adviser should cancel it and announce a new one.

Syed Abdullah Muhammad Taher
Naib-e-Ameer, Jamaat



Those who come to power tend to focus on staying there for long. We want to break that cycle.

Akther Hossen
Member secretary, NCP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three major political parties yesterday opined that the upcoming national election must be internationally recognised and ensure a peaceful transfer of power.

They said if the polls are not free and fair, a fresh vote should be held.

The remarks came at a roundtable titled "Inclusive and Fair National Parliament Election: Expectations of Civil Society from Political Parties," held at the Prothom Alo office in Dhaka. The event was jointly organised by ActionAid Bangladesh and Prothom Alo.

Attending the discussion, BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed said people are finally

getting the chance to vote freely after many years. "This time, voters themselves will guard the election. Law enforcement will play a secondary role," he said.

"We have always echoed the sentiment that the election should be credible and recognised globally," he said.

The BNP leader further said his party would play its part to ensure a fair and transparent election.

He also stressed that the BNP had long pledged to form a national government through consensus if fascism is dismantled and the opposition alliance wins the election.

Salahuddin explained that such a government

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

UTTARA BANK PLC.

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- (a) Age
- (b) Academic qualification

(c) Honorarium

- 02. Name of the post
- (a) Age
- (b) Academic qualification

(c) Honorarium

03. Necessary documents to be submitted:

- (a) Bio-date
- (b) 02 (two) copies of recent passport size photograph.
- (c) Attested copies of academic certificates.
- (d) Photocopy of NID.

(e) Contact address with mail ID and Mobile No.

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Uttara Bank PLC,
Human Resources Division (3rd floor),
Head Office, Dhaka.
Telephone No. 223355784



JULY UPRISING
Salauddin, who lost sight in one eye after being hit by shotgun pellets of police during the anti-discrimination movement in July last year, died on Sunday night.

Salauddin was 55. He developed severe breathing problems after Sunday evening. He was taken to Narayanganj 300-Bed Hospital around 9:00pm, where doctors declared him dead at the emergency

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



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Advisory council to stay on till new govt takes over

Interim govt clarifies Mahfuj Alam's earlier remarks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The advisory council will continue performing its regular duties and holding meetings as usual until power is handed over to the elected government, the interim government said yesterday.

The clarification followed media reports interpreting comments by Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam as suggesting a possible early cessation of council activities.

At a "Meet the Reporters" event organised by Dhaka Reporters Unity on Sunday, Mahfuj hinted that advisory council meetings might not continue beyond November.

However, the interim government's statement said, "It is not correct that the reform activities and policy formulation undertaken by the government must be completed by November. Rather, the reform activities will continue in full swing."

Six more die of dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least six dengue patients died while 983 others were hospitalised in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), among the deaths, four were reported from Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) area, while one each in Dhaka South and Barishal division.

With the new deaths and cases, the total number of deaths this year rose to 269, while total cases rose to 66,423.



Potter Santosh Pal from Kalaskathi village in Barishal's Bakerganj upazila arranges chitoi pitha moulds and rosher hari (earthen pots for storing date juice) on a traditional kiln for firing. During winter, he sells 100 rosher haris for Tk 2,500, with pitha moulds priced similarly. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Salauddin, who lost sight

FROM PAGE 3
department, said his elder son, Amir Faisal Ratul.

Ratul said, "Apart from the eye, bullets had hit my father's face, neck, and hands. The splinters in his throat could not be removed. Doctors had advised him not to talk much. He had been coughing badly in recent days, and he would often cough blood."

"My father had also been seeing dimly through his other eye," he added.

Salauddin lived with his wife and two sons in Godnail area

of Narayanganj Sadar upazila.

He was listed as number 132 among those critically injured during July movement, in the interim government's official gazette. Alongside

government's financial support, the July Foundation also helped his family by providing goods to start a small grocery shop last month.

Due to his fragile condition, Salauddin could not manage the shop regularly -- his son Ratul often looked after it instead.

Family members recalled that during the anti-discrimination movement protests in Narayanganj last July, Salauddin had been working at a shop in Bhuior area. When

demonstrations erupted in the city, he joined the protesters. On July 19, he, along with others, was shot by police.

After initial treatment

at Narayanganj 300-Bed Hospital, he was transferred to the National Institute of Ophthalmology, where he underwent surgery, but he never regained vision in one eye.

Salauddin's wife, Rani Begum, believes he might have survived if he had received advanced treatment.

Worried about their future, she said, "We have no savings. He worked whenever he could, and that is how we lived. I never imagined I'd lose him like this."

Salauddin's janaza was held yesterday at Godnail Bazar, followed by burial at a local graveyard, family members confirmed.

PRAYER TIMING
OCTOBER 28
Faz Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:50 12:45 4:00 5:32 7:15
JAMAAT 5:25 1:15 4:15 5:35 7:45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Renata PLC.
Corporate Headquarters: Plot # 1, Milk Vita Road
Section-7, Mirpur, Dhaka-1216, Bangladesh.
Website: www.renata-ltd.com

PRICE SENSITIVE INFORMATION (PSI)

Disclosure of First Quarter (Q1) Un-audited Financial Statements for the period ended on 30 September 2025

This is for the kind information of all concerned that the Board of Directors of the Renata PLC, in its 236th Board Meeting held on Monday, 27 October 2025 at 3:00 pm, approved the First Quarter (Q1) Un-Audited Financial Statements for the period ended 30 September 2025 in compliance with the relevant directives of BSEC and DSE. The key financial information is presented below:

Particulars	Consolidated				Standalone			
	01 Jul to 30 Sep 2025	01 Jul to 30 Sep 2024	As at 30 Sep 2025	As at 30 Jun 2025	01 Jul to 30 Sep 2025	01 Jul to 30 Sep 2024	As at 30 Sep 2025	As at 30 Jun 2025
Net Profit After Taxes (BDT in Crore)	74.17	59.50			68.19	56.26		
Earnings Per Share (EPS) in Taka	6.47	5.19			5.95	4.90		
Net Operating Cash Flow Per Share (NOCFPS) in Taka	12.61	(0.04)			12.45	(0.54)		
Net Asset Value (NAV) Per Share in Taka			312.01	305.49			307.16	301.11

Brief explanation regarding significant deviation between the quarterly financial statements:

- Revenue and margin expansion contributed to higher operating profit and EPS year-on-year.
- NOCFPS improved due to stronger collections and moderated working capital outflows.
- NAV per share increased mainly on retained earnings.

The detailed Q1 (Unaudited) Financial Statements as of 30 September 2025 are available on the Company's website: www.renata-ltd.com/financialreport


Md. Jubayer Alam
Company Secretary

Dated: 27 October 2025

Undisciplined

FROM PAGE 3
crime and law-and-order situation.

The home adviser said the police would play a key role in ensuring a free, fair, and neutral national election. He warned that no police member should take sides, seek or provide political favours, or act as political activists.

He said police have a list of "fascists" responsible for creating unrest in society and urged intensified drives against them.

"However, no innocent person should be harassed," he said.

The adviser also directed police to hold regular district-level core committee meetings, withdraw politically motivated cases, and expedite the disposal of false ones.

"Any attack on police will not be tolerated under any circumstances," he said, directing immediate legal action against those involved.

Highlighting the rise of cybercrimes, Jahangir urged young officers to take the lead in tackling digital threats.

IGP Baharul said the national election would be a major challenge but also an opportunity to restore public trust.

He instructed all units to recover illegal arms, improve intelligence gathering, and conduct election-related training with diligence.

পল্টী কর্ম-সহায়ক ফাউন্ডেশন (পিকেএসএফ)

পিকেএসএফ ভবন, প্লট: ই-৪/বি, আগারগাঁও প্রশাসনিক এলাকা, শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭

ফোন: ৮৮-০২-২২২২১৮৩০১-০৩, ০২-২২২২১৮৩০৫-০৯; Website: <http://www.pksf.org.bd>

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

কর্মসংস্থানের মাধ্যমে দারিদ্র্য বিমোচনের লক্ষ্যে বাংলাদেশ সরকার কর্তৃক প্রতিষ্ঠিত পল্টী কর্ম-সহায়ক ফাউন্ডেশন (পিকেএসএফ)-এর নিম্নলিখিত স্থায়ী পদসমূহে কর্মকর্তা নিয়োগের জন্য দরবার্খান্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে:

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম	পদ সংখ্যা	বয়স	মূল বেতন
১	সহকারী ব্যবস্থাপক (সিস্টেম)	১	সর্বোচ্চ ৩২ বছর	'পিকেএসএফ' বেতন কাঠামো (২০১৮'-এর আওতায় মূল বেতন ৫,০০০/- টাকা।
২	সহকারী ব্যবস্থাপক (সাইবার সিকিউরিটি অ্যান্ড নেটওয়ার্ক অ্যাডমিনিস্ট্রেশন)	১	জমাদানের সর্বেষণ তারিখে	
৩	সহকারী ব্যবস্থাপক (জিআইএস আভ রিমোট সেবিং)	১		

উল্লিখিত পদসমূহে নিয়োগপ্রাপ্ত কর্মকর্তাগণ মূল বেতনের ৬০% বাড়ি ভাড়া ভাতা, চিকিৎসা ভাতা ও সুবিধা, যাতায়াত ভাতা, ভবিষ্য তহবিল, আনুভূতিক, উৎসব ভাতা, গোষ্ঠীবাসা, দেশে শিক্ষার সন্তানের শিক্ষা ভাতা, গৃহ নির্মাণ খণ্ড, অর্জিত ছুটি নগদায়নসহ বিধিমালা মোতাবেক অন্যান্য সুবিধাদি প্রাপ্ত হবেন।

আগ্রহী প্রার্থীগণকে উল্লিখিত পদসমূহের Terms of Reference (ToR) দেখার জন্য পিকেএসএফ ওয়েবসাইটে (www.pksf.org.bd) ভিজিট করার অনুরোধ করা হলো। প্রার্থীগণকে আগামী ১৫ নভেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে পিকেএসএফ ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে অনলাইনে আবেদন করতে হবে।

