



"It's an important part of American national security to make sure that this nuclear arsenal we have actually functions properly."

US VP JD Vance on testing US nuclear arsenal

The Daily Star

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

SECOND EDITION



DHAKA SATURDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2025

REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 279

KARTIK 16, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

JAMADIUL AWWAL 9, 1443 HJRI

16 PAGES: Tk 15.00



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BB seeks legal overhaul for full autonomy

Proposes search panel, court of inquiry to shield top posts from politics

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and WASIM BIN HABIB

Bangladesh Bank has sent a set of sweeping reform proposals to the government, seeking to align its autonomy with global standards and shield the institution from political influence.

Governor Ahsan H Mansur outlined the draft amendments to the Bangladesh Bank Order 1972 in a Demi-Official letter dated October 9 to Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed, with copies to the finance secretary and the financial institutions secretary.

The proposals, backed by detailed justifications, aim to elevate the status of the central bank's leadership, restructure its board, and overhaul the appointment and removal process for top officials.

Finance ministry officials said the central bank had placed the draft amendments before its board on September 16, where it was agreed in principle to forward them to the finance ministry to promulgate it as an ordinance.



The Dhaka North City Corporation, entrusted with protecting public roads from encroachment, has itself occupied a portion of one of the capital's busiest thoroughfares to build a ward office. This brazen irony is all the proof city dwellers need to understand why the city's long-standing street occupation crisis never gets resolved. The photo was taken yesterday on Pragati Sarani in Baridhara.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Through these amendments, a strong legal foundation will be established to prevent the recurrence of past mistakes and irregularities in the financial sector.

Ahsan H Mansur, BB governor



- Number of govt-nominated director in BB board will be 1 instead of 3
- Number of independent experts will be 4 to 6 instead of existing 3
- BB governor will enjoy the status of a full minister

"Through these amendments, a strong legal foundation will be established to prevent the recurrence of past mistakes and irregularities in the financial sector," the governor wrote.

Past reform attempts, he noted, faltered "due to lack of political and administrative will", adding that the current moment is "the most appropriate time" and would stand as a significant contribution by the government.

The nine proposed amendments draw on practices from advanced and regional economies. The letter argues that passing the Bangladesh Bank (Amendment) Ordinance 2025, in step with broader interim government reforms, would empower the central bank to act with greater independence and modern oversight.

The IMF, which has pushed for enhanced central bank autonomy under its \$5.5 billion loan programme and provided technical assistance in drafting the amendments, had set a September deadline for securing the advisory council's approval, a deadline already missed.

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NATIONAL CONSENSUS COMMISSION

'Proposal unconstitutional'

Legal experts oppose automatic incorporation of July charter reforms into the constitution

ASHUTOSH SARKAR and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

Some legal experts have strongly opposed the National Consensus Commission's recommendation that constitutional reforms in the July charter be automatically incorporated into the constitution if these are not implemented within a 270-day timeframe.

Calling the proposal "illegal and unconstitutional", they said there is no such precedent, and it might be challenged in court.

In the recommendations, submitted to the government on October 28, the consensus commission left it to the government to decide whether a proposed referendum on the July charter will be held on the same day as the general election in February or earlier.

It proposed two alternatives with a common thread – the government will issue a July National Charter (Constitution Reform) Implementation Order; a new

parliament will be formed through the general election; the parliament will also act as a constitution reform council with the authority to exercise "constituent power" on constitutional matters.

constitution.

It also left the tough question of who would issue the implementation order – the president or the chief adviser.

When asked whether the order is

"In the history of law, there have been many new inventions. But this is something unheard of in legal history."

Constitution expert and lawyer Shahdeen Malik



The first alternative suggests that the referendum question will include the reforms in a schedule of the order, while the second proposes a constitutional reform draft bill based on the charter's proposals, and put the bill in the order's schedule.

If the constitution reform council fails to complete its work within 270 days of its first sitting, the reforms will automatically take effect and be incorporated into the

a constitutional one, constitution expert and lawyer Shahdeen Malik said there is no such precedent in legal history.

He noted that during the Pakistan era, military dictators used to issue similar orders when the constitution remained abrogated.

Regarding the provision of automatic inclusion, he said, "In the history of law, there have been many new inventions. But this is

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BNP caught in reform dilemma ahead of polls

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP is in a conundrum over how to respond to the National Consensus Commission's recommendations on implementing reforms.

Party leaders said the situation has become uncomfortable for the BNP, which had not anticipated such a development while focusing on its election preparations.

It is now closely monitoring the government's actions and has reiterated that it will not compromise on holding the national polls in February. Instead, it plans to proceed with greater caution in the coming days.

Senior party leaders said the interim government and the consensus commission have recently drawn greater criticism than the BNP over the July charter issue, after losing the trust of political parties by failing to uphold their commitments.

According to political analysts, BNP's most practical option is to pursue a solution through talks. In this way, the party may put strategic pressure on the government to achieve its goals.

"The BNP is in a dilemma now. If it rejects the charter,

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Tenure ends, full consensus still elusive

MD ABBAS

The tenure of the National Consensus Commission expired yesterday, with the National Citizen Party and four leftist parties yet to sign the July charter of reforms.

Meanwhile, three major parties – the BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and NCP – remain divided over how to implement the constitutional reforms in the charter.

The commission submitted its recommendations on implementing the July National Charter 2025 to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on October 28.

It proposed that the government issue a July Charter Implementation (Constitutional Reform) Order and hold a referendum to secure public endorsement under that order.

It also recommended giving the next parliament a dual mandate for 270 days to oversee the constitutional reforms while performing legislative duties. If it fails to complete the reforms within the timeframe, the proposals would automatically be incorporated into the constitution.

However, five parties – the NCP, the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (Basod),

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A battery-run rickshaw driving across the Malibagh flyover near Mouchak in Dhaka yesterday. Although such slow-moving vehicles are not allowed on flyovers or highways, these rickshaws are often seen flouting the rules, putting commuters' lives at risk.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Islamic government needed for welfare of Hindus: Porwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar yesterday said all governments since independence have used the Hindu community merely for their own benefit.

"For the betterment of the Hindu community and infrastructural development in Dumuria, Phultala and across the country, an Islamic government is now essential. If anyone obstructs them [Hindus], the people will build resistance," he said at a meeting in Khulna's Dumuria upazila.

In the event organised by the Hindu committee of the upazila unit of Jamaat-e-Islami, Porwar pledged that if Jamaat gets the chance to govern, it will eliminate terrorism, extortion and land-grabbing from the country.

"For 54 years, those who ruled the country have exploited the Hindu community," he said.

"The people want change, and we want to bring that change. We have seen the rule of the plough, the sheaf of paddy and the boat. Only one symbol remains – the scale of Jamaat-e-Islami," he said, referring to electoral symbols of Jatiya Party, BNP, and Awami League.

Reiterating his demand for holding a referendum in November to implement the July charter and then holding the national election in February, Porwar said, "Students from all universities have delivered the message of change, and the people will echo that message in the coming days."

Babu Krishna Nandi, president of the upazila Hindu committee of Jamaat, urged everyone to vote for the scale to ensure the party's victory.

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Why small-talk in Dhaka feels like a vanishing act

ASHIF AHMED RUDRO

As “the melting pot” of Bangladesh, the capital city has certain characteristics that might as well be tagged as ‘culture.’ Some of them commendable, some are prevalent everywhere, and some on the verge of fading away. It feels like small talk is one of those cultures.

SMALL TALK FADING AWAY

It’s not just Dhaka. Small talk is fading away everywhere. The whole world is facing this phenomenon where small talks are a becoming a memory of the past. We are not going into the discussion of the necessity and merits of small talk culture, but rather acknowledging how something that was once so common now almost unheard of (Pun intended).

There are a number of things that took its place. Having a smartphone in everyone’s hand is probably the biggest of them all. People nowadays would rather be tuned into their favourite playlist instead of small talk.

On the other hand, Dhaka is not what it used to be. Now, there are too many people, too many vehicles, too much noise, and everyone is too busy to care about anyone else. So small talk really has no place in people’s schedule anymore.

RARE BUT STILL HERE

While it is indeed rare, it still can be spotted.

Most people who engage in small talk are acquaintances. In public transport, you see people who often commute



together engage in discussion about how much traffic there is on the road. People complain about how difficult it is to get a seat on one of the public transports and the other person nods in agreement, probably adding some comment that you can’t hear over the noise of the honking traffic.

The usual small talk includes asking about the family, where the kids go to school. Then pretty soon, it ends up in politics these days; even though small talk is supposed to be a casual conversation.

Sometimes, you get a glimpse of a few young adults who truly engage in small talk. Football, wrestling, TV shows are usually their topic of conversation. If it’s none of the above, then it’s gossip.

“Did you hear what Ashif did yesterday?” one of them begins and

soon, a chatter starts. People around them will give them an annoyed look but they don’t care.

THE KING OF SMALL TALK

A middle-aged man on a public transport; this is the ultimate king of small talks.

From asking you details about how you are doing, where you are coming from, where do you study and how many siblings you have, this man will switch up faster than you can answer.

If you are on a bus, they will invite you in small talks about how terrible the roads are and curse the drivers, hoping you join in. Next thing you know, he is criticising the government, criticising the average person for their dishonesty and blaming the general public for anything he can think of. Younger people usually refrain from



ILLUSTRATION: ASHIF AHMED RUDRO

such conversations with strangers. This is an interesting factor that shows the generational gap.

ALWAYS DRAMATIC, NEVER BORING

This culture of small talk is many things but it’s never boring. All you have to do is take off your earbuds for a moment and listen.

You will find how fast these small talks start, how suddenly they change topic and how abruptly they can turn sideways sparking a conflict. Raised voices are usually escalated small talks that did not remain so small.

It is ironic, somewhat entertaining, and a culture that might become scarce with time but it will never disappear. And it’s not just Dhaka. As long as there are civilisations standing, small talks will remain.

AL leader found dead on rooftop of Sylhet home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

An Awami League leader was found dead on the rooftop of his home in Sylhet’s Dakshin Surma upazila yesterday.

The deceased, Abdur Razzak, 55, was vice-president of the South Surma upazila unit of the AL.



Abdur Razzak

Police said there were several stab wounds on his body. “The incident likely took place between 6:30am and 9:00am,” said Mohammad Saiful Islam, additional deputy commissioner of Sylhet Metropolitan Police.

Family members said Razzak went to the rooftop for his usual morning walk but did not return. Around 9:00am, relatives went upstairs and found his blood-stained body lying in a corner, said Mizanur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Dakshin Surma Police Station.