পিকেএসএফ যে কোনো প্রকার তদবির নিষ্কাশন করে। কেবলমাত্র বাছাইকৃত প্রার্থীদের নিয়োগ প্রক্রিয়া অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আমন্ত্রণ জানানো হবে। নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত যেকোনো বিষয়ে পিকেএসএফ-এর সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে বিবেচিত হবে।

মহাব্যবস্থাপক (জনবল)

Dated: October 27, 2025

Notes:

- Shareholders bearing BOID are requested to update their respective BO Account with 12 digits e-TIN number through Depository Participants (broker house) and Shareholders bearing Folio Numbers are requested to submit their 12 digits e-TIN certificate to the Share Department of the Company by November 17, 2025.
- Failure to provide e-TIN to Depository Participants or Company, Tax to be deducted @15% instead of 10% (individual) as per amended Income Tax Act, 2023, Section 117.
- Shareholders are requested to check and update their BOID's e-mail address, mobile number and Bank A/c details along with Routing Number to get Dividend online through BEFTN system.
- In Compliance with the BSEC Notification No.BSEC/CMRRCD/2006-158/208/Admin/81 dated 20 June 2018, Annual Report 2024-2025 will be duly sent in soft form to the respective shareholders e-mail addresses available in their Beneficial Owner (BO) Accounts maintained with the DP. These will also be available in Company's website: www.renata-ltd.com

Metro tragedy exposes fatal supervision failure

The govt must conduct a full independent safety review

We are deeply alarmed by the death of a pedestrian struck by a falling bearing pad from Dhaka's metro rail. But behind this tragic death lies a baffling negligence of supervision by the authorities responsible for public safety. Public infrastructure is more than steel and concrete—it represents a covenant of trust, a promise that the systems designed to improve daily life are, above all, safe.

That covenant was shattered on a street in Dhaka's Farmgate area on Sunday. The falling component killed a 35 year old man named Abul Kalam Azad. Just a year ago, an identical component fell from a pillar a short distance away. That no one was killed then was a matter of luck. The repetition of such an outrageous failure suggests that the initial incident was treated as a glitch to be managed, rather than a serious warning that should have triggered a comprehensive safety review.

The immediate aftermath of Sunday's incident has followed a predictable script. The authorities suspended metro services, causing widespread disruption. A committee has been formed to investigate. Compensation has been promised to the victim's family. These are administrative reflexes, not solutions. They do little to confront the deeper crisis—lax supervision and weak accountability. The explanations offered so far by the authorities are alarming in their vagueness. The managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL) speculated about "jerking of the line," a "construction issue," or a "design flaw." But this uncertainty itself is unacceptable. This is not a minor technicality; it is a component responsible for transferring the entire load of the train and absorbing its vibrations. Its integrity cannot be compromised. Even more troubling are the questions surrounding the investigation. Appointing the former managing director of the metro rail company, who now leads the government's Bridges Division, to head the probe committee is a clear conflict of interest. This is deeply problematic: he held the position of managing director at DMTCL when the previous incident occurred.

The science of elevated rail systems is indeed mature, perfected over a century of global engineering. That a bearing pad could dislodge not once, but twice in Bangladesh, points unequivocally to a grave compromise in either its construction, its design, or more likely, the rigour of its oversight and maintenance. The suggestion from officials that "corrective measures" were taken after the first incident reveals that those measures were insufficient.

The government must immediately run an independent safety review of the entire 21-kilometre line, with its findings made public. Every vulnerable component, every weld, every bearing must be subjected to scrutiny. The death of Abul Kalam Azad is a terrible human cost and a direct result of supervisory failure. This tragedy must be the final warning that forces a reckoning with the integrity of a system upon which millions of lives now depend.

Recurring deaths of animals unacceptable

Gazipur Safari Park plagued with mismanagement, neglect, and lack of expertise

The alarming decline in animal populations at Gazipur Safari Park has once again exposed the scale of mismanagement in one of the country's important conservation sites. Reportedly, at least 37 animals have died or gone missing over the past five years due to negligence and theft. The recent death of the park's last giraffe—an ageing female imported from Africa—has brought the issue to public attention. While officials claim she died of tuberculosis, animal rights activists and wildlife experts see it as the inevitable result of poor veterinary care, inadequate habitat, and a lack of accountability of the authorities.

According to the park's officer-in-charge, several thefts and escapes have occurred in the park in recent years. For instance, two green-winged macaws were stolen in November 2024, three lemurs in March this year, and a nilgai escaped in January, while another fled in 2021. Although the macaws and one lemur were later recovered, these incidents expose the park's poor security. Moreover, the tragic loss of all 13 giraffes—once the park's major attraction—and the deaths of zebras, lions, tigers, and kangaroos over the past few years point to a much deeper problem. While authorities talk about fixing logistical glitches and plans to "strengthen walls" and "install help desks," they continue to ignore the core issue: conservation failure. The absence of professional zookeepers, modern health facilities, and scientifically designed enclosures has left veterinarians overburdened and animals vulnerable to disease and neglect.

Animal welfare advocates argue that the park's vast 3,690 acres of land could have been a model of humane, semi-free wildlife management, but poor planning and lack of professional expertise have turned it into an ambitious project gone wrong. Importing animals without ensuring proper care is not conservation; it is cruelty. Experts point out that such facilities require multidisciplinary management, combining veterinary science, animal behaviour, habitat design, and tourism strategy, which is missing here.

The death of the last giraffe at the park should serve as a wake-up call. Authorities must investigate the park's operations, address structural flaws, and take decisive action against negligence. Most importantly, they should prioritise the welfare of animals—native and foreign alike, and make conservation the park's core mission. Moreover, rather than importing foreign species that struggle to survive in our environment, the park should focus on the country's abundant native wildlife and prioritise their rehabilitation. The environment adviser's proposal for a joint public private management model for the park deserves serious consideration to ensure better, more professional oversight.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Italy invades Greece

On this day in 1940, Italy, led by Benito Mussolini, invaded Greece from Albania during World War II.

EDITORIAL

Why we should be worried about the latest revision of DAP

Amirul Rajiv and Naim Ul Hasan
are coordinators at the Bangladesh Tree Protection Movement.

AMIRUL RAJIV and
NAIM UL HASAN

With an estimated population of more than 2.4 crore people, Dhaka has become Bangladesh's central growth engine, contributing around 40 percent of the country's GDP. The unplanned urban growth of Dhaka came at the cost of the environment, liveability, and sustainability of the city. It ranked as the third least liveable city in the world in 2025, only surpassing the cities in active war zones. This should have been a wake-up call for the policymakers of our country. They should have implemented radical policy measures to fix this dysfunctional city and make the lives of millions of people in the city bearable. However, instead of putting forward progressive and stringent planning policies to save the city, the revised Detailed Area Plan (DAP) 2022-2035 of Dhaka was approved in principle by the interim government last week, despite opposition from urban planners.

After years of unplanned development due to unimplemented master plans, the DAP 2022-2035 marked a positive shift in urban planning when it was gazetted in August 2022. A team of experts, along with the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakha (Rajuk), conducted research, held numerous meetings and consultations to finalise the document. Despite its limitations, the initial document was a step in the right direction to rescue Dhaka city from its woes. Rather than taking a singular approach for all areas, it took a spatial planning approach locally and contextually by dividing the city into 350 density zones. These zones determined the building heights, area, and units based on existing infrastructure such as road conditions, common facilities, and the character of an area. Within a year of the gazette's publication, Rajuk caved in to the pressure from real estate businesses and landowners, increasing the floor area ratio (FAR) in

some areas.

The floor area ratio has been a point of contention for real estate businesses and construction professionals (architects, engineers, etc) because it determines the volume and floor area of a plot. A larger FAR means a bigger structure can be built on the land, and a larger structure translates into bigger profits for the companies and professionals. On the other hand, the government and urban planners use FAR as a mechanism to control the density of an area based on the utility infrastructure and common facilities

experts, and they produced reports with recommendations for reforms in various areas. Obviously, it came as a shock to us when the government, under pressure from the Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (Rehab) and the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB), took the initiative of revising the DAP (2022-2035) once more. Ignoring the pleas from environmental and citizens' rights activists, academics, urban planners, and several architects, the government reduced the number of density zones in DAP

would decrease the affordability of the properties. Although it seems like a fair argument, other factors that made real estate unaffordable have been completely ignored. According to various media reports, the provision of allowing black money in the real estate sector has heavily inflated the market in the last decades and taken it out of reach of ordinary citizens. Instead of putting a stop to this issue of black money injection in the real estate sector, the interim government fulfilled Rehab's demand of revising the DAP as a cherry on top.

Real estate businesses and related professionals also argued that the FAR provided according to the density zones in the original DAP is "discriminatory," because it gave a higher FAR to affluent zones, in other words, the option to build more units. However, instead of demanding a reduction in the FAR of the affluent zones to end discrimination, they pushed for increasing the FAR in areas with narrow roads and poor utility services and management. Their demand was anti-people, purely profit-driven, and counterintuitive to any planning principle.

The revision of DAP threatens Dhaka's liveability and sets a dangerous precedent. Without taking the initiative to decentralise Dhaka, the government preferred short-term growth over long-term sustainability. The people who endorse the revised document should ask themselves whether they or future governments will have the capacity to develop the infrastructure to ensure the services to the millions who call Dhaka their home. The city's density is already taking a toll on people's standard of living. Are there any plans to handle the increased population density that will come from increasing the building heights?

Our recent experiences with fire hazards exposed the inadequacies in infrastructure and emergency services. Experts' kept warning about the lack of preparedness against earthquakes. With no clear direction on how to handle the increased risk that will arise from more buildings and increased population density, the revised DAP might as well be the last nail in Dhaka's coffin as a functional city.



Dhaka ranked as the third least liveable city in the world in 2025, only surpassing the cities in active war zones.

FILE PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

to ensure the quality of life for residents and to preserve the environment. Dhaka needs contractionary measures for its exploding population density, which already exceeds the international standard by a long margin. Whether Rajuk had the willingness to implement the DAP or not, the original document provided an instrument that people and the government could use if they wanted to.

After the July uprising, the interim government assumed power with several reform agendas as priorities. Commissions were formed with

by five times, which increased the FAR significantly in many of the areas. DAP had a provision of revising the document every five years if needed, but the government changed the document twice since its finalisation in 2022, without any sort of technical justification. It begs the question, why was the interim government so eager to revise the DAP, putting the liveability of Dhaka city in jeopardy, even when the matter was not part of their reform agenda?

One of the main arguments Rehab put forward to revise the FAR was that restricting the number of units

The untaught skill of teaching in Bangladesh



Altaf Russell
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ALTAF RUSSELL

In Bangladesh, university teaching is often seen as a natural extension of academic brilliance. A high-achieving student becomes a lecturer, and it is assumed that their subject knowledge will automatically translate into effective teaching. But this assumption is deeply flawed. Teaching is not just about possessing knowledge; it is about facilitating learning, which requires development. This became clearer to me after participating in a six-week programme at the University of Glasgow designed to help academics grow as teachers. The programme explores questions such as: how does learning work? How do academics develop as teachers? What do the top university teachers do?

Two influential models—Peter Kugel's five stages (1993) and Gerlise Akerlind's five approaches (2007) to teaching development—offer valuable insights into this journey. Though developed independently, these models align remarkably well and together provide a powerful framework for understanding how academics evolve from novice lecturers to transformative professors.

At the beginning of this journey, Kugel describes the "Self" stage, where the teacher is focused on survival—designing courses, preparing lectures, and managing classrooms. Akerlind's corresponding approach is "Content Familiarity," where confidence comes from mastering the subject matter. This is where Bangladeshi lecturers begin, and unfortunately, where many remain.

Kugel's second stage, "Subject,"

is where teachers become fluent in delivering content. Akerlind calls this "Practical Experience." Teaching is still teacher-centred, and learning is passive. This is the dominant mode in most Bangladeshi universities, where lectures are the norm and student engagement is minimal.

The third stage marks a turning point. Teachers begin to notice that students are not all the same; they learn, think and respond differently. Kugel calls this "Student as Receptive," and Akerlind's parallel is "Strategy," where teachers start experimenting with varied methods. This shift from "What am I saying?" to "What are they hearing?" is critical but rarely supported in our institutions.

In the fourth stage, the teacher becomes a facilitator. Kugel describes this as "Student as Active," and Akerlind calls it "Effectiveness for Teacher." Here, student feedback, self-reflection, and peer input become tools for development. This stage is almost absent in Bangladesh, where teaching is rarely evaluated, and reflection is not institutionalised. However, this stage is not without its limitations. Without a focus on concrete learning outcomes, teachers are seen as experts who must "deliver" knowledge, not as coaches who guide students to discover it themselves.

The final stage is the most transformative. Kugel's "Student as Independent" aligns with Akerlind's "Effectiveness for Students." The teacher empowers students to take control of their learning, encouraging them to explore beyond

the syllabus, even into areas the teacher may not have mastered. This is where true learning happens. This shift from teacher-comfort to student-learning-outcomes marks a profound transformation in teaching philosophy. It requires academics to move beyond satisfaction surveys and embrace the ultimate indicator of learning outcomes.

One of the biggest barriers to achieving the final stage is cultural resistance. In many institutions, the teacher is seen as the unquestioned authority. Student-centred learning is still viewed with suspicion; their feedback is too often dismissed.

In many institutions, the teacher is seen as the unquestioned authority. Student-centred learning is still viewed with suspicion; their feedback is too often dismissed. Ultimately, education must be judged not by how well it is delivered, but by what it enables students to achieve.

Ultimately, education must be judged not by how well it is delivered, but by what it enables students to achieve. Defining a clear threshold or benchmark for successful learning outcomes might not be an easy task. Yet, without an honest attempt to articulate and assess these outcomes, we risk perpetuating a system that values tradition over transformation.

But the problem runs deeper in Bangladesh. Students, from their first year of university, often shift their focus from academic learning to government job preparation. Coaching centres flourish, offering shortcuts to success in a system where memorisation is rewarded more than

creativity. As a result, academic study is devalued. Even meritorious and well-trained professors find themselves teaching half-engaged classrooms. This disconnect is compounded by politicised teacher recruitment. Appointments are often based on political loyalty rather than academic merit. Many teachers are neither encouraged nor equipped to go through the developmental stages described by Kugel and Akerlind. Subsequently, students do not demand quality teaching, and teachers do not feel compelled or empowered to provide it.

Adding to this crisis is the unregulated expansion of universities and educational institutions. While access to higher education has increased, quality assurance has not kept pace. Many institutions were established without ensuring qualified teachers or adequate infrastructure. This rapid expansion has also made political considerations more entrenched in faculty recruitment and institutional governance. In such a landscape, the space for pedagogical innovation and reflective teaching has shrunk even further.

To break this cycle, we must normalise developing teaching. Pedagogical training should be embedded in academics' lives—not treated as optional, but as a professional obligation. Universities must celebrate teaching excellence over research output. Most importantly, teaching development must be linked to career progression. When promotions and recognition depend on teaching quality, faculty will have a reason to engage.

Structured teaching development can transform one's approach and offer not just a roadmap for development, but a mirror to reflect on our own teaching journeys. We can continue with outdated models of teaching, or we can embrace a future where academics are supported to grow as teachers.

THE METRO RAIL TRAGEDY

What is the cost of a human life in Bangladesh?



Mahiya Tabassum
is a member of the editorial team
at The Daily Star.

MAHIYA TABASSUM

On an ordinary morning in Farmgate, Abul Kalam Azad left his home in Narayanganj and set off for his daily commute to Uttara. He never returned. A bearing pad from a metro rail pillar collapsed and killed him instantly, leaving behind a four-year-old son, a three-year-old daughter and a widow grappling with irreplaceable loss. The government's response? A payment of Tk 5 lakh and an offer of a job to a family member. His brother's response sheds light on the devastating reality: "What will this Tk 5 lakh do? This can never be compensation for a human life."

That question demands an answer, not just from the authorities, but from our collective conscience. What is the cost of a human life in Bangladesh? More critically: who will take responsibility for the mounting death toll from preventable accidents that have become tragically routine?

Let's explore "the preventable accident" part. The bearing pad killing Azad fell from pier 433. Just 13 months earlier, a bearing pad slipped from the same metro line near pier 430—only two piers away from 433. The earlier collapse caused no casualties, yet it should have served as an urgent warning. Instead, it became a prophecy of disaster ignored.

Transport expert Shamsul Hoque of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology told this daily that two such structural failures strongly suggest a compromise in the metro system's construction. He noted that the design followed global standards developed over a century, pointing instead to construction quality and inadequate oversight by Japanese consultants.

However, the cost of Dhaka's metro rail line is not insignificant. In Bangladesh, the per kilometre cost reportedly ranges between \$226.74 million and \$253.63 million—five times the cost in India (\$40.77 million/km) and higher than Riyadh (\$166 million/km) and Dubai (\$188 million/km). These astronomical costs raise concerning questions about where the money went and whether corners were cut where they should not have been.

But the metro rail is only one symptom of a broader, systemic disease.

In July, a training aircraft of the Bangladesh Air Force crashed into the Milestone School and College campus in Uttara, killing at least 36 people, most of whom were children. The crash left the question about the rationale for allowing air force training missions so close to residential areas in an overcrowded city unanswered. In the same month, Faria Tasnim Jyoti, a 32-year-old sales manager, fell into an uncovered drain along the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Tongi and drowned. There were no warning signs near the hazard.

In Chattogram, at least 14 people died falling into open drains or canals over the past six years, including a six-month-old baby in April and a three-year-old girl in July. A probe committee identified "mismanagement by utility service agencies, gross negligence, and long-standing coordination failures" as causes.

More recently, a devastating fire in a chemical warehouse in Mirpur's Rupnagar claimed at least 17 lives, including children. A fire-service official admitted they only learn about such illegal warehouses "when a fire breaks out"—a damning indictment of regulatory failure.

The carnage extends onto our roads. At least 417 people were killed and 682 injured in 446 road accidents across Bangladesh in September 2025 alone, according to the Road Safety Foundation.

Global standards and Bangladesh's reality
International safety frameworks provide a stark contrast to Bangladesh's approach. India's metro rail projects, despite lower costs, maintain safety records via independent third-party audits and rigorous quality control; for example, the Delhi Metro, operational since 2002, has carried over six billion passengers with an exemplary safety record, enforced by the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety. Meanwhile, Vietnam reduced road fatalities from around 13,000 in 2007 to approximately 7,000 in 2020 through the strict enforcement of helmet laws and traffic regulations.

By contrast, Bangladesh operates in a regulatory vacuum. The Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) exists largely on paper. The Road Transport Act, 2018, promised stricter penalties, but enforcement remains dismal. The Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006, mandates safety measures in factories—yet illegal chemical warehouses continue operating in residential areas until they explode into headlines.

Worse still, Bangladesh's lax enforcement measures often allow company owners to continue operating without accountability, whereas in countries like Singapore Workplace Safety and Health Act includes penalties up to 500,000 Singaporean dollars (equivalent to Tk 3.3 crore) and imprisonment of up to two years for companies found negligent for fatalities.

How do we place a value on life?

When Azad's widow, Irene Akhter Priya, said, "Compensation or a job will not suffice," she articulated what compensation studies globally have long established: human life cannot be reduced to a transaction. However, the economic concept of the Value of Statistical Life (VSL)—the value society places

on reducing the risk of dying—provides insight into how societies prioritise safety.