They also said CCTV footage from the house showed no sign of anyone entering the premises before the incident.

Sylhet Metropolitan Police Commissioner Abdul Quddus Chowdhury said both the Police Bureau of Investigation and the Criminal Investigation Department have visited the scene and are investigating the incident.

Trump sets refugee ceiling at record-low 7,500

REUTERS, Washington

US President Donald Trump set the refugee admissions ceiling at 7,500 for fiscal year 2026, the lowest cap on record, a White House document published on Thursday said, part of a broader effort to reshape refugee policies in the US and worldwide.

Trump said in an annual refugee determination dated September 30 that admissions would be focused largely on South Africans from the country’s white Afrikaner ethnic minority.

Trump has claimed Afrikaners face persecution based on their race in the Black-majority country, allegations the South African government has denied.

Trump paused all US refugee admissions when he took office in January, saying they could only be restarted if they were established to be in the best interests of the US.

Weeks later, he launched an effort to bring in Afrikaners, sparking criticism from refugee supporters. Only 138 South Africans had entered the US by early September, Reuters reported at the time.

Tenure ends

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD), and Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (Marxist) – did not sign the charter.

Contacted yesterday evening, NCP Joint Convener Javed Rasin told The Daily Star that his party would sign once the government issued the referendum order.

The four leftist parties said they could not sign any document, even with dissent notes, that risks altering the constitution’s four fundamental principles: democracy, socialism, secularism, and nationalism.

CPB General Secretary Abdullah Al Kafi Ratan said the party opposed any move preventing future legal challenges to the charter.

When The Daily Star approached Prof Ali Riaz, vice-president of the commission, yesterday, he said that with the commission’s term now over, he would return to academic work but “continue monitoring developments in a personal capacity”.

Asked if the NCP could still sign, he said that since the commission no longer exists, the party could now sign directly with the government.

According to the Chief Adviser’s Office, Monir Haidar, special assistant (consensus) to the chief adviser, will now oversee matters related to charter signing.

Contacted for comments, Monir told The Daily Star, “I will do whatever the chief adviser advises me to do.”

The government formed the seven-member commission on February 13 to build political consensus on the recommendations of six reform bodies.

Chaired by the chief adviser, it included Prof Ali Riaz, head of the Constitutional Reform Commission; Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, head of the Public Administration Reform Commission; Safar Raj Hossain, head of the Police Reform Commission; Badiul Alam Majumder, head of the Election Reform Commission; Justice Emdadul Haque, head of the Judiciary Reform Commission; and Dr Iftekharuzzaman, head of the Anti-Corruption Reform Commission.

Its mandate was to engage political parties and stakeholders from the 2024 uprising and forge national agreement on reforms in elections, public administration, the judiciary, anti-corruption systems, and policing.

In the July charter, the commission drafted 84 proposals after two rounds of negotiation. Half of the proposals were related to constitutional reforms, with the BNP and allies recording dissent on at least nine points.

In a rare show of unity, 24 parties signed the charter on October 17 at the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban. The Gonoforum added its signature two days later.

The final draft went to all parties on September 10, followed by a third round of talks on implementation.

Parties agreed that non-constitutional reforms would proceed via ordinances and executive orders, while constitutional changes would go to referendum, though no consensus was reached on the referendum’s timing, procedure, or framework.

BB seeks legal overhaul for full autonomy

FROM PAGE 1

Speaking to The Daily Star by phone, Mansur said he wrote to clarify the rationale for reform and “the basis of the central bank’s autonomy”. He had yet to hold formal talks with the government, having left for the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings on October 10; he is due back this week.

When asked if the proposals are ambitious, he replied, “I think it’s not at all ambitious; it is overdue, long overdue.”

Asked whether the interim government could implement the changes, he said it could if it wants.

On IMF conditions, he noted, “We will try our best to get it approved by the advisory council before November. If the government doesn’t want to do it, that’s on them.”

APPOINTMENT, REMOVAL

In his letter, Mansur proposed forming a three-member search committee, led by a former finance or planning minister or adviser, or a former or outgoing BB governor, to appoint the governor and deputy governors, under rules defining its mandate.

The main goal of the proposal is to ensure merit-based appointments free from political interference, which is “a fundamental condition for a modern and autonomous central bank”, he wrote.

He cited examples of countries like the Bank of England, Reserve Bank of India, Bank of Canada, South African Reserve Bank, and European Central Bank.

Allegations requiring removal of

top officials would be examined by a three-member Court of Inquiry headed by a justice of the Supreme Court’s Appellate Division, ensuring removal only through due legal process.

The letter cites global practice, including the Bank of England, where removal requires proof of misconduct or incapacity under law.

Contacted by this newspaper, Mustafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said the proposed amendments are essential for strengthening the central bank’s autonomy.

However, he noted, the genuine autonomy of the central bank will ultimately depend on the governor’s individuality, independent mindset, and performance – particularly in how the officeholder independently exercises the responsibilities entrusted to them with independence and integrity.

BOARD RESTRUCTURING

The letter proposed reducing government-appointed directors from three to one, while the number of independent experts would rise from four to six, strengthening regulatory and policy independence.

Many leading central banks, including the Bank of England, operate with predominantly independent boards, the letter noted.

The Bank of England’s board is formed with 12 members, including the governor, two deputy governors, and nine non-executive members.

Currently, the BB’s board has eight members, including the governor, one

deputy governor, three secretaries, two economists and a leader of the business chamber.

GOVERNOR’S STATUS

The governor’s rank would be elevated to that of a full cabinet minister, matching peers in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and India, which helps them maintain policy independence and decision-making authority.

This will also help ensure the central bank’s stature, international representation, and effective coordination with other government agencies involved in economic policymaking.

NEW OVERSIGHT POWERS

New sections proposed by Mansur would cover whistleblower protection, prevention of monopolistic practices, oversight of credit rating agencies, collateral valuation, and legal vetting.

These measures aim to enhance discipline, transparency, and accountability in the banking sector by preventing irregularities, mismanagement, and conflicts of interest.

These will also enable Bangladesh Bank to establish a modern, integrated supervisory framework, which will play an effective role in curbing unethical practices, information concealment, nepotism, and monopolistic behavior in the banking sector.

The letter cites the World Bank’s 2022 Global Financial Development Report, which highlights whistleblower protections as a powerful guard against corruption and moral hazard.

‘Proposal unconstitutional’

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something unheard of in legal history.”

“You cannot bind a future parliament to do something. One parliament may pass a law, but it cannot say that the next three parliaments cannot amend it. That’s not how the law works.

He added, “Every parliament is sovereign. The current one may pass or reject a law, but it cannot dictate what future parliaments can or cannot do. Yet now we’re saying that if a decision is not made within 270 days, the bill will automatically be considered passed. Then what’s the point of 270 days of discussion if the outcome is already predetermined?”

“Accordingly, the consensus commission proposes a middle path: if reforms are not completed, they shall be deemed enacted. This approach serves as a deterrent while relying on the political commitment of all parties to make the penalty unnecessary.”

Barrister Imran Siddiq

He also said some proposals, including the one for establishing a bicameral parliament, are directly contradictory to the constitution.

Khurshid Alam Khan, a senior lawyer of the Supreme Court, told this newspaper that there is no provision in the constitution for the formation of a constitution reform council and passing a bill in 270 days.

“I think it is a very risky provision. It may be challenged in the higher court. Such provisions cannot be covered by our constitution,” he said.

Alam said it is the president who can promulgate an ordinance in the absence of parliament. “If the ordinance is promulgated, it has to be placed within 30 days. If the parliament does not pass the ordinance in 30 days, it will be automatically cancelled,” he said.

Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua said, “First of all, I’m not clear why they thought of keeping such an option.”

He also said the move was unconstitutional.

Citing article 80 of the constitution, he said any bill other than a money bill must be sent to the president for assent. The president has 15 days to approve or return it with objections; if no action is taken within that time, the bill is deemed to have been passed.

SC lawyer Barrister Rashna Imam said, “The consensus commission’s proposals to implement the July charter through an order followed by a referendum raise serious constitutional and procedural concerns.”

“Today, Bangladesh remains a

constitutional democracy, however imperfect, and any mechanism that overlooks this fundamental reality risks eroding the legitimacy of our constitutional order.”

“While referendums can serve as tools of direct democracy, they require clear, singular issues and broad public participation. The July charter, however, contains multiple complex matters on which political parties themselves remain divided, and, more critically, the process has thus far excluded meaningful participation of the broader public”.

“Equally concerning is the reported exclusion of notes of dissent submitted by various political parties on different reform proposals. This omission erodes the credibility of the commission’s proceedings”.

“The commission’s current trajectory threatens to erode public trust and whatever constitutional stability we have today. For the July charter to serve as a genuine instrument of national renewal, its implementation must be grounded in broad-based political consensus, transparent procedures, and constitutional continuity, not expedient shortcuts or imposed mechanisms”.

Contacted, Barrister Imran Siddiq, one of the legal experts consulted by the consensus commission, told The Daily Star that several countries provide that their constituent assemblies are dissolved if they fail to adopt a constitution within a specified period – a penalty meant to ensure timely completion.

“However, such a provision may be unsuitable in our context, as dissolving parliament for non-implementation could trigger a constitutional crisis. Conversely, without any penalty, political actors might delay or avoid reforms, undermining the July uprising’s spirit.

“Accordingly, the consensus commission proposes a middle path: if reforms are not completed, they shall be deemed enacted. This approach serves as a deterrent while relying on the political commitment of all parties to make the penalty unnecessary,” he said.

Islamic government

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Sudipta Kumar Sundar Mondal, president of the Matua Sangha, said, “We no longer want to be identified as a minority. We are all Bangladeshis. No government since independence has worked to meet the demands of the Hindu community. This time it will be proven that Hindus are not tied to any particular party.”

After the meeting, a procession paraded through various roads in Dumuria town.

MAZED SARDAR ROAD IN OLD DHAKA

When waterlogging becomes a daily ordeal

HELEMUL ALAM

Mazed Sardar Road in Old Dhaka remains submerged under dirty water almost throughout the year.

Over a thousand people live in the area. Locals said the condition of the road is so poor that vehicles must move extremely carefully to avoid accidents.

“One of my hands was broken last Saturday while walking along the road. I slipped while trying to give way to a rickshaw-van,” said Mohammad Sohel, a local resident.

According to Mohammad Sentu Miah, another local, the road has been in a severe state of disrepair for the last three years due to the city corporation’s negligence.