For instance, the US Environmental Protection Agency uses a VSL of approximately \$10 million, and many other countries follow a similar approach. These figures influence infrastructure investment, safety regulations, and corporate liability frameworks. In Bangladesh, contingent valuation and benefit-transfer studies put

"jerking of the line caused by train movement" and acknowledged that "there might be a construction issue or a design flaw," but deferred conclusions until the investigation is complete.

Sadly, this is a familiar script: form a committee, promise a report in two weeks, announce compensation and then wait for public attention to fade. Rarely do such investigations lead to meaningful

safety audits of all critical infrastructure, especially major projects completed in recent years. Second, criminal liability for institutional negligence must be established so that organisations and leadership are held accountable when failures cause death. Third, we must create an independent safety oversight body with enforcement powers, insulated from political interference. This body should conduct inspections, mandate



the VSL in the range of \$15,000 to \$250,000, depending on income levels and risk preferences. Yet in practice, compensation awards for preventable deaths in Bangladesh rarely approach even the lower end of these estimates.

However, the loss of a life does have broader economic consequences. The World Bank estimates that the costs related to traffic crashes can be as high as 5.1 percent of the GDP annually. The Asian Development Bank and other regional analyses estimate that infrastructure deficits can cost economies roughly 3-4 percent of GDP. Recent studies report that human and organisational failures are implicated in a large share of structural failures, as high as 60-90 percent, and improved oversight, inspection, and quality control can reduce failure risk substantially. Therefore, the economics of prevention are clear—what is lacking is the political will.

Who bears responsibility?

The Road Transport and Bridges Ministry has formed a six-member committee to investigate whether the metro accident arose from "technical fault or sabotage." This framing itself is telling—it equates sabotage with negligence, deflecting from systemic accountability. The Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited (DMTCL) managing director, Faruk Ahmed, speculated about

accountability. No executives are charged. No licences revoked. No systemic reforms implemented.

The interim government has inherited infrastructure built on what many call "Sheikh Hasina's loot-fest"—megaprojects plagued by inflated costs and suspected corruption. DMTCL is now examining why metro costs are so high, but retrospective analysis comes too late for Azad. Unless accompanied by comprehensive safety audits and accountability measures, the analysis may come too late for future victims.

City corporations carry similar failings. Despite so many deaths in Chattogram from open drains, basic safety measures, such as covering drains, installing barriers, posting warning signs, remain undone. The failure to cover drains or post warnings directly led to Farid's death in Gazipur. Yet, no officials have been held accountable. Acronyms of coordination and committees mask the lack of action. Although Azad's wife has filed an unnatural death case, whether it will lead to justice and meaningful accountability remains a question.

What must be done?

Bangladesh needs a fundamental overhaul of its safety and accountability framework, focusing on clear and enforceable measures, starting with conducting independent

corrective actions, and have the authority to shut down non-compliant operations.

Moreover, ensuring transparency in project costs and construction oversight by publishing detailed audits, investigation reports, and safety compliance data is also crucial. The government must provide meaningful compensation that reflects the true economic and social cost of preventable deaths. A payment of Tk 5 lakh for a breadwinner's life is an insult layered upon a tragedy.

We can either continue treating safety as an afterthought—compensating victims with token payments while systemic rot persists—or we can demand the accountability every citizen deserves. The right to cross a street, ride public transport, work in a factory, or walk near a drain without risking death should not be a privilege.

The question "What is the cost of a human life in Bangladesh?" must not have a finite answer. A life is priceless. But our actions suggest we have assigned it a basement value, paid in compensation checks that insult more than console. Until those responsible for these deaths—through negligence, corruption, or wilful disregard—face consequences proportionate to their failures, the deaths will continue. Justice delayed is justice denied; justice absent is complicity in murder.

The Nobel gap: Reclaiming the Muslim legacy of knowledge



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ABDULLAH A DEWAN

Winning a Nobel Prize is universally regarded as the highest recognition of human intellect—the pinnacle of creative and scientific achievement. Since its establishment in 1901, the Nobel Foundation has awarded 633 prizes to 1,026 individuals and organisations for advancing the frontiers of knowledge, promoting peace, and enhancing human welfare. Yet, among Muslims, only five have ever received this honour for sciences, while eight have been awarded for peace and three for literature.

This disparity does not arise from exclusion, but mainly from a civilisation's retreat from its own legacy of inquiry. The Muslim world, once known for scientific curiosity and philosophical brilliance, has over time lost its enthusiasm for discovery. The same ideals that once illuminated fields of mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and chemistry with near spiritual dedication to knowledge have, in many areas, faded into reverence without research, belief without exploration. For the decline of intellectual discipline and neglecting the very spirit of Islam (knowledge) that once defined the Muslim world, there is no one to blame but the civilisation itself. The story of Muslim

absence from the Nobel list is not a tale of oppression or bias; it is a chronicle of diminished pursuit of passion unrefined and potentials unfulfilled.

Among the rare exceptions stand a few luminous names. Dr Abdus Salam, the Pakistani physicist, became the first Muslim Nobel laureate in 1979 for co-developing the electroweak unification theory that revolutionised particle physics. In 2006, Dr Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh and his Grameen Bank received the Nobel Peace Prize for microcredit—a social innovation that empowered millions of poor women and redefined development economics. Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani schoolgirl who defied Taliban bullets, was awarded the 2014 Peace Prize at just seventeen, becoming the youngest laureate in history and the voice of every silenced girl denied education.

In 2015, the Nobel Committee honoured a Muslim scientist in chemistry: Aziz Sancar, a Turkish-American biochemist, for mapping the intricate mechanisms of DNA repair. A decade later, in 2025, Omar Yaghi stood on the Stockholm stage, sharing the Nobel Prize in Chemistry with Susumu Kitagawa and Richard Robson for pioneering the field

of reticular chemistry—the art of weaving molecules into porous, functional materials.

That makes only five Muslim laureates for science. The disparity here is glaring—not of intellect but of environment. The West has built a culture that rewards inquiry; much of the Muslim world has built systems that fear it. From the ninth to the thirteenth centuries, Muslim scholars translated Greek texts, invented algorithms, measured the

laboratories in Cambridge, MIT, or Berkeley, where freedom of thought replaced fear of offence. The story repeats itself: most Muslim Nobel laureates built their careers in Western universities. Their success does not indicate their belief; it indicates the systems that could not sustain their curiosity at home.

Science thrives on scepticism, not obedience. Yet in many Muslim societies, questioning authority is mistaken for

The Muslim world needs more than laureates; it needs laboratories that breathe curiosity, classrooms that encourage debate, and governments willing to fund science as vigorously as they fund theological undertakings. Research and scientific exploration are about survival in a fast-changing world. When a society invests in science, it invests in sovereignty—intellectual, economic, and moral. The Nobel Prize is not the measure of a civilisation's worth, but a reflection of its direction.

stars, and laid the groundwork for modern algebra, optics, and medicine. Knowledge was then seen as a divine pursuit—"Seek knowledge even unto China" was more than a proverb; it was policy. Baghdad's House of Wisdom rivalled any modern research institute, and scholars from Cordoba and Samarkand made discovery a sacred duty.

That light dimmed when theology eclipsed philosophy and dogma displaced doubt. The collapse of intellectual pluralism—the marginalisation of thinkers such as Ibn Rushd and Ibn Sina—marked the beginning of the decline. Colonial intrusion later deepened the decay, leaving many Muslim nations politically independent yet intellectually dependent. Many of the brightest minds emigrated for oxygen to

defiance, and conformity masquerades as virtue. Critical thinking is largely absent from classrooms that prize rote memorisation over reasoning. Research budgets are meagre, peer review perfunctory, and political patronage suffocates merit. A young physicist in Cairo or Karachi spends more time chasing visas than experiments. Without autonomy, institutions become ornamental, not generative.

Islam equated ilm with spiritual duty. The Qur'an's first revealed word to Prophet Muhammad was Iqra (Read)—emphasising the primacy of knowledge in Islam. The tragedy is not that Muslims have stopped reading, but that too many have stopped asking why. The revival of intellectual vibrancy requires reclaiming that original

mandate: to explore, to reason, to verify. Science and faith were never meant to be rivals; one explains creation, the other its meaning. When belief becomes afraid of the microscope, both religion and reason suffer.

Omar Yaghi's Nobel in 2025 is more than a personal triumph; it is a reminder that intellectual exile need not mean extinction. His journey—from a Palestinian refugee family to the world's most cited chemist—exemplifies what happens when intellect meets opportunity. His discoveries in green chemistry could help solve some of the world's most pressing challenges: clean water, breathable air, and sustainable energy. The irony is that while his innovations can hydrate deserts, many of the Muslim world's universities remain intellectual deserts—barren of inquiry, barren of dissent.

The Muslim world needs more than laureates; it needs laboratories that breathe curiosity, classrooms that encourage debate, and governments willing to fund science as vigorously as they fund theological undertakings. Research and scientific exploration are about survival in a fast-changing world. When a society invests in science, it invests in sovereignty—intellectual, economic, and moral. The Nobel Prize is not the measure of a civilisation's worth, but a reflection of its direction.

The task before Muslims is to reclaim that civilisational zeal by restoring freedom to think, courage to question, and dignity to fail in pursuit of truth. The next Nobel will not arrive by miracle; it will emerge from classrooms unafraid of curiosity, from universities liberated from biased politics, and from children taught that wonder is not heresy.



'People like him keep music beautiful': Asif Akbar on Bassbaba Sumon

Popular singer Asif Akbar and rock band Aarthohin shared the stage in Boston on October 25, marking a rare reunion between two icons of Bangladeshi music.

This performance comes as part of several US concert tours by Bangladeshi artistes – Asif's first in 17 years and Aarthohin's debut in the country.

From the greenroom, Asif posted a photo with Aarthohin frontman Saidus Salehin Sumon, known as Bassbaba Sumon, expressing admiration for his resilience and legacy.