“The drainage lines are completely blocked because the authorities have failed to clean them. Sewage overflows from the drains, and residents have to wade through it every day,” he said.

“The situation worsens during the rainy season when the road is submerged under knee-deep water.”

Residents said they often suffer from skin diseases caused by prolonged exposure to the dirty water.

Fifty-year-old Shahzadi, a resident of the area, said, “Our tenants do not stay for more than two or three months because of this terrible situation. We have to face

dirty water right outside our doors – it has become a permanent problem.”

Kohinoor Begum, 40, who supplies homemade lunch boxes to factory workers, said, “It’s very risky to walk here with the food boxes – there’s always a chance of falling into the dirty water due to the road’s condition.”

Kohinoor added that about a month ago, a woman fell into an open manhole hidden under the dirty water. Locals put a wooden cover on it to prevent any further accidents.

A nurse from Dhaka Medical College Hospital shared a similar experience. “I often have to wade through this water to reach the hospital after rain, as it’s nearly impossible to find a rickshaw here after the rain,” she said, requesting anonymity.

Sadia Akter, a ninth-grade student of Agrani Girls School and College, said, “After the rain, the dirty water rises, and we are forced to wade through it. Many times, I have reached school with my clothes completely wet.”

Contacted, Dhaka South City Corporation Chief Engineer Nur Azizur Rahman said a contractor has already been appointed to repair the road.

“However, the contractor is working very slowly. I have asked the concerned officials to serve a notice, and we’ll hold a meeting on Monday to find an immediate solution.”



Motorcyclists and pedestrians struggle through the dirty water on Mazed Sardar Road in Old Dhaka, which remains waterlogged almost year-round due to poor drainage and lack of maintenance. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Karwan Bazar’s Mughal-era mosque echoes Dhaka’s rich past

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Nestled within the chaos of Karwan Bazar, one of Dhaka’s oldest and busiest commercial hubs, stands the Khawaja Am Barsha Jame Mosque, a relic of Mughal splendour that has quietly endured the city’s rapid transformation.

The three-domed mosque, built on a raised platform about 12 feet above the ground, is believed to have been constructed during the reign of Subedar Shaista Khan by his close aide, Khawaja Am Barsha, in the latter half of the 17th century.

The intricate Mughal craftsmanship of the mosque, from its domes and arches to its sturdy octagonal corner towers, still draws admiration from those who step inside. Each of the mosque’s four corners features a towering minaret-like structure capped with miniature domes, and access to the main prayer hall is through a flight of stairs on the eastern side.

When this correspondent visited the site recently, Mufti Tayeb Ahmed, a teacher at the adjoining madrasa, shared his experience of serving there for several years. Inside the main prayer hall, a stone inscription bearing a verse from the Holy Quran can be seen above the mihrab. Another inscription, positioned above the mosque’s central entrance, bears the name of Shaista Khan and mentions the construction period.

“The script is in old Persian, and parts of it have faded over time,” said Tayeb. “Only a few lines are legible now – Shaista Khan’s name can be read clearly on the second line.”

He said the mosque is believed to have been constructed between 1664 and 1668, during Shaista Khan’s first tenure as Subedar of Bengal. The structure itself is remarkably solid, with thick walls and domes that have withstood centuries of weathering.

Over the years, the mosque has undergone several renovations. The current five-storey

complex behind the original prayer hall features modern additions, including marble flooring, mosaic pillars, air-conditioned rooms and decorative lighting. Beneath the three-domed mosque lies a basement that once served multiple purposes – as a storeroom, sleeping quarters and even a cooking space for madrasa students.



The three-domed mosque, built on a raised platform about 12 feet above the ground, is believed to have been constructed during the reign of Subedar Shaista Khan by his close aide, Khawaja Am Barsha, in the latter half of the 17th century.

Local traders said the mosque was built at a time when Karwan Bazar stood on the outskirts of old Dhaka, near the waterways of present-day Hatirjheel.

Travellers from distant regions would anchor their boats nearby and rest at the mosque before continuing their journey.

Over time, the settlement around

it evolved into one of the city’s largest commercial markets.

Abdus Salam, a long-time trader who began his business beside the mosque in 1967, recalled seeing the tomb of Khawaja Am Barsha on the northern side, enclosed by walls. “There was also a well next to the mosque, built at the same time, from which worshippers performed ablution,” he said.

He reminisced about the open prayer shed that once stood on the mosque’s eastern side along Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue – later demolished during the Ershad administration to create a garden area, which still remains.

As the market expanded in the 1990s and commercial high-rises sprang up around Karwan Bazar, the number of worshippers increased sharply. To accommodate the growing congregation, the mosque committee initiated a multi-storey expansion project. The plan was later endorsed by then-president HM Ershad, transforming the earlier market design into a five-storey mosque building.

On the southern side of the mosque, a seven-storey madrasa building now serves hundreds of students, while the ground floor hosts several small shops and a restaurant. According to madrasa authorities, these rental spaces help maintain the mosque and fund its educational activities.

Former madrasa student Shahidul Islam said the mosque’s capacity has grown immensely over the years. “Now, more than 4,000 worshippers can pray here at once,” he said with pride.

Although the modern extension now towers above the original Mughal structure, the three-domed section still retains its historical essence – its terracotta ornamentation, arched entrances and ancient inscriptions standing as witnesses to Dhaka’s rich past.

3,000 AL men held in 10 months over flash processions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has arrested nearly 3,000 leaders and activists of the Awami League (AL) and its affiliated organisations over the past ten months for participating in flash processions across the capital.

DMP Deputy Commissioner (Media and Public Relations) Talebur Rahman disclosed the information at a press conference at the DMP Media Centre on Minto Road yesterday.

The briefing followed the arrest of 46 AL leaders and activists from several flash processions held in different parts of Dhaka earlier in the day.

Talebur Rahman said those detained during flash processions were later formally arrested after verification. “Many of them come from outside Dhaka and join these processions in exchange for money,” he said, adding that police are working to identify and take legal action against the financiers behind these activities.

He said such processions were aimed at creating public panic and asserting political presence in the capital.

40 extrajudicial killings in last 14 months

Reports Odhikar; MSF raises concern over rise in custodial deaths

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 40 people were victims of extrajudicial killings during the 14 months of the interim government formed after the July uprising, according to rights organisation Odhikar.

The highest number of such incidents – nine – occurred in September last year, while 11 were reported in the past three months, said the organisation in its latest quarterly report published on its website yesterday.

The report summarised data covering the entire 14-month period, based on information from Odhikar’s human rights defenders and various media outlets.

- 153 people killed in mob violence
- 7,979 incidents of political violence, killing 281 people
- 242 attacks on journalists

Odhikar began counting from August 9, 2024 – four days after the fall of the Awami League government following the July uprising.

No extrajudicial killings were recorded between August 9 and the end of that month. Nine incidents were reported in September 2024, followed by one each in October, November, and December.

Five people were killed in January this year, three in February, and two each in March and April. The figures for May to September 2025 were four, three, six, three, and two, respectively.

Among the 40 victims, 19 were shot dead, 14 died from torture, and seven were beaten to death.

Between July and September this year, 11 people were reportedly killed in such incidents. During the same period, 153 people were killed in mob violence, the report said. The highest number – 18 – occurred in September this year, compared

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Oct logs highest dengue toll of year

80 deaths, 22,014 cases reported

HELEMUL ALAM

With the continuous rise in dengue-related deaths and infections, the country recorded 80 deaths and 22,520 cases in October alone – the highest in any month this year – highlighting an alarming trend.

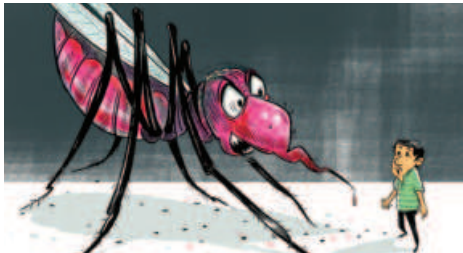
According to experts, both dengue cases and deaths may show a slight downward trend from November as temperatures begin to drop. However, the decline is expected to be minimal.

Data from the Directorate General of Health Services shows that in October 2024, there were 134 dengue-related deaths and 30,879 cases, compared to 173 deaths and 29,652 cases in November.

The DGHS further reported that a total of 278 dengue patients had died and 69,862 were hospitalised this year, as of yesterday morning.

Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman said a slight downward trend is currently being observed.

“Naturally, this rate is expected to decrease further, as the cyclone and adverse weather conditions that were anticipated



KEY ISSUES

- Experts warn decline in cases may be minimal
- Culex threat rises as Aedes still active
- Mosquito breeding continues despite cooler weather
- Health experts fear prolonged outbreak

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote regular cleanup drives
- Strengthen local govt involvement
- Implement targeted hotspot management
- Launch community awareness campaigns

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



PHOTO: STAR

Hasina's former peon Jahangir sued for laundering Tk 100cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has filed a money laundering case against Jahangir Alam, a former office assistant of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, over the alleged laundering of Tk 100 crore.

The case was filed with Chatkhil Police Station in Noakhali yesterday after CID's Financial Crime Unit found substantial preliminary evidence during an initial probe, said Jasim Uddin Khan, special superintendent (media) of CID, in a press release.

The case was lodged under the Money Laundering Prevention Act, the release added.

According to CID, Jahangir, originally from Chatkhil upazila of Noakhali, had worked at the National Parliament Secretariat on a daily wage basis.

After Awami League formed the government in 2009, he was temporarily appointed as a personal assistant at the Prime Minister's Office. CID said the position reportedly helped him gain significant financial benefits.

In 2010, Jahangir established a company named Sky Re Arrange Limited, which operated as a distribution business of a mobile financial service.

However, investigators found numerous suspicious financial transactions under the company's name, including large unexplained deposits into several bank accounts, inconsistent with its business operations.

Between 2010 and 2024, transactions exceeding Tk 565 crore were recorded in multiple bank accounts of the company, a major portion of which came from cash deposits across the country, the CID said.

The sources of these funds remain unidentified, and initial evidence suggests links to hundi and money laundering activities, according to the release.

The investigation also found that Jahangir, along with his wife Kamrun Nahar and brother Monir Hossain, had been involved in illegal financial transactions for years. Jahangir and his wife moved to the US in June 2024 and are currently residing in Virginia.