"It is people like him who make the music industry still feel beautiful," Asif wrote, calling Sumon a "living legend."

Fans responded with overwhelming affection, celebrating the powerful moment of camaraderie between two generations of Bangladeshi music.

NUSRAAT FARIA set for musical comeback

Actor-singer Nusraat Faria is set to make her musical comeback with several new releases. Known for balancing her acting and singing careers, Faria debuted as a singer in 2018 with *Pataka* and has since released four tracks.

The actress recently addressed the long delay of her unreleased collaboration with Fuad Almuqtadir, citing her focus on high-quality production and visually rich music videos.

Faria confirmed that multiple new songs are ready for release, including projects with Fuad and Sanjoy. She also expressed interest in collaborating with musicians she admires.

Beyond music, the *Bibaho Obhijaan* star announced she will begin shooting for a new film this month. After a recent performance in Canada, she hinted at another international concert tour planned for November.



'One Battle After Another' expected to lose \$100 million



Paul Thomas Anderson's *One Battle After Another*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, is projected to lose around \$100 million despite earning \$140 million globally.

Warner Bros spent over \$130 million on production and \$70 million on marketing, while DiCaprio's first-dollar gross deal further limits studio profits.

The film, hailed as a masterpiece, needs nearly \$300 million to break even. Warner Bros disputed the loss estimates, citing a successful year with hits like *Sinners* and *A Minecraft Movie*.

Meanwhile, other adult-oriented releases such as A24's *The Smashing Machine* and *Roofman* have also struggled at the box office, underscoring the post-pandemic decline in mid-budget, non-franchise films.

Analysts say audiences now wait for streaming releases, challenging studios to make prestige films financially viable again.

Nawshaba returns to TV with 'Ditiyo Boyer Por'

After a long hiatus from television, actress Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed returns to the small screen in Chayanika Chowdhury's new drama *Ditiyo Boyer Por*.

"I'm acting in a TV drama after years. The story is beautiful, and working with Chayanika *Didi* is always special," Nawshaba said.

Director Chayanika Chowdhury shared photos from the shoot, noting, "It's been four years since I last worked with Nawshaba. She's disciplined, soft-spoken, and deeply committed to her craft."

The drama also features Irfan Sajjad and Aisha Khan and will soon premiere on the YouTube channel Swapnophara.

Nawshaba's recent film *Joto Kando Kolkatatei*, directed by Anik Dutta and co-starring Abir Chatterjee, was released in Kolkata last September.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

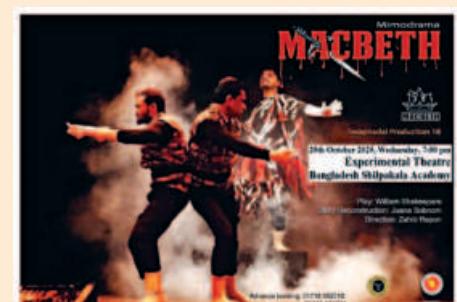
'Macbeth'

Swapnophara will stage the 19th show of its acclaimed mimodrama *Macbeth*, written by William Shakespeare and directed by Zahid Repon. Reimagined by Juana Sobnom, this non-verbal production will blend mime, rhythm, and Bengali performance traditions to explore ambition, guilt, and downfall in a visually arresting retelling of Shakespeare's tragedy.

Date: Wednesday/Oct 29, 2025

Time: 7pm-8:15pm

Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA



NEWS

Scores injured as DIU

FROM PAGE 12

University campus, leading to chases and counter-chases, and the throwing of brickbats between the two groups.

In the meantime, DIU proctorial team arrived at the scene and informed the City University administration about the matter, urging them to take steps to resolve the issue.

At one point, City University students allegedly beat up a DIU student at a separate location adjacent to their campus. In response, DIU students entered the City University campus and set fire to three university buses and a private car parked there. In addition, a bus, two private cars, a motorcycle, and parts of the administrative building were vandalised.

Members of the police, army and Rab later arrived at the scene and brought the situation under control.

"The situation is now calm. No case has been filed in connection with the incident, and no one has been arrested," said Helal Uddin, inspector (operations) at Savar Model Police Station.

Meanwhile, Dr Helal Uddin, a medical officer at City University, alleged that law enforcement arrived late despite repeated calls for help.

"City University is a trustee-run institution. We provide education to students at the lowest cost. Thousands of Daffodil students vandalised, set fire to, and looted our campus. They beat our students, burnt our gate

20 hurt as protesters hurl stones at train

FROM PAGE 12

while others were halted at nearby stations.

Railway officials confirmed that at least five trains were delayed, including the Karnaphuli Express, Titas Commuter, and Chattala Express. Passengers expressed frustration as the blockade dragged on.

At the railway blockade, speakers including Bhairob unit BNP President Rafiqul Islam, General Secretary Ariful Islam, and student leaders Md Zahidul and Mawlana Shahriar said their patience was running thin.

"We've been demonstrating peacefully for 15 days, but the interim government hasn't responded yet. We blocked the railway for an hour today [Monday] after observing a two-hour road blockade on Sunday. If our demand is ignored, we'll go for indefinite road, rail, and river blockades," said one of the speakers.

Responding to the violence, student leader Shahriar claimed, "A vested group tried to sabotage our peaceful movement by throwing stones. We decided to end the programme early, considering the passengers' suffering."

Bhairob Railway Police Station Officer-in-Charge Sayeed Ahmed said train operations were restored after discussions with local leaders and higher authorities. "We're investigating the stone-throwing incident and will identify those responsible."

The agitation follows weeks of protests after the Reform Commission under the Ministry of Public Administration proposed including Kishoreganj district under the Mymensingh Division on October 11. Many in Bhairob, currently under Kishoreganj, reacted angrily and began demanding district status for the upazila.

Protesters had earlier blocked the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway and the Bhairob-Kishoreganj Regional Highway on Sunday. They also announced plans to enforce a waterway blockade on the Meghna River today.

"Any conflicting issues would have been raised and addressed there. So far, no such conflicts have arisen."

When asked if further amendments might follow upcoming talks with political parties, he said: "It's better not to speak on assumptions."

Regarding the BNP's objection to the RPO amendment, he said: "They raised the issue yesterday. The EC will act to ensure the outcome is acceptable to all."

Asked why the EC was amending the Representation of the People Order (RPO) and the electoral code without dialogue with political parties, Akhtar said the changes were based on discussions held earlier under the National Consensus Commission.

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Bullet took his voice, future

FROM PAGE 12

"The bullet fired by police shattered my life. I have lost my mother and am still giving all my efforts for the treatment of Musa, my only child," said Mustafizur.

Musa neither walk nor speak but understands everything. He takes food through a tube," said the father, his voice trembling.

When The Daily Star gently asked the boy inside the courtroom, "How are you, little one?", Musa raised his thumb to say okay.

Mustafizur recounted how an ordinary afternoon turned into horror on July 19 last year. Around 3:30pm, he went downstairs from their Rampura home with his mother and son to buy ice cream. "A bullet fired from outside hit my son in the head -- it pierced through and came out the other side," he said.

He rushed Musa to a local hospital and then to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) as gunfire raged outside. Hours later, he learnt that

Mustafizur said the police personnel forced his father to take the body to their Tangail home and bury it there. "With my son still in

Dhaka, Islamabad discuss trade

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh's request to waive existing customs duties and grant duty-free, quota-free (DFQF) access for Bangladeshi jute, jute products, and agro products.

The parties also agreed to explore export opportunities for other Bangladeshi products with high market potential in Pakistan, including pharmaceuticals, tobacco, textiles, clothing accessories, tea, plastics, fruits such as pineapple and lychee, and handicrafts, read the draft meeting minutes.

The JEC also discussed cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, energy, research and higher education, banking, tourism, sports, textiles, and climate change, the Economic Relations Division (ERD) said in a statement.

Both sides expressed interest in enhancing connectivity by establishing direct shipping links, expanding air services, and increasing the use of ports and logistics to reduce costs and improve efficiency in bilateral and regional trade, it added.

On the sidelines, the two nations signed a MoU on halal food trade, under which BSTI-certified halal products will be accepted in Pakistan

his mother had died on the way to another hospital.

Mustafizur said he saw Mashirul Rahman, then officer-in-charge of Rampura Police Station, firing during the chaos. "I want justice for those who killed my mother and destroyed my son's life."

Musa underwent multiple surgeries at DMCH, Combined Military Hospital, and later in Singapore. Despite months of therapy, he remains paralysed and dependent on others.

During cross-examination by the defence lawyer for the only accused in custody, then Rampura police outpost assistant sub-inspector Chanchal Chandra Sarkar, the witness said no autopsy on his mother's body was conducted, and her body was released only after police asked the DMCH to do so.

Mustafizur said the police personnel forced his father to take the body to their Tangail home and bury it there. "With my son still in

critical condition, I could not attend my mother's burial."

Talking to reporters after the hearing, Mustafizur said, "Musa was at the top of his class ... He had a whole life ahead of him. It has all been snatched away."

At a press briefing, Md Amir Hossain, state-appointed defence counsel, was asked if he had any doubts about the tribunal delivering proper justice. He responded by saying that there was no lack of transparency at the court and that he did not believe it was a "kangaroo court".

The lawyer, who is also representing ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal in an ICT case related to the July uprising, added, "So far, no side has ever exerted any pressure on me or told me what to say or do. Whether this is a kangaroo court or not? I would not answer that. But I don't think it is."

engineering, and cold-chain logistics.

"All issues will be forwarded to the relevant ministries for follow-up discussions," Salehuddin said, adding that focal-point officials will be appointed to monitor direct flights and shipping.

He emphasised that the push is not limited to one country. "We have started a new beginning and want to continue this process with other South and Southeast Asian countries... We also want to strengthen SAARC," he said.