Ali Riaz's new book explores Bangladesh's democratic transition

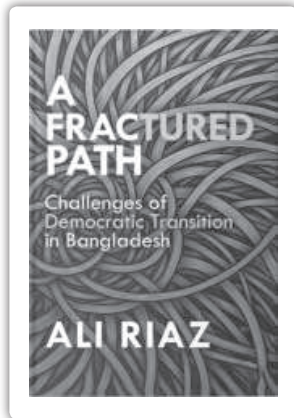
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

University Press Limited (UPL) has published a new book by Prof Ali Riaz titled "A Fractured Path: Challenges of Democratic Transition in Bangladesh".

The book examines the state of democracy in Bangladesh following the 2024 uprising and questions whether the country can achieve lasting democratic stability. It also explores why previous governments failed to deliver on their democratic promises.

In this work, Prof Riaz analyses Bangladesh's political realities alongside global experiences of democratic transition. He argues that a new social contract may be necessary to strengthen democracy in the country.

Prof Riaz is a professor of political science at Illinois State University, USA. He has also served as president of the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies and as vice-president of Bangladesh's National Consensus Commission.



A farmer takes care of his bottle gourd plants in Sylhet. Across Dakshin Surma upazila, farmers have started planting cucumbers, tomatoes, cauliflowers, and red spinach ahead of the winter season. The photo was taken in the Kamalbazar area recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Oct logs highest dengue toll

FROM PAGE 3

have now passed. In this situation, the current condition is likely to remain stable throughout this month, providing a clearer picture of the overall situation," he said.

However, Rahman cautioned that while numbers are expected to decline gradually, dengue will not disappear entirely. "Only the number of patients will slowly start to decrease," he added.

He also pointed out that the Culex mosquito population is on the rise and requires immediate attention. "Authorities must focus not only on dengue but also on the growing Culex mosquito population," he warned.

Rahman explained that the Culex population could become more serious by January or February, urging immediate preventive measures.

"Containers that previously held water but have now dried up may still contain mosquito eggs. These containers must be collected and properly disposed of without delay. Additionally, all active breeding sites should be identified and destroyed," he suggested.

Rahman emphasised that authorities now have a window of opportunity

to take effective action over the next few months. "If measures are taken promptly, the early surge of dengue cases that typically appears in March or April after the first rains can be delayed," he added.

Entomologist of Jahangirnagar University Prof Kabirul Bashar also believes that while dengue cases may slightly decrease in November compared to October, the reduction will not be significant.

He attributed this to three main factors – climate change and delayed rainfall, inefficiency of city corporations, and continued circulation of the virus.

Bashar said the epidemic can only be reduced through natural control or human intervention. "If nature suppresses the mosquito population, transmission will decline. Otherwise, it must be managed through human efforts, which city corporations are currently struggling to do effectively," he said.

Bashar emphasised the need to treat dengue as a local government issue, involving wards, upazila councils and district councils, rather than focusing solely on city

corporations.

He outlined three key strategies for the next phase of dengue control – breeding source management, hotspot management, and community engagement. "Focusing on these three key areas will be essential for the next phase of dengue control efforts," Bashar said.

PRAYER TIMING

NOVEMBER 1

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-55	12-45	4-00	5-30	7-15
JAMAAT 5-30	1-15	4-15	5-34	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

40 extrajudicial killings

FROM PAGE 3

to 17 in the same month last year.

A total of 45 such killings were reported in the past three months.

Odhikar also documented 7,979 incidents of political violence during the interim government's tenure.

According to the report, 281 people were killed in incidents of political violence during this period. Odhikar also recorded 242 attacks on journalists in 14 months, the highest – 34 – in September this year.

Meanwhile, rights organisation Manabadhikar Sanskriti Foundation (MSF) reported an increase in the number of unidentified bodies

recovered across the country and deaths in jail custody in October compared to the previous month.

"The recovery of unidentified bodies continues to increase, while incidents of mob violence remain persistent," said the report published yesterday.

"The lack of effective government measures has heightened fear and insecurity among citizens," it added.

According to the MSF, 44 incidents of mob beating occurred in October, compared to 43 in September.

Twelve people were killed and 50 others critically injured last month, while

25 injured victims were handed over to police. In September, 24 people were killed and 36 injured in such incidents.

It added that 66 unidentified bodies were recovered across the country in October, up from 52 in September.

The MSF also reported 13 deaths in jail custody in October, up from eight in September. Six were convicted prisoners and seven were on trial.

The organisation stressed the need for proper investigations into custodial deaths, accountability of authorities, and improved medical and security conditions in prisons to prevent such incidents.



মিলিটারি কলেজিয়েট স্কুল খুলনা (এমসিএসকে)

ক্যাডেট ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

শিক্ষাবর্ষ - ২০২৬



এমসিএসকে খুলনা শহর হতে ২৪ কিঃ মিঃ অদূরে প্রায় ১১০ একর জমির উপর বাংলাদেশ সেনাবাহিনী কর্তৃক স্থাপিত ও পরিচালিত জাতীয় শিক্ষা কার্যক্রম অনুযায়ী যশোর শিক্ষা বোর্ডের অধীনে প্রথম ইংরেজি ভাষার সর্বোচ্চ আনুমানিক শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান। ঐতিহ্যবাহী এই শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ক্যাডেট কলেজ সমূহের আদলে সামরিক কর্মকর্তাদের প্রত্যক্ষ তত্ত্বাবধানে ক্যাডেটদেরকে শারীরিকভাবে সুস্থ - সবল, নৈতিক গুণাবলী ও নেতৃত্বের প্রশিক্ষণের মাধ্যমে ভবিষ্যতের যোগ্য নাগরিক হিসেবে গড়ে তোলা হয়। পড়াশুনার পাশাপাশি নিয়মিত সহশিক্ষা কার্যক্রমে অংশগ্রহণ, লেখাখুলা ও সাতার প্রশিক্ষণ, ইংরেজিতে কথোপকথন দক্ষতা এবং জাতীয় ও আন্তর্জাতিক পর্যায়ে বিভিন্ন প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ সৃষ্টির মাধ্যমে একজন ক্যাডেটকে চৌকস ও আত্মনির্ভরশীল নাগরিক হিসেবে গড়ে তোলা হয়। উল্লেখ্য, এমসিএসকের ক্যাডেটদের সরাসরি আইএসএসবিতে অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ রয়েছে।

ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত তথ্য

পরীক্ষার কেন্দ্র	প্রশ্নি	পরীক্ষার তারিখ		মাস্ট্র এবং মনোবৈজ্ঞানিক পরীক্ষা	লিখিত পরীক্ষার বিষয়বস্তু, নম্বর ও সময়	যোগ্যতা	বয়স	উচ্চতা	ওজন
		লিখিত	মৌখিক						
গ্রন্থপত্রের উল্লেখ থাকবে	৭ম (বয়েজ ও গার্লস ক্যাডেট)	০৩ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬, শনিবার সকাল ১০০০-১২০০	এমসিএসকের ওয়েব সাইটে পরবর্তীতে জানানো হবে	সর্বমোট ২০০ নম্বর ১। বাংলা (৫০) ২। ইংরেজি (৫০) ৩। গণিত (৫০) ৪। সাধারণ জ্ঞান ও আইকিউ (৫০) সময় ২ ঘণ্টা	১। বাংলাদেশি নাগরিক হতে হবে। ২। ভর্তি প্রার্থী সমস্ত সর্বোচ্চ ১৩ বছর ০৬ মাসের মধ্যে। ৩। শারীরিক ও মানসিকভাবে সুস্থ হতে হবে।	০১/০২/২৬ তারিখে সর্বোচ্চ ১৩ বছর ০৬ মাস	সর্বনিম্ন ৫'-৮" /৫৬ ইঞ্চি (বালক ও বালিকা উভয়ের জন্য)	ইন্টার্নাল মেডিকেল চার্টে ভর্তিপ্রার্থী বয়স ও উচ্চতা অনুযায়ী	

সিলেবাস সিলেবাস www.mcsk.edu.bd ওয়েব সাইটে পাওয়া যাবে।

পরীক্ষার মাধ্যম বাংলা/ইংরেজি যেকোন একটি মাধ্যমে লিখিত পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণ করা যাবে।

দৃষ্টি শক্তি

দৃষ্টিমান চশমাবিহীন	চশমাসহ	মন্তব্য
এক চক্ষুতে ৬/১২ অন্য চক্ষুতে ৬/১৮	উভয় চক্ষুতে ৬/৬	পরীক্ষার পাওয়ার কোন চক্ষুতেই (-) 2D এর অধিক হবেনা। এ্যাসটিগম্যাটিজম এর ক্ষেত্রে Spherical Equivalent হিসাব করতে হবে।

অযোগ্যতা

১। গ্রন্থ নক নী (Gross Knock Knee), ফ্লাট ফুট (Flat Foot), কালার ব্লাইন্ড (Colour Blind), অতিরিক্ত ওজন (Over Weight) ও ভেরিকস ভেইন (Varicose vein)

২। অ্যাস্থমা (Asthma), মূদ্রা (Epilepsy), হৃদরোগ (Heart Disease), বাত (Arthritis), বাতজ্বর (Rheumatic Fever), যক্ষা (Tuberculosis), পুরাতন আমাশয় (Chronic Dysentery), হেপাটাইটিস (Hepatitis), ডিউডেনাল আলসার (Duodenal Ulcer), রাতকানা (Night Blindness), যে কোন প্রকার ডায়াবেটিস (Diabetes), হেমাফিলিয়া (Haemophilia), অতিমাত্রার অ্যালার্জি (Severe Allergy), শারীরিক অক্ষমতা (Physical Disability), মানসিক ও শারীরিক সমস্যা (Mental/Physical Problem), বয়স কম/বেশি (Over/Under Ages), অধিক মাত্রার আঞ্চলিক ভাষার সমস্যা (Severe Local Accent), শুল্কলাজনিত কারণে শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান থেকে বহিষ্কার (Withdrawal from any School on Discipline Ground), বিছানায় হুপাস করা ইত্যাদি রোগে আক্রান্ত।

৩। এমসিএসকেতে ভর্তি ও যোগদানের পরবর্তী সময়ে উপরিউক্ত রোগসহ অন্য যেকোন অসুখ বা হাউজে থাকার ক্ষেত্রে যদি অসুস্থক বিবেচিত হয় তবে উক্ত ক্যাডেটকে প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে ছাড়পত্র প্রদান করা হবে।

৪। লিখিত, মৌখিক, বাস্তবপূর্ণ ও মনোবৈজ্ঞানিক পরীক্ষার যে কোন একটিতে অকৃতকার্য হলে।

৫। বাস্তব পরীক্ষা পর্যন্ত কর্তৃক চিহ্নিত অন্যান্য কারণ।

অনলাইনে ভর্তি আবেদনের সময়সূচি

১লা নভেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখ সকাল ০৮০০ ঘটিকা থেকে ২৮ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখ রাত ১২০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত

www.mcsk.edu.bd ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে অনলাইনে আবেদন করতে পারবেন।

অনলাইনে আবেদন করার অত্যাবশ্যকীয় কাগজপত্র

১। পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ছবি (সাইজ-৩০০ x২০০ পিক্সেল এবং সর্বোচ্চ ১০০ কিলোবাইট - JPEG)।
২। পরীক্ষার্থীর ফান্ডার (সাইজ-৩০০ x২০০ পিক্সেল এবং সর্বোচ্চ ১০ কিলোবাইট - JPEG)।
৩। জন্ম নিবন্ধন সনদপত্র (সর্বোচ্চ ৪০০ কিলোবাইট - JPEG)।
৪। প্রধান শিক্ষক কর্তৃক ৬ষ্ঠ অধ্যায় সমমানের (যেকোনো মাধ্যমে) পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হওয়ার সাল এবং রোল নম্বর উল্লেখপূর্বক সনদপত্র। পরীক্ষার ফলাফল প্রকাশিত না হয়ে থাকলে প্রধান শিক্ষক কর্তৃক এই ফর্ম সনদ প্রদান করতে হবে যে, "(নাম..... রোল নং..... অত্র স্কুলে ৬ষ্ঠ শ্রেণি/সমমানের বার্ষিক পরীক্ষায় (বাংলা/ইংরেজি) মাধ্যম/ভাষা-এ অংশগ্রহণ করেছে এবং পরীক্ষায় কৃতকার্য হবেন)" (সর্বোচ্চ ৪০০ কিলোবাইট - JPEG)।

ভর্তি পরীক্ষার ফি প্রদানের পদ্ধতি

অনলাইনে আবেদনকারীকে সকল মোবাইল ব্যাংকিং, ইন্টারনেট ব্যাংকিং, ডেবিট ও ক্রেডিট কার্ড এবং ওয়ালেটের মাধ্যমে ২৫০০ (দুই হাজার পাঁচশত) টাকা ফি জমা দান নিশ্চিত করে অনলাইনের আবেদন ফরম নিবন্ধন সম্পন্ন করতে হবে। আবেদনপত্র ফি ২৫০০/- সঠিকভাবে জমা দেওয়ার পরেই আবেদনটি গৃহীত হবে। সঠিকভাবে আবেদন ফি জমা না হলে আবেদন ফরম পূরণ ও প্রবেশপত্র প্রিন্ট করা যাবে না।

অসম্পূর্ণ আবেদনপত্র বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

প্রবেশপত্র সংগ্রহ সফলভাবে আবেদন সম্পন্ন হওয়ার পর ২৯ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ থেকে ০২ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ পর্যন্ত প্রবেশপত্র প্রিন্ট/ডাউনলোড করতে পারবেন।

Tracking এবং প্রদত্ত **Mobile Number** এর মাধ্যমে **Submit** বাটনে ক্লিক করে প্রবেশপত্র (**Admit Card**) প্রিন্ট/ডাউনলোড করতে পারবেন।

E-booth Outlet এর মাধ্যমে আবেদন

প্রার্থী এবং অভিভাবকবৃন্দের সুবিধার্থে অনলাইনে আবেদন ফরম পূরণের জন্য এমসিএসকের ১ নং গেটে একটি " **E- booth Outlet** " থাকবে। " **E- booth Outlet** " - এ আবেদন করা, ফি জমা দেয়া এবং প্রবেশপত্র প্রিন্টের ব্যবস্থা থাকবে। " **E- booth Outlet** " ১৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখ হতে ২৮ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখ পর্যন্ত প্রতিদিন (বুধবার ও সরকারি ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত) সকাল ৮.৩০ ঘটিকা থেকে বিকাল ২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত খোলা থাকবে। বিশেষ দ্রষ্টব্য: অনিবার্য কারণবশত উল্লিখিত লিখিত পরীক্ষার তারিখ পুনর্নির্ধারিত হলে, সকলকে **SMS** এবং **Website** এর মাধ্যমে অবগত করা হবে।

ভর্তি সংক্রান্ত যোগাযোগ ০১৭৬৯৫৬৪০৮০, ০১৭৬৯৫৬৪০৮১। যোগাযোগের নম্বর ০৩ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ তারিখ পর্যন্ত (সরকারী ছুটির দিন ব্যতীত) সকাল ৮.৩০ ঘটিকা থেকে বিকাল ৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত সচল থাকবে।

Consultancy Opportunities



International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka is inviting applications from interested consultants ensuring effective research coordination, knowledge synthesis, and communication to link evidence with policy processes in Bangladesh and the wider region (ILO Co-Dhaka).

The Terms of Reference (ToR) can be reviewed from the **United Nations Global Market Place (UNGMP)** at <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/282638> Jaggaer ref: RFX_2909

The deadline for submission of proposal is **Monday, November 03, 2025**, by 04:30 PM (BST time).


Consultancy Opportunities



International Labour Organization (ILO) Dhaka is inviting applications from interested consultants to support the operationalization of the platform and ensure its effective implementation in coordination with the signatories and stakeholders (ILO-CO Dhaka).

The Terms of Reference (ToR) can be reviewed from the **United Nations Global Market Place (UNGMP)** at <https://www.ungm.org/Public/Notice/282635> Jaggaer ref: RFX_2912

The deadline for submission of proposal is **Monday, November 10, 2025**, by 04:30 PM (BST time).



সিগন্যাল বেস ওয়ার্কশপ

ঢাকা সেনানিবাস, ঢাকা-১২০৬

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। সিগন্যাল বেস ওয়ার্কশপের তত্ত্বাবধানে বাংলাদেশ সেনাবাহিনীতে ব্যবহৃত বিভিন্ন সিগন্যাল/ওয়ারেন্সেস সরঞ্জামাদি মেরামত করা হবে। আগ্রহী প্রকৃত মেরামতকারী সংস্থার নিকট হতে বিভিন্ন এইচএফ, ডিএইচএফ এবং ইউএইচএফ রেডিও সেট মেরামতের নিমিত্তে স্থানীয় কর্তৃপক্ষের বরাবরে দেশীয় মুদ্রায় সীলমোহের যুক্ত উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাবে। মেরামতব্যব সরঞ্জামাদির তালিকা সহ বিস্তারিত বিবরণ দরপত্রে উল্লেখ করা হবে।

২। আগামী ১০ নভেম্বর ২০২৫ ইং তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে (০৭৩০ ঘটিকা হতে ১৪০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত) ৭৫০.০০ (সাতশত পঞ্চাশ মাত্র) টাকা (অফেরৎ যোগ্য) প্রদান পূর্বক প্রয়োজনীয় বিনির্দেশ/শর্তাবলী সহ দরপত্রের সিডিউল অত্র অফিস হতে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। উক্ত সিডিউলের শর্তাবলী মোতাবেক আগামী ১৯ নভেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখ সকাল ১১০০ ঘটিকার সময় অত্র অফিসে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্তবে দরপত্র ফেলতে হবে এবং এদিন ১১৩০ ঘটিকার দরপত্র সাতাশগণের উপস্থিতিতে দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলা হবে।

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/ ৬৯৮
GD-2293

কমান্ডার
সিগন্যাল বেস ওয়ার্কশপ
ঢাকা সেনানিবাস



United Nations Development Programme

জাতিসংঘ উন্নয়ন কর্মসূচী

Procurement Notice: Invitation to Bid

Quantum Reference number: UNDP-BGD-00997

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bangladesh is seeking bids from interested firms for the following requirement:

Contracting a firm for construction work, Replacement of Bamboo Pillars with RCC Pillars for the GCA project, UNDP.

The deadline for submission of Bids is 4:30 p.m. (Bangladesh Local Time), November 18, 2025.

Quotation may be submitted on or before the deadline indicated by UNDP in the **procurement notice**. For learning more about ITB, pre-bid meeting link & submission documents through the quantum platform, please visit the link below: https://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_negotiation.cfm?nego_id=40047

For any technical queries, please write to us at bd.procurement@undp.org, mentioning the reference number UNDP-BGD-00997 in the email subject line, by **16 November 2025**.

The ceasefire in Gaza has eased the trauma of Israel's air strikes and blockade but a shortage of cash has left Palestinians unable to spend what little money they have without falling victim to wartime profiteers. Israel launched the war after Hamas-led fighters attacked southern Israel in October 2023, killing 1,200 people.



Hundreds killed in Tanzania vote protests: opposition

The United Nations said credible reports indicated at least 10 people were killed in protests in three cities, the first public estimate of any fatalities by an international

Protesters have taken to the streets since Wednesday, angered by the exclusion of President Samia Suluhu Hassan's two biggest challengers from the race and what they described as widespread repression.

Police have imposed an overnight curfew in the commercial capital Dar es Salaam over the past two nights after government offices and other buildings were set ablaze. Internet access has been disrupted since Wednesday. Military and police patrolled the streets of Dar es Salaam yesterday.

King Charles strips brother Andrew of titles, his mansion

under mounting pressure in recent years over his behaviour and his ties to late sex offender Epstein.

Stop strikes on alleged drug boats in Caribbean

UN rights chief asks US

"These attacks -- and their mounting human cost -- are unacceptable," he said in a statement.

Burnt stations hinder probes

Some pieces of evidence, such as

When asked, AHM Sahadat Hossain, assistant inspector general at the PHQ, said, "Various units have already been provided with some new vehicles to strengthen patrol and crime prevention activities."

"If any major incident is reported, we still need to send two to three patrol teams at the scene," added the officer.

Israel launches more strikes on Gaza Strip

Meanwhile, an Israeli army drone attack targeted a motorcycle in the town

Britain on Thursday announced that it will provide £4 million (\$5 million) towards international efforts to clear an estimated 7,500 tonnes of unexploded munitions in Gaza that is

The funding for the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) will help "surge in" experts to clear land mines, cluster bombs and munitions dropped during the war. Removing the unexploded ordnance to allow more aid into Gaza is "a vital component" of the recently US brokered ceasefire agreement, the UK foreign ministry said.