Ali Pervaiz Malik noted that bilateral trade remains below \$1 billion but expressed optimism about future growth. "We aim to enhance trade in ways that support each country's key industries. Jute will remain the mainstay, but we are also exploring cooperation in agriculture, pharmaceuticals, and other sectors," he told reporters.

Both sides welcomed the Pakistan-Bangladesh Knowledge Corridor, which offers 500 scholarships to Bangladeshi students to promote academic exchange and research collaboration.

The next JEC meeting will be held in Islamabad at a mutually convenient time, the ERD statement added.

EC finalises list

FROM PAGE 12

The EC has no information regarding a potential referendum at this time.

Asked whether a referendum might be held alongside the national election and if that would require more booths, he said: "Since it hasn't been placed before the Election Commission yet, I can't comment on it."

Meanwhile, the EC has not provided a legal justification for its decision to deny the Water lily (Shapla) symbol to the National Citizen Party (NCP).

Asked about the matter, Akhtar refrained from offering a legal explanation but recommended that journalists consult with legal experts for further clarity.

No alternative proposal has been received from the party, so the EC would allocate symbols at its discretion.

The matter is simple -- the 'Shapla' symbol is not included in our schedule, so it was not allotted.

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NEWS

100 days on, no headway in IU student murder probe

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

A hundred days after Islamic University (IU) student Sajid Abdullah was found dead, his classmates staged a protest carrying a symbolic coffin yesterday, demanding progress in an investigation that remains stalled.

Despite repeated appeals from the university and Sajid's family, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has yet to make any headway.

"They haven't found any clues or shared anything specific yet. We're repeatedly pressing them to speed up the process," said IU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Nakib Mohammad Nasrullah, adding that official letters have been sent seeking updates.

At a meeting with CID officials on campus yesterday, it was decided that investigators would be allowed to question anyone -- teachers, officials,



employees, or students -- in connection with the case.

CID Kushtia Special Superintendent Abu Tarek admitted difficulties in the investigation, citing the absence of CCTV footage and an apparent unwillingness among students to speak. "It's an incident inside the campus. That makes it difficult. But now the university has asked everyone to cooperate," he said.

Sajid's father, Ahsan Habibullah Delwar, expressed frustration. "Whenever we call the CID, they say it will take time -- but they can't say how long," he told The Daily Star. On July 17, police recovered Sajid's body from a pond beside Shah Azizur Rahman Hall. Though initially reported as a drowning, a later viscera report confirmed he was strangled to death. The case, filed on August 4, was later handed over to the CID, but no arrests have been made so far.

Credible polls, peaceful

FROM PAGE 3
would help implement BNP's 31-point reform agenda, which includes forming several commissions.

The interim government's commissions were insufficient. We will restructure them and open the process to public input," he added.

Jamaat-e-Islami Naib-e-Ameer Syed Abdullah Muhammad Taher said if the election is not fair, the chief adviser should cancel it and announce a new one. "Any deviation will be noticed by the public," he said.

Taher stressed that the election must be transparent and meet international standards.

He also urged all parties to follow the election code of conduct and criticised past governments for corruption and negative activities that thwarted opportunities for change.

Akhter Hossen, member secretary of the National

Citizen Party (NCP), said peaceful power transfer has rarely been seen in the past. "Those who come to power tend to focus on staying there for long. We want to break that cycle," he said.

Stressing the need for peaceful power transfer, he linked it to greater youth and women's participation in elections.

Former caretaker government adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury expressed concern over the lack of trust in the electoral process, particularly regarding women's rights.

She urged political parties to ensure women's safety during and after the polls and called for improvements in education and governance.

Kazi Maruf Islam, professor of Development Studies at Dhaka University, said parties must adhere to the election code of conduct and define how they will respond to violations.

He also urged the Election Commission to monitor and report breaches regularly.

Mahrul Mohiuddin from the Women's Political Rights Forum said they had officially rejected the July charter for failing to ensure adequate female representation.

Indigenous rights activist Sanjeeb Drono stressed the need to continue reserved seats for women in parliament.

Abdullah Kafi Raton, general secretary of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), and Mojibur Rahman Manju, president of the AB Party, also spoke at the event, among others.

Mariam Nessa, women's rights lead at ActionAid Bangladesh, presented recommendations from similar discussions held in nine districts.

The session was moderated by ActionAid Bangladesh Country Director Farah Kabir.

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HOW TO ASK FOR GROWTH

having a one-to-one with your boss about moving on

ZARIF FAIAZ

Careers rarely stall for lack of ambition; they falter because people never say out loud what they want next. A focused one-to-one with your manager is the right place to test ideas, map options and, if necessary, set a respectful course away from your current role. Handled well, it protects relationships, reveals opportunities you cannot see from your desk, and reduces the risk of impulsive exits. Handled badly, it can erode trust or trap you in the same job with a shinier title. The difference lies in preparation, tone, and the quality of how you ask.

Before you ask for time

Do your homework. Gather concise evidence of what you have delivered in the past six to twelve months and be ready to show how those outcomes supported the team's goals. Replace the vague desire for "more responsibility" with two or three thought-through directions, such as a transfer, a stretch project, a secondment, or an orderly exit if the fit is wrong. Each option should carry a business case: how it reduces risk, enables revenue, builds capability, or solves a succession problem. If you are exploring an internal move, learn the formal process and its timelines. If you are leaning towards leaving, read your contract carefully for notice periods, bonus or share-plan rules, and any restrictive covenants; HR can explain policy, but legal advice is the place for specific interpretations.

Setting up the meeting

Avoid ambushing your manager at the end of a status call. Book a dedicated half hour or, better, forty-five minutes, and choose a setting where neither of you is clock-watching. Set the tone in the invitation by framing it as a career conversation about how you can add value over the next year, and send a short agenda in advance so the discussion is purposeful rather than reactive.

Lead with impact, not frustration

Open the meeting with the work, not with what you dislike. The quickest way to trigger defensiveness is to start with a list of grievances. A calmer, more productive start sounds like: "Here's what I've delivered this year and where I think the impact has been strongest" or "Looking at the team's goals, I can see several areas where I could contribute more". Keeping the conversation future-focused invites your boss into problem-solving rather



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

than defence.

Make a clear, positive ask

Managers respond to specific, feasible proposals. If you want to grow in place, propose a defined shift of time or scope and explain how you will cover existing commitments. If you're seeking a secondment, sketch a trial period with success measures and a handover plan. If there is an internal vacancy that suits, show the fit and suggest a transition that avoids gaps for live projects. If you are ready to look externally, say so professionally and ask for support with an orderly plan, including references at the appropriate stage. Anchor each version of the ask in outcomes the organisation cares about: quality, speed, savings, risk reduction or customer value, so the conversation is about benefits, not indulgences.

Anticipating pushback

Expect legitimate concerns. Timing, headcount, policy, and readiness are the usual stumbling blocks. Treat these not as verdicts but as constraints to design around. If timing is the issue, offer a phased plan and show how early planning reduces risk. If headcount is frozen, suggest testing the change as a project or a time split before revisiting the budget. If your manager doubts your readiness, ask which skills would tip the balance and propose milestones and a date to review progress. If policy appears to rule out an idea, explore what is possible within the rules - shadowing, short secondments,

or fixed-term assignments often sit comfortably inside policy.

Agreeing next steps

Good meetings die in the gap between principles and actions. Before you leave the room, summarise what you both think should happen first, what each of you will do, how success will be judged, and when you will meet again to check progress. Name the people you will involve: HR, project sponsors, partner teams, and agree who will speak to whom. Then send a same-day note capturing the decisions so momentum is not lost.

When the answer is "not now"

"Not now" can be productive if you convert it into a development plan with dates. Ask what would need to be true by a specific month to reopen the option, and record clear thresholds: the skills you must demonstrate, the exposure you will gain, and the work you will deliver. Ask for visibility: meetings to join, projects to co-lead, sponsors to meet, so you can build the evidence that will matter at the next review. If timescales keep slipping or the thresholds change with every conversation, treat that as data. It may be time to activate an external search with the same professionalism you brought to the internal route.

If you decide to leave

Leaving well is part of a long career. Tell your manager first and privately, give the notice the contract requires and offer

solutions rather than surprises. Draft a transition plan, propose a sensible scope for your backfill, and document your processes cleanly for whoever follows. Finish what you reasonably can and hand over the rest with clarity. Resist the temptation to vent in team channels; the way you exit will travel with you.

Remote and hybrid realities

Video compresses nuance. To de-risk the conversation, share a one-page brief beforehand, keep your camera on, leave longer pauses than feel natural, and summarise more often. Use a shared document during the call to capture decisions in real time so neither party leaves with a different memory of what was agreed.

Sensitive contexts

In small companies, options can be genuinely limited. Equity, cash flow, and key person risk loom larger, so frame your proposals as risk management and continuity as much as personal growth. If you are on a visa, confirm potential immigration consequences of any change with HR or an adviser before you commit. If you are in probation, the wisest move is usually to focus on impact and feedback now and revisit mobility when the probation period ends.

A simple way to structure the conversation

Think of the meeting in five acts. Set the tone by explaining that the purpose is to maximise your value over the next year. Recount two or three pieces of work where the impact is clear. Shift to the future by describing what energises you and how that overlaps with the team's direction. Present a small set of options, explain the business case for your preferred path, and show that you have thought about coverage and risk. Close by confirming actions, owners, measures, and a review date. It is not theatre, but the shape helps you keep control of time and intent.

Measure success by outcomes, not titles

Titles lag reality. The best indicator that the conversation worked is not the wording on your email signature but a change in what you spend time on, the quality of opportunities that reach you, and the sponsorship you receive from people whose advocacy opens doors. If, after two good-faith cycles of this process, nothing meaningful has shifted, you have your answer, and your cue to act elsewhere.

NEXT STEP

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

Save the Children



Senior Python Developer

Deadline: November 1

Eligibility:

• Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) or equivalent with professional experience in Python software development.