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
অধিনায়ক (অ্যাডিশনাল ডিআইজি) এর কার্যালয়
৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন
যোলশহর, চট্টগ্রাম

তারিখ: ৩০/১০/২০২৫ খ্রি।

স্মারক নং-এপিবি(৯)/কিউএম-২০২৫-২০২৬/১০৪৪৩

এছাড়া "The Public Procurement Act-2006 and Regulation-2008" (সংশোধিত-২০০৯, ২০১৬ এবং ২০১৮) এর বিধান মোতাবেক ২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থবছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টারের (অক্টোবর/২০২৫ হতে ডিসেম্বর/২০২৫ পর্যন্ত) ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম অফিসার/ফোর্সের ভোজ্যতেল (সয়াবিন) সরবরাহ কাজের টিকাদার নিয়োগের জন্য প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী ব্যবসায়ী/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট থেকে শর্ত সাপেক্ষে সীলমোহরকৃত নামে প্রতিযোগিতামূলক উদ্ধৃত পুনঃ দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

০১.	মুদ্রাশাল/বিভাগ	দ্বিরাষ্ট্র মুদ্রাশাল/পুলিশ বিভাগ।
০২.	সহায়	বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।
০৩.	দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	অধিনায়ক (অ্যাডিশনাল ডিআইজি), ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, যোলশহর, চট্টগ্রাম।
০৪.	কিরণে দরপত্র আহ্বান	২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থ বছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টারের ভোজ্যতেল (সয়াবিন) সরবরাহ।
০৫.	দরপত্র সূত্র নম্বর	স্মারক নং-এপিবি(৯)/কিউএম-২০২৫-২০২৬/১০৪৪৩
০৬.	তারিখ	৩০/১০/২০২৫খ্রি।
কাজের বিবরণঃ		
০৭.	দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি	উদ্ধৃত পুনঃ দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (OTM)।
অর্থের উৎসঃ		
০৮.	বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	রাজস্ব খাত।
তথ্যাদিঃ		
০৯.	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি পরিচালনা প্রকল্পের শেষ তারিখ	০১/১১/২০২৫খ্রি তারিখের মধ্যে।
১০.	দরপত্র তফসিলি বিজ্ঞপ্তির শেষ তারিখ ও সময়।	১১/১১/২০২৫খ্রি পর্যন্ত (প্রতিটি কার্যদিবস অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে মধ্যে)।
১১.	দরপত্র প্রমাণ প্রদানের তারিখ ও সময়	১২/১১/২০২৫খ্রি ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১২.	দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	১২/১১/২০২৫খ্রি ১২:০০ ঘটিকা।
১৩.	টিফিনের সভার তারিখ	১৩/১১/২০২৫খ্রি পর্যন্ত ১১:০০ ঘটিকা।
অফিসের নাম ও ঠিকানাঃ		
১৪.	দরপত্র ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল বিরূপকারী অফিস	১। ডিআইজি (প্রশাসন), এপিবিএন হেডকোয়ার্টার, বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ, উত্তরা, ঢাকার কার্যালয়। ২। অধিনায়ক (অ্যাডিশনাল ডিআইজি) এর কার্যালয়, ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, যোলশহর, চট্টগ্রাম। ৩। পুলিশ সুপার এর কার্যালয়, চট্টগ্রাম জেলা।
	দরপত্র প্রার্থীকারী অফিস	অধিনায়ক (অ্যাডিশনাল ডিআইজি) এর কার্যালয়, ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, যোলশহর, চট্টগ্রাম।
	দরপত্র খোলার স্থান	অধিনায়ক (অ্যাডিশনাল ডিআইজি) এর কার্যালয়, ৯ আর্মড পুলিশ ব্যাটালিয়ন, যোলশহর, চট্টগ্রাম।
দরপত্র সম্পর্কিত তথ্যঃ		
১৫.	দরপত্র যোগ্যতা	"The Public Procurement Act-2006 and Regulation-2008" এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট সংশোধিত বিধি মোতাবেক দরপত্র দাতাকে দরপত্র দাখিলের সময় নিম্নবর্ণিত কাগজপত্রাদি দরপত্রের সাথে অবশ্যই দাখিল করতে হবে (১) হাদদনামা বৈধ ট্রাউ লাইসেন্স (২) টিআইএন নম্বর সফলিত হাদদনামা আদায়ের সনদ (৩) হাদদনামা ডাউ রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ (৪) ন্যায়িকত্ব সনদ/জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র (৫) ব্যবসায় মালিকানা সনদ (৬) যে কোন তফসিলিভুক্ত কারিগর বাহক হতে হাদদনের আর্থিক স্বচ্ছতা সনদ (৭) কোনো তফসিলিভুক্ত নয় নথি দিও প্রতিষ্ঠানের পাত্রে স্বাক্ষরিত অঙ্গীকারনামা (৮) অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী/যোগ্যতা যা যা টেন্ডার ডকুমেন্ট/সিডিউল-এ উল্লেখ থাকবে। দরপত্র জয়ের জন্য প্রতিষ্ঠানের পাত্রে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর করাবরে আবেদন করতে হবে।
১৬.	মাল্যমানের বিবরণঃ	
	লট নং	আইটেম
	০১.	২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থবছরের ২য় কোয়ার্টারের ভোজ্যতেল (সয়াবিন) সরবরাহ।
		পরিমাণ
		দরপত্র সিডিউলের মূল্য (আফরশযোগ্য)
		দরপত্র প্রদানাত (আইটেমনি)
		কাজের সমাপ্তি
দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারীর নামঃ		
১৭.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার নাম	
১৮.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার পদবী	
১৯.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার ঠিকানা	
২০.	দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্মকর্তার যোগাযোগের মাধ্যম	
২১.	বিশেষ শর্তাবলীঃ	
ক) নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের পর কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।		
খ) কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।		
গ) সরকারী বছরে কারণে নির্দিষ্ট তারিখে দরপত্র খোলা না হয় তাহলে পরবর্তী কার্যদিবসে একই স্থানে ও সময়ে দরপত্র উদ্ধৃত করা হবে। দরপত্রের অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী অপরিবর্তীত থাকবে।		
ঘ) "দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ এবং রেগুলেশন-২০০৮ (সংশোধিত-২০০৯, ২০১৬ ও ২০১৮)" এর বিধি মোতাবেক সনদ শর্তাবলী কার্যকর হবে।		

স্বাক্ষরিত/-

(মোহাম্মদ সামসুল ইসলাম আকন্দ)

বিপি-৭০৫০২৮৬৮২

সুপারিন্টেন্ডার অফিসিয়ার অফিসিয়ার ডিআইজি

অধিনায়ক (ভারপ্রাপ্ত)

৯ এপিবিএন, যোলশহর, চট্টগ্রাম

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GD-2291

Alarming decline in SME lending

Govt must take immediate steps to reverse it

The dip in bank lending to SMEs to a four-year low is another concerning indicator of the current state of the economy. During FY2024-25, banks disbursed Tk 2.05 lakh crore in loans to SMEs, a nine percent drop year-on-year, according to data from Bangladesh Bank. This marks a reversal of the upward trend in SME lending seen since 2021, following the slowdown caused by the Covid pandemic in 2020.

Unfortunately, SMEs have had little respite since the pandemic, as the war in Ukraine, political unrest, and last year's mass uprising have acted as one external shock after another. Given that small businesses are particularly vulnerable to such disruptions, these successive shocks have taken a serious toll, with nearly one-quarter of SMEs shutting down since the pandemic.

SMEs are often described as the backbone of the industrial sector. Bangladesh has around 78 lakh cottage, micro, small, and medium enterprises, which contribute about one-quarter of the country's GDP and provide employment to over 2.4 crore people across the country. With SMEs struggling to sustain operations—and many being forced to close—the job market has undoubtedly worsened, and economic growth has taken a significant hit. Investment is also likely to suffer, as reflected in the World Bank's recently lowered growth forecast for Bangladesh.

In addition to external shocks, the fragility of nearly a dozen banks has also constrained credit availability for small and micro businesses. Some 10-12 banks, including several shariah-based ones that were once very active in SME financing, are no longer participating in this sector. Many banks struggling with capital shortages and rising bad loans have become increasingly risk-averse. With private sector confidence remaining low for a prolonged period, and ongoing uncertainty delaying new business plans and expansion, it is difficult to see a reversal of this trend without effective policy interventions.

Unfortunately, despite the finance adviser acknowledging back in early July that funding challenges are preventing SMEs from realising their vast potential, the interim government has so far failed to turn things around, as evidenced by recent data. This is particularly disappointing, given that the adviser himself also admitted that the country's economic growth still largely depends on the SME sector, which generates the highest employment. Given this reality, we must ask: why has the government not prioritised this matter more urgently? Is it unaware of the struggles of millions of jobseekers and the state of the overall economy at large?

To revive SME lending, the government must act on several fronts at once. It must take steps to ensure that banks feel secure in lending to SMEs. And refinancing windows with lower interest rates should be made readily available to banks and non-bank lenders specifically for SME loans. Most importantly, restoring confidence in the banking sector through stronger oversight and transparent restructuring of weak banks is essential—as without financial sector stability, no SME support programme will achieve its intended impact.

Fix the chaos around Mayor Hanif Flyover

Flawed design, poor management keep traffic snarled

It is disappointing that people still have to endure severe traffic gridlock at one of Dhaka's key entry points—Jatrabari—despite improved inter-district communication which significantly reduced travel time. Reportedly, every day, vehicles from around 40 districts enter Dhaka through the Mayor Hanif Flyover and the roads beneath. Since the opening of the Padma Bridge, traffic on this route has further increased. However, due to poor design, weak management, and widespread violation of traffic rules, severe congestion occurs both on the flyover and the roads below. Sadly, the time saved on the highway is thus lost at the city's entrance.

The Mayor Hanif Flyover, stretching 11.5 km from Shonir Akhra to Chankharpul, was built to speed up entry into the capital. Instead, it has become one of Dhaka's worst traffic choke points. Commuters often spend hours stuck in gridlock here. According to one driver, it takes just three and a half hours to bring his bus from Khulna to Dhaka, but hours more to cross the Gulistan toll plaza. Another driver, who travels daily from Narayanganj, said it can take over an hour just to descend from the flyover at Gulistan, with the toll counter adding further delay. Beneath the structure, the situation is equally dire. The road connecting Jatrabari and Sayedabad is riddled with potholes, regularly waterlogged during the rainy season, and covered in dust during dry months. The situation has worsened, as the Sayedabad Bus Terminal, meant to hold around 800 buses, now accommodates nearly 3,000, with illegal transport counters and encroachments spilling onto the streets.