Minimum experience: 5 years

UCEP Bangladesh

Senior Officer, Resource Mobilisation

Deadline: November 1

Eligibility:

• Master's degree in International Development Studies, Social Sciences, Business Administration, Public Administration, or a related field.

Minimum experience: 5 years



Beacon Pharmaceuticals PLC

Coordinator, Oncology/ Biotech/ Palliative Care

Deadline: November 4

Eligibility:

• M.Pharm/B.Pharm from a reputed university.

Minimum experience: N/A



Water and Sanitation for Urban Populations (WSUP)

Senior Officer, WASH Technical & Municipal Coordination

Deadline: November 8

Eligibility:

• Bachelor's degree in civil engineering, urban and regional planning, environmental engineering, or related discipline. Master's degree preferred.

Minimum experience: 3-5 years

FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.



THE BOSSMAN

BY E. RAZA RONNY



ChatGPT Enterprise adds new 'company knowledge' feature

NEXT STEP DESK

OpenAI has introduced a new 'Company Knowledge' feature for its ChatGPT Business, Enterprise, and Education subscription plans. The function allows the AI system to search through an organisation's connected applications to provide answers using internal company information.

The new feature works with various business tools, including Slack, Google Drive, SharePoint, GitHub, and Asana. According to OpenAI, the system respects existing user permissions, meaning employees can only access information they're already authorised to view within their organisation. Responses include citations linking back to original sources for verification.

To use the feature, employees must select 'Company Knowledge' before asking questions in a chat. The system will then search across connected



PHOTO: UNSPLASH

applications that have been enabled by company administrators. OpenAI states that data protection measures include

industry-standard encryption and that the company does not train its models on customer data by default.

WhatsApp plans to ban ChatGPT-like AI chatbots in 2026

NEXT STEP DESK

WhatsApp will no longer permit general-purpose AI chatbots, such as ChatGPT, to operate on its platform under a new policy that takes effect on January 15, 2026. The Meta-owned messaging service has updated its Business API terms to prohibit third-party AI model providers from distributing their assistants through WhatsApp, effectively shutting out a growing number of AI-powered bots that have recently emerged on the platform.

In the revised policy, WhatsApp stated that "providers and developers



PHOTO: UNSPLASH

of artificial intelligence or machine learning technologies", including large language models and generative

AI assistants, are "strictly prohibited" from using the WhatsApp Business Solution if their technology functions as a standalone chatbot rather than an incidental feature.

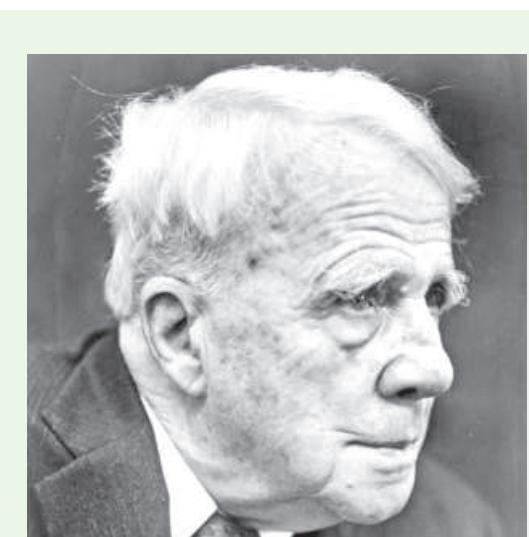
The rule change is expected to affect a range of startups and AI companies that have integrated their conversational models into WhatsApp, including OpenAI, Perplexity, Luzia, and Poke. The move effectively reserves WhatsApp's AI integration for Meta's own assistant, Meta AI, while preventing independent AI developers from using the platform to reach WhatsApp's user base of more than 3 billion people.

X's ad chief out after 10 months: report

NEXT STEP DESK

John Nitti has left his position as X's Global Head of Revenue Operations and Advertising Innovation after ten months with the company, according to a recent report by The Financial Times. Before joining X, Nitti held senior roles at Verizon and American Express.

According to the report, Nitti's exit comes amid broader leadership changes at X, as the company continues to face internal and strategic challenges under Musk's management. The advertising department has also experienced difficulties, with several major brands pulling back from the platform and Musk redirecting resources toward artificial intelligence development.



"The brain is a wonderful organ; it starts working the moment you get up in the morning and does not stop until you get into the office."

ROBERT FROST

Star SPORT

DHAKA TUESDAY OCTOBER 28, 2025, KARTIK 12, 1432 BS

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
 Bangladesh U19 vs Afghanistan U19
 1st ODI
 Live from 10:00 am
 Pakistan vs South Africa
 1st T20I
 Live from 9:00 pm



Bangladesh captain Litton Das's return to the side was not a memorable one as he could only score five off eight during their 16-run defeat against the West Indies in the first T20I at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Ft Lt Matiur Rahman Stadium in Chattogram yesterday. Pacer Tanzim Sakib looks desolate as the visitors earlier launched a late assault in their innings, plundering 83 runs in the last eight overs in an unbroken fourth-wicket stand.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Rakibul joins exclusive nine-wicket club in NCL

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh left-arm spinner Rakibul Hasan joined the elite club, claiming nine wickets in an innings for Mymensingh against Sylhet in the National Cricket League at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium on Monday.

Rakibul finished with figures of 9-168, becoming only the fifth Bangladeshi bowler to achieve the feat in domestic first-class cricket, joining Sunzamul Islam, Saqlain Sajib, Mosharraf Hossain, and Abdur Razzaq, who has accomplished it twice.

Despite Rakibul's heroics, Sylhet opener Shykat Ali produced a career-best 175, forging a crucial 148-run ninth-wicket partnership with pacer Ebadot Hossain. Sylhet posted 489 all out, securing an 88-run first-innings lead. Mymensingh ended day 3 at 58 for no loss, keeping the contest alive.

Elsewhere, Khulna dominated Barishal at the Khulna Divisional Stadium, bowling them out for 224 in the second innings and chasing the modest target of 38 with seven wickets in hand. The match ended on a somber note, as Barishal physiotherapist Hasan Ahmed passed away due to cardiac arrest.

At the Sylhet Academy Ground, Naeem Islam's unbeaten 137 powered Rangpur to 358, but Dhaka fought back, reaching 212 for 2 in the second innings and securing a 75-run lead, with Jishan Alam unbeaten on 80.

Chattogram's Yasir Ali narrowly missed a century, scoring 92 as they declared at 277 for 9, while Shafiqul Islam claimed four for Rajshahi. Rajshahi, previously dismissed for 196, reached 219 for four thanks to unbeaten fifties from Priyot Kumar and SM Meherob. They now need 264 runs on the final day to secure a challenging victory, keeping the domestic season intensely competitive.



SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN from Chattogram

Bangladesh's batting frailties resurfaced once again as they fell 16 runs short against the West Indies in the opening T20I of the three-match series in Chattogram yesterday. Despite a promising start with the ball, their top-order collapse turned a manageable chase into another frustrating defeat.

After West Indies captain Shai Hope chose to bat first, Bangladesh's bowlers kept control for most of the innings, restricting the visitors to 114 for three after 17 overs. However, the momentum shifted when Royman Powell, marking his 100th T20I, powered an unbeaten 44 and forged a 46-ball 83-run partnership with Hope, guiding his side to a competitive 165 for three. The Tigers conceded 51 runs in the final three overs, a lapse that proved decisive.

Given Chattogram's reputation for even bounce and the added influence of dew, the chase appeared well within Bangladesh's reach at the Bir Shreshtha Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Stadium. But the top order faltered early, losing four wickets for just 42 runs inside the powerplay and slumping to 77 for six by the 12th over.

By then, Towhid Hridoy offered brief resistance with 28 off 25 balls, while opener Tanzim Hasan Tamim

contributed 15, but poor shot selection once again undermined the innings.

Needing 89 off the final eight overs, Bangladesh's lower order mounted a spirited fightback. Tanzim Hasan Sakib struck 33 off 27 balls, Nasum Ahmed added 20

BRIEF SCORES

WEST INDIES
 165-3 in 20 overs (Hope 46 not out, Powell 44 not out; Taskin 2-36)

BANGLADESH
 149 all out in 19.4 overs (Sakib 33; Seales 3-32, Holder 3-31)

RESULT
 West Indies won by 16 runs

PLAYER OF THE MATCH
 Royman Powell

top order to anchor an innings. A single set batter might have made the difference, as acknowledged by the opposition.

"If one of Bangladesh's main batters had stayed at the crease for longer, we would've been under pressure because it was very wet in the end," said Powell in the post-match press conference, further praising his bowlers for "sticking to their plans" despite the dew.

Bangladesh pacer Tanzim Sakib, who was expensive with the ball (0-47) but nearly turned hero with the bat, echoed the same view.

"Of course, when the dew started to fall, the ball came on to the bat more easily. If we had one set batsman at that stage, the game would've been much easier," Sakib said.

"In the last couple of overs, a settled batsman always keeps the game in hand."

"We lost four wickets in the powerplay. Even if it had been two, the chase could still have been managed," he added.

The defeat leaves Bangladesh in danger of losing their first T20I series after four consecutive wins, with the remaining two matches scheduled for October 29 and 31. Their next outing in Chattogram will test their ability to respond to pressure with the bat -- a department that continues to hold them back despite steady progress in other areas.

Butler knows 'the problems and the answers'

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's football team suffered a 5-1 defeat to Thailand in their second and final FIFA international friendly at the 72nd Anniversary Stadium in Bang Mod, Bangkok, yesterday.

Playing with a high defensive line and showing sluggish movement at the back, the women in red and green were exposed repeatedly by Thailand's pace and precision. The hosts, ranked 51 places above Bangladesh in the FIFA standings, demonstrated their superiority throughout both friendlies, following up a 3-0 win in the first match with another emphatic victory.

The two friendlies were part of Bangladesh's preparations for next year's AFC Women's Asian Cup Qualifiers, and the results highlighted the significant gap that still exists between Bangladesh and the top-tier Asian nations. The British head coach, Peter Butler, now faces the challenge of tightening his defence and improving the team's physical conditioning before heading to Australia in March for



the Asian Cup.