Urban planners have long warned that flyovers are not a sustainable solution to Dhaka's traffic woes, yet the authorities keep building them without proper planning. Many, including the Mayor Hanif Flyover, now experience chronic congestion. A recent study by Brac University's Centre for Inclusive Architecture and Urbanism also found that Dhaka's 10 flyovers, covering 105 km, have 207 acres of poorly used space underneath, causing major public health, environmental, and economic losses of about Tk 21,000 crore annually, a concerning finding. The authorities must therefore act urgently to fix this situation. Since the flyover itself offers little scope for improvement, the focus should shift to repairing and maintaining the roads below to ease pressure from above. Relocating transport counters from roadside areas to inside the Sayedabad Terminal could help. At the same time, traffic monitoring and enforcement must be strengthened. Most importantly, better planning and coordination among the responsible agencies are essential to reduce the daily suffering of commuters entering Dhaka.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

United States tests first thermonuclear bomb

On this day in 1952 on an atoll of the Marshall Islands, Edward Teller and other American scientists tested the first thermonuclear bomb, its power resulting from an uncontrolled, self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction.

How reducing dwell time can improve our port's efficiency



Ahamedul Karim Chowdhury is adjunct faculty at Bangladesh Maritime University, and former head of inland container depot at Kamalapur and Pangoon Inland Container Terminal under Chittagong Port Authority.

AHAMEDUL KARIM CHOWDHURY

In 2003, I had the privilege of spending 55 days in Japan under a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)-sponsored Group Training Course on Container Terminal Development in Tokyo and Yokohama. We visited several container terminals and logistics hubs, including the Nippon Express Bonded Warehouse, where I first encountered Japan's remarkable Hozei Area System. It was an eye-opener. Importers could immediately move cargo from full-container-load (FCL) units—where all the goods belong to one sender—into bonded warehouses under customs supervision. Inside those warehouses, they could unpack, repack, or store goods duty-free until clearance. This system freed up containers almost instantly and kept Japan's ports moving.

That single mechanism—reducing container dwell time—was at the heart of Japan's logistics miracle. Through this, ports achieved faster vessel turnaround, higher yard capacity, and far lower storage costs, proving that efficient container flow is the most powerful multiplier of port productivity and trade competitiveness.

Bangladesh, however, faces the opposite reality. At Chittagong Port, our nation's busiest maritime gateway, FCL imports sit idle for an average of more than 11 days before clearance. Each of those days comes at a painful cost: demurrage to shipping lines, port storage fees, and detention charges that drain foreign exchange. Industry estimates suggest importers lose billions of dollars annually, which could otherwise be fuelling growth, investment, and jobs.

The issue is not one of capacity but of efficiency. Terminals are designed for throughput, not storage. Yet in Bangladesh, containers linger for weeks, turning our terminals into parking lots. Yard space that should hold transit containers instead holds uncleared imports. As a result, vessels queue offshore, berth schedules slip,

and shipping lines grow increasingly frustrated with the port's sluggish turnaround. Their vessels lose time and money waiting for berths, their containers remain trapped beyond free days, and their operational schedules fall into disarray. Many carriers now consider Bangladesh



FILE PHOTO: RAJIB RATHAN

Terminal cranes stand idle not for lack of cargo but for lack of space inside Chittagong Port, as most imports still clear inside the port, clogging its arteries.

a “slow port”—a costly label that discourages service expansion and investment. Every day of delay reverberates through freight rates and supply chains, hurting importers, exporters, and ultimately consumers.

Reducing dwell time, therefore, should be a national economic strategy. Every day saved increases a port's effective capacity without adding a single square metre of land. If the average dwell time at Chittagong Port could be reduced from 11 days to 4, my estimation shows that total container handling capacity could rise by more than 60 percent, instantly easing congestion and accelerating trade.

Japan's Hozei system offers a tested

blueprint. Private operators such as Nippon Express and Kintetsu World Express manage bonded warehouses licensed by customs, where containers move out of terminals within hours of unloading. Goods can stay duty-free for up to three years, and importers pay taxes only upon release. Customs retains full digital oversight—control without congestion.

Other nations have embraced similar reforms with remarkable success. Indonesia's Bonded Logistics Centers (PLB) cut port dwell time from 6.4 to 2.9 days within two years. India's 2019 bonded warehousing framework transformed throughput at Jawaharlal Nehru Port. Vietnam and Malaysia have integrated

statements. Bonded warehouse development must become a cornerstone policy priority, supported by the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and customs, not resisted by them. These agencies must modernise their supervision tools to enable off-dock clearance, rather than monopolising clearance within the port fence.

To drive this transformation, the Chief Adviser's Office, Bangladesh Investment Development Authority, and the Public-Private Partnership Authority should jointly champion bonded-logistics zones around Chattogram, Dhaka, and Mongla. NGOs such as Business Initiative Leading Development (BULLD) and the private sector can partner under PPP models to develop modern warehouses integrated with digital customs interfaces. Such collaboration would free up container yards, speed up vessel operations, and dramatically improve Bangladesh's trade ranking.

Port management efficiency is not just about equipment or infrastructure—it is about flow. When containers sit for weeks, the entire system slows, regardless of investment. That is why dwell time is the single most accurate metric of port health. The shorter it is, the stronger the economy.

Bangladesh cannot attract world-class terminal operators or shipping alliances unless it ensures smooth cargo flow. Long idling containers are a nightmare for carriers; they lose box rotations, revenue, and schedule integrity. The current system imposes invisible penalties that damage our reputation. To restore confidence, Chittagong Port must transition from a storage-based model to a movement-based one—where bonded warehouses take the pressure off the terminals and customs supervises through data, not detention.

It is time for policymakers, think tanks, and business leaders to unite. Research organisations and think tanks must elevate this issue to the top of the reform agenda. The Chief Adviser's Office should ensure that NBR and customs align with national interests—not institutional inertia.

Bangladesh stands at a crossroads. If we act now, embracing bonded logistics as Japan did with its Hozei system, we can unlock our ports and transform our economy. But if we delay, our growth will remain trapped behind port gates. The choice is ours—to remain boxed in bureaucracy or to free the boxes and free the economy.

Rare earth elements are the new drivers of global power



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SYED RAIYAN AMIR

The recent back-and-forth between Washington and Beijing over rare earth minerals looks technical on the surface, but it points to a deeper shift in global leverage. The 17 metallic elements—vital for everything from electric motors to precision guidance systems—have quietly become strategic tools. Whoever controls them gains not only industrial advantage but diplomatic and economic influence.

For years China has quietly built a full rare-earth chain—from mining to magnet production—while others lagged. By 2024, it processed most of the roughly 44 million metric tonnes produced globally. But behind China's dominance lies a knot of politics. Myanmar's output comes from Kachin and Shan, where conflict economies feed militias and shadow contractors. In Africa, Namibia, Malawi and South Africa hold reserves but struggle with weak oversight, foreign rent capture and local anger over pollution. These states aren't passive; their politics decide whether resources become leverage or instability.

While rare earths' magnetic and conductive traits make them indispensable in green technologies and advanced weaponry, their extraction and refinement are dirty, technically hard and capital intensive. That creates an asymmetry: countries with refining capacity can weaponise access; those with only raw ore become junior partners, often trading

sovereignty for investment. The control of strategic materials translates directly into bargaining power.

The politics of supply shape alliances, industrial strategy and regulatory choices across Asia, Europe and Africa. The modern push for net-zero and digitisation makes demand for rare earths structural. That creates incentives for states to pursue long-term industrial policy, secure recycling streams and sponsor substitution research. Yet democracies and centralised economies do this differently. China's state-directed approach achieved rapid vertical integration; liberal economies, wary of environmental backlash and private-sector caution, are still catching up. The result is strategic divergence in how societies accept risk, finance infrastructure and permit environmental disruption.

Economic statecraft such as export limits and subsidies now act as political signals, reshaping competitors' industrial plans, defence timelines, and negotiation strategies. On a very different note, China's refining dominance brings pollution backlash and strategic pushback through stockpiling, diversification, and recycling. Transitions open space for recyclers, substitutes, and new refiners, especially for developing states seeking to escape raw-export dependence.

The control of rare earths is not

just about mines; it is about the whole value chain—geological surveying, separation chemistry, magnet fabrication, component design and end-of-life recovery. Whoever controls these nodes captures most of the value and most of the leverage. That explains why some Western firms still send semi-processed ores to Chinese plants: the cost calculus favours outsourcing until domestic capability is rebuilt. But rebuilding is expensive, slow and politically contested, especially where public opinion opposes mining's environmental footprint. That creates a paradox: the green transition that relies on rare earths can become politically toxic if communities face pollution and displacement.

Therefore, while states are funding recycling research, subsidising domestic refineries, and investing in partner countries' governance, they are also testing new trade rules and looking for substitutes. None of these moves is a silver bullet. Recycling reduces dependence but cannot meet immediate demand; substitutes can be resource- or performance-limited. Meanwhile, donor-driven governance reforms in resource-exporting countries often run up against local power structures that benefit from opacity.

A sober conclusion follows: rare earths sharpen rather than simplify geopolitics. They create new interdependencies that mix economics, security and ecology. The most dangerous scenario is not merely a single supplier cutting off exports, but a slow, systemic sclerosis where strategic mistrust multiplies transaction costs, fragments supply chains and makes technological diffusion uneven. Conversely, the best outcome requires pragmatic cooperation: shared standards for environmental performance,

transparent contracts, joint recycling ventures, and investments that build local capacity rather than hollow it out.

It is worth mentioning that, global supply lines for rare earths run from Chinese inland hubs to coastal ports through the South China Sea and Strait of Malacca, and from overland corridors hauling ore from Myanmar's Kachin fields into Yunnan. They also include corridors from Mongolia and Central Asia to Chinese refineries, maritime routes carrying African consignments to Chinese and European ports, and transpacific lanes to Japan, South Korea and the United States. Each of these arteries is being securitised. The South China Sea and Malacca straits have seen stepped-up naval patrols and freedom-of-navigation assertions as states protect chokepoints; Myanmar's routes are militarised by junta forces and armed groups that control extraction; Chinese state firms and coast guard units fortify export nodes; Western navies and the US are expanding escorts and stockpiles; and private security. They are also investing in ports and securing diplomatic-military ties in the African corridors, and using export-licensing and sanctions layer to legalise restraints on shipments.