Although Butler made some adjustments to the system, he opted to retain his preferred high-line defence -- a decision that proved costly. Thailand's physically stronger and faster forwards repeatedly breached Bangladesh's backline, scoring three goals within the first 35 minutes.

Thai midfielders and defenders frequently exploited space behind

through Thailand's composed defence. Long-range efforts from Bangladesh also failed to trouble the opposition, though Shamsunnahar Jr's glancing header provided a rare highlight and a small boost of confidence for the forwards.

Despite the heavy defeat, Butler remained positive about his team's effort and potential.

"We have to be honest with ourselves -- we're not at their level," Butler said in a video message after the match. "We played a very, very good team with some wonderful players. They're stronger and fitter than our girls, but I'm proud of them. They never gave up."

He added: "I'm pleased with certain aspects of our game, though we'll always struggle physically and with limited resources and training facilities. I don't believe in the blame game or making excuses. This environment is difficult, but I'm not despondent. I'm disappointed with some of the goals we conceded, but I'm very positive moving forward. I know the problems -- and I know the answers to fix them."



VICTORY BEYOND THE SCORELINE

In Berrechid, Morocco, history was written in courage, not goals. Afghan Women United -- a team of refugees -- stepped onto the field on Sunday for their first international match since fleeing a homeland where women's sport is banned. They scored first, through Manoz Noori's penalty, igniting tears and cheers that transcended the scoreboard. Chad won 6-1, but for these women it was a triumph of resilience, a reclaiming of identity and proof that even in exile, the spirit of Afghan women's football endures, supported by FIFA's mission to protect the rights of all women and girls to play and dream freely.

PHOTO: FIFA

First division clubs unhappy over league schedule

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) on Sunday announced that the next edition of the First Division Cricket League will begin on November 18, however, many of the participating clubs are unhappy with CCDM's announcement and as their demand of deferring the league was ignored.

CCDM held a meeting with 20 first division clubs on October 22, which, barring three, the other outfits attended.

The CCDM relayed that this year's first division league would begin in early November, reversing the recent trend of holding the third division league first.

According to first division outfit Amber Sporting Club's cricket secretary Ziaur Rahman Topu, most clubs disagreed with the proposed schedule in the meeting.

"We said that our league ended in March and asked how can we play again in the first week of November. Majority of the clubs were not in agreement," he said.

"Later Faruque [Ahmed, BCB vice-president] bhai showed up in the meeting and said it was the board's decision. I said, 'why did you call us to the meeting since you could have just notified us by a letter?' Since you won't listen to us, why call the 20 clubs and why all this preparation?" he said, adding he stormed out of the meeting after that.

However, CCDM chairman Adnan Rahman Dipon claimed that majority of the clubs had agreed to play the league in the proposed schedule. "Verbally, maximum clubs wanted to play. Officially, they should send a letter because it's the board's decision, I am just a subcommittee chairman," he said.

Topu claimed that only clubs that have directorship in the board are willing to compete and the other teams had proposed the December-January window.

He further said that around 45 clubs across divisions are going to send a letter to Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Aminul Islam Bulbul ahead of the first division league's players' transfer window on November 5 and 6.

SHORT CORNER

Bangladesh miss out on CAVA Cup final

Hosts Bangladesh's bid to play in the final of CAVA (Central Asian Volleyball Association) Cup was crushed with a 3-1 sets defeat to Afghanistan in their final group match at the Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur on Monday.

India's Iyer hospitalised in Sydney

India vice-captain Shreyas Iyer has been hospitalised in Sydney after suffering a rib-cage injury that caused internal bleeding during the third ODI against Australia on Saturday. Scans revealed a laceration injury to his spleen from that impact, with bleeding detected in the rib-cage region.

Bavuma returns for India Tests

Tembu Bavuma was on Monday named as captain of South Africa's squad for two World Test Championship matches in India next month having recovered from injury. Bavuma has captained South Africa in ten Tests, winning nine and drawing one.

***Read full stories on The Daily Star website.*



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JEC MEETING

Dhaka, Islamabad discuss trade, connectivity

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and
ASIFUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh and Pakistan yesterday agreed to expand economic cooperation by exploring new trade opportunities and enhancing direct connectivity through shipping links and air services.

The decisions were made at the ninth meeting of the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) held in Dhaka, the first JEC meeting since 2005. The meeting focused on expanding bilateral trade and investment and identifying potential across various sectors.

Salehuddin Ahmed, adviser to the finance and science ministries, led the Bangladesh delegation, while Pakistan's delegation was headed by Ali Pervaiz Malik, minister for energy (petroleum division).

After nearly two decades, ties between Dhaka and Islamabad have improved following the ouster of Hasina last year.

Jute and jute products account for about 38 percent of Bangladesh's exports to Pakistan. However, data shows this is declining. Exports totalled around \$23 million in FY24, down from \$63 million in FY22.

According to draft meeting minutes, Pakistan responded positively to

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Bullet took his voice, future

Father tells ICT about his six-yr-old son paralysed during July uprising

SHARIFUL ISLAM and SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Once a cheerful boy, whose father dreamed he would become a pilot one day, Basit Khan Musa now sits silent in a wheelchair, a feeding tube in his nose and paralysis gripping the right side of his body.

The now six year-old was not a victim of any accident, but of police atrocities in the city's Rampura area during the July uprising.

The very bullet that pierced the left side of his head and exited through the other side struck his grandmother, Maya Islam, on the ground floor of their house in the afternoon of July 19, 2024.

His grandmother died a day later.

Musa miraculously survived after prolonged treatment at different hospitals here and in Singapore.

Yesterday, Musa came to the International Crimes Tribunal-1 along with his father, electronic goods trader Md Mustafizur Rahman, who broke down in tears while testifying as the second prosecution witness in a case against four police officers, including former Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Habibur Rahman.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Trump to host summit of Central Asian leaders

AFP, Bishkek

US President Donald Trump is to host a Central Asian summit next week, the leaders of two countries have said, as major powers jockey for influence in the resource-rich region.

Russia's traditional dominance in the five former Soviet states has been questioned since it invaded Ukraine, with China, the European Union and the United States all seeking to boost their diplomatic and economic footprint in the region.

The White House has not commented on plans for the summit, but on Sunday the president of Kazakhstan said it was scheduled for November 6 in Washington and on Monday Kyrgyzstan's president said he would attend, local media reported citing their offices.

Heads of the other three states — Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — have not confirmed their participation.



The suspension of direct metro rail service between Uttara and Motijheel, until 11:00am yesterday, caused heavy traffic on city streets, especially during rush hour. The photo was taken at Asad Gate in the morning.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

EC finalises list of polling centres

Slow progress in registering parties and observer organisations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 42,761 polling centres and 2,44,739 booths will be set up across the country for the upcoming 13th national parliamentary election scheduled for February next year, according to the final list released by the Election Commission yesterday.

"Each voting centre will have an average of 3,000 voters — if necessary, this number will be adjusted in the future," EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed told reporters at the EC headquarters in the capital.

In the 12th national parliamentary election, there were a total of 42,150 polling centres and 2,61,472 polling booths.

The EC, however, is facing delays in the registration process for political parties and election observer organisations, EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed told reporters at the EC headquarters in the capital.

"Progress has been a bit slow in those two areas," The EC has initially identified 22 political

13TH GENERAL ELECTION

42,761
polling centres

2,44,739
polling booths

1,15,137
booths for male voters

1,29,602
booths for female voters

parties as eligible, and additional field-level information has been collected for them, he said, adding that the process is expected to be complete by the end of the week.

Despite the setbacks, the EC assured the public that there is no cause for concern.

"We are slightly behind schedule, but everything will be completed within the remaining time."

On the registration of observer organisations, he said the review for domestic observer groups is underway.

In some cases, journalists have already provided the required information.

The EC hopes to finalise the registration process for observer organisations by the end of the week.

When asked about the EC's preparedness for the election in light of the delays in the two key areas, Akhtar said: "If you ask about percentages, I would say we are 90 percent to 95 percent ready in these two areas."

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Scientists link dental health with stroke

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

People with poor dental hygiene are at an increased risk of stroke, a new study warns.

The research, published in Neurology, notes that people suffering from both cavities and gum inflammation exhibit an 86 percent higher chance of experiencing a stroke.

They face a greater likelihood of ischemic stroke, characterised by a cessation of blood flow to the brain due to clot formation inside blood vessels. Ischemic stroke, which accounts for the majority of cases worldwide, disrupts oxygen delivery to the brain, resulting in permanent neurological deficits or death.

While traditional risk factors for stroke, such as high blood pressure and diabetes, are widely scrutinised, oral health remains underestimated. The new study assesses two dental conditions — cavities and periodontal disease. The former develop as acid-secreting bacteria erode tooth enamel while the latter is a chronic inflammatory condition that destroys gums, provoked by bacterial plaque biofilm.

The study, led by researchers from the University of South Carolina, is based on an extensive analysis of around 6,000 middle-aged adults, all initially free from stroke.

The researchers divided the participants into three categories after giving them dental exams — those with a healthy oral status, those with gum disease, and those affected by both periodontal disease and dental cavities.

DEMAND FOR BHAIRAB DISTRICT 20 hurt as protesters hurl stones at train



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Train services on the Dhaka-Chittagong and Dhaka-Sylhet routes were disrupted for over two hours yesterday after protesters in Bhaibar blocked the railway lines demanding the upazila be declared a district.

The demonstration, held at Bhaibar Bazar Railway Junction from around 10:00am, turned violent when stones were hurled at trains and police, leaving at least 20 passengers injured.

Witnesses said hundreds of locals occupied the tracks, chanting slogans like "Bhaibar zila chai [We want Bhaibar as a district]". The Dhaka-bound Upakul Express and Karnaphuli Express were among several trains stranded,

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