In short, rare earths have become a litmus test for 21st-century power—an issue where industrial policy, domestic politics in resource states, environmental limits and international strategy intersect. They reveal a new fact of statecraft: influence now arises from mastering invisible materials as much as from controlling territory. Which states adapt, by building clean, resilient supply chains and by addressing political and environmental grievances where ores are mined, will determine how advantage shifts in the decades ahead.

The de-escalation deficit in our campuses



BLOWIN' IN THE WIND

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SHAMSAD MORTUZA

Our campuses are becoming increasingly unrestful, with a decline in civic patience and a growing culture of direct action. The episodic student rage is becoming more frequent than ever. While many are sparked by genuine causes which merit urgent attention, some are aimed at making territorial claims, scoring political mileage or asserting supremacy. Such tensions on our campuses have become a barometer of national stress. The timing and nature of the unrest and escalation have the potential to spread beyond the classroom and influence our national politics and mood, which is already strained by inflation, unemployment and factional rivalry, especially ahead of the general election. So, the question is: do the stakeholders of our academic institutions realise that the stake is higher?

Take, for instance, the recent clash between City University (CiU) and Daffodil International University (DIU). The entire CiU campus in Savar was vandalised, and buses were set alight. Students from the neighbouring university raided the campus, reducing it to ruins. Even when a representative from the DIU visited to assess the damage, he appeared genuinely apologetic, promising that his top management had decided to compensate for the losses. However, based on subsequent statements and actions from DIU, it seemed that the institution had reneged on its earlier promise while portraying its students as the primary victims. They are emphasising the mistreatment of students caught by CiU

authorities during the vandalism. The incident had a trivial start. A student of CiU was accused of spitting at the motorcycle of a student belonging to DIU. An altercation broke out, and later a gang of CiU students ransacked a privately owned property that was inhabited by DIU students. The proctor of DIU tried to calm the situation. He, too, came under the abuse of CiU students. The, hundreds of angry DIU students gathered and attacked the CiU campus in the middle of the night. The disproportionate response is both story and history (Latin root of history—historia—implying both story and history).

Now, let us use this incident as a case study for the escalation of violent activities on campuses since the uprising last year. The impact of mass mobilisations to press home maximalist demands (removals, expulsions, and burn/ban threats) has become the order. Gone is the system of institutional incremental grievance processes. Most of our universities have failed to establish clear, trusted, time-bound complaint pipelines, leading disputes to spill into the street or someone else's space. The rapid jump from minor scuffles to arson or blockade demonstrates basic disregard for democratic norms.

The tension in the physical space gets amplified on social media, where an echo chamber creates outrage cycles. Ideological disagreements can easily be transformed into an all-out campaign for a "ban." The DIU–CiU case shows a lack of inter-campus coordination, enabling tit-for-tat escalations.

The situation was reportedly worsened further by the false ego created by the ranking myth—one university is touted as better than the other, which made the spat a test of egos. While universities should indulge in battles of wits, we are back to the primitive law of the jungle and search for the alpha male. We have seen similar clashes between Dhaka College and Dhaka City College, who act like Capulets and Montagues, two feuding families

communication team, and student welfare and its counselling units. This is a standard de-escalation ladder where dialogue and shuttle diplomacy with vetted student representatives can be used before imposing sanctions, only after due process. There should be monitoring of social media discourses as well as preservation of CCTV footage for verification and investigation. Tracking risk indicators (rumour spikes,

has caused the general mood of distrust in academia. Universities must create rapid review panels comprising students, faculty, and legal participants with 10–14 day clocks for social media disputes. The culture of apology, teach-ins, or formal inquiry must be established to avoid mob penalties. Inter-campus pacts can be strengthened through joint hotlines, non-aggression agreements, and mutual patrol alerts; shared protocols for hostel incidents and crowd dispersion.

Students at their prime can get involved in activities that can affect their entire life or family. Often, peer pressure can turn a student into a perpetrator. Therefore, there should be restorative justice options. We need to replace the "ban/expel" reflex with mediated dialogues or community projects as punishments when feasible. Expulsion should be reserved for repeat or violent offenders. Teachers and staff also need to feel safe on campuses.

The success of the de-escalation process will lie in transparency. Each case of calibrated penalties (from warnings to suspension) tied to specific acts (arson, assault, vandalism, intimidation) must be in the public domain to deter "collective punishment." The suspicion of ad hoc bargaining and cash dealing has already hampered our academic image.

Most importantly, the academic code of conduct must be introduced to all incoming staff and students. This may include mandatory short modules on non-violent action, digital citizenship, and grievance pathways for freshers and student leaders. What is now required are even-handed disciplinary actions to set a national precedent.

Universities must stop acting like wrestling rings and start behaving like conduits for creative and critical minds. Unless we de-escalate the tension, our campuses will forget the original aim and scope of a university: knowledge creation and dissemination, academic and cultural leadership, innovation and community engagement. Universities are designed to build the nation, not break it.



FILE PHOTO: AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH

Wreckage of buses torched during clashes between students of Daffodil International University and City University over a trivial matter early this week.

featured by Shakespeare in Romeo and Juliet. The prevailing climate of polarisation has not helped the situation either.

Universities must come up with their own playbook to de-escalate the situation. This must begin with the formation of a 24/7 incident command comprising student leaders, the proctor office, the

doxxing posts, "ban/remove" hashtags) can help us prepare to prevent street action.

The existing harassment policies and code of conduct need to be reviewed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to separate protected speech from misconduct such as harassment, incitement, and doxxing. The tendency to prolong the cases

Legal reform is key to protecting intellectual property rights of Indigenous culture

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SAKHAWAT SAJJAT SEJAN and RAKIBA NABI

Our country is at a complicated juncture in integrating its thriving Indigenous heritage with its subsisting legal instruments for intellectual property. In spite of a cultural terrain of over 45 Indigenous communities, the legal apparatus stays deeply noncompliant with the intergenerational, collective and spiritual nature of the Indigenous knowledge systems.

Conventional intellectual property (IP) statutes are highly influenced by the Western ideas of temporal protection, commercial utility and individual authorship. It somehow fails to acknowledge or respect the sacred values, oral transmission and the communal custodianship that demarcates Indigenous intangible cultural heritage. The complications are not merely an abstract instance; they manoeuvre real-world struggles. Ethno-botanical knowledge is obtained to pursue pharmaceutical interests without sharing the benefits, traditional designs are mishandled without consent, and sacred traditions and rituals are commercialised. The situation is worsened by fragmented policies and weak enforcement, and continuous disregard for Indigenous customary law in national legal framework. Without proper systematic reforms, Bangladesh is about to lose Indigenous knowledge systems developed through

centuries.

The essence of this issue rests in the epistemic disparity between Euro-American legal understanding and Indigenous knowledge systems. While IP law prefers creativity, innovation, permanence and profit-oriented schemes, Indigenous cultures are ever-changing, communally shared and deeply connected to ecological and spiritual interdependence. Copyright protection ends at a certain time, while the traditional cultural knowledge survives an evolving journey. This ontological discord makes regular IP regimes foundationally insufficient.

Moreover, Bangladesh has introduced reforms in IP laws in 2023 that include the copyright and patent act, but unfortunately failed to close the gap between traditional knowledge systems and the conventional IP regime. The Copyright Act, 2023, recognises folklore, but it falls short in acknowledging Indigenous communities as the right holders or custodians. The Patent Act, 2023, decrees revelation of the sources regarding traditional knowledge but does not introduce a process for acquiring consent or sharing benefits. The promising geographical indications are dominated by commercial benefits without Indigenous participation. At its core, these legal frameworks treat Indigenous heritage as economic artefacts instead of living systems that deserve cultural sovereignty.

To acknowledge these pitfalls, activists and scholars are continuously advocating for the introduction of a sui generis(unique) legal system that surpasses the barriers of current IP regimes. Such a framework should be established by assessing Indigenous world views, ensuring community governance, institutionalising collective rights and perpetual ownership. Comparative study from Peru, India, Bolivia, and Panama

showcases the implementability of such mechanisms in the current IP regime. The Law No. 27811 of Peru underpins sharing benefits, oral transmission of culture and community consent as the pillars of legal recognition. Whereas, the Indian Traditional Knowledge Digital Library deliver a defensive system against biopiracy. This might be a good example for Bangladesh, except for the facts of community exclusion and state control. The development of a sui generis system in Bangladesh must begin with the legal recognition of Indigenous peoples as separate legal entities rather than as ethnic minorities under the Constitution of Bangladesh. Bangladesh should also incorporate Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) while engaging with Indigenous heritage. It must also ensure that communities have the authority and right to monitor the use, access and dissemination of their knowledge. Indigenous councils such as Bangladesh Resource Center for Indigenous Knowledge (BARCIK) will maintain a national registry concerning traditional knowledge, which can propose defending documentation by adhering to and honouring ethical protocols and cultural secrecy, respectively.

The key foundation for any transmitting legal system is to recognise the Indigenous customary law. The communities of Chittagong Hill Tracts and other regions follow ornate systems of knowledge governance by defining who may perform, access and transmit specific traditions. These unwritten laws are comprehensive legal orders in their own way. Avoiding them or not accepting Indigenous traditions into law not only violates Indigenous integrity but also accelerates cultural misappropriation. The concept of cultural sovereignty is asserted in international law documents such as the UN

Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and is fundamental to the recognition of Indigenous cultural heritage. Bangladesh should endeavour to adopt it in its legal and constitutional culture. Though Bangladesh abstained from voting in favour of the adoption of UNDRIP, a non-binding treaty, that does not legally prevent us from following or implementing the principles of the declaration. Also, cultural sovereignty as a core idea of racial freedom underpins the rights of Indigenous peoples to monitor their rituals, languages, symbols and epistemologies. Without its formalisation, legal safeguarding becomes extractive instead of emancipatory and participatory governance remains ornamental.

Some comprehensive legal changes should be introduced along with institutional systems to ensure Indigenous participation. The foundation of a national body on cultural heritage and Indigenous knowledge, consisting of legal experts, cultural practitioners and Indigenous representatives, would give monitoring oversight, ensure ethical compliance in sharing the benefits, and regulate heritage registries. This authority shall keep liaison with several ministries to ensure the Indigenous concerns are included in the environmental, cultural, technological and educational policies along with decentralised governance. Customary bodies and local authorities shall be acknowledged as valid authorities in decisions, including traditional expressions and knowledge. Cultural protocols and community consent must guide documentation efforts, whether it is commercial, governmental or academic. Sacred knowledge of the Indigenous communities must not be exposed or recorded without overt community approval. Reformation of the current legal system

alone will be insufficient without empowering the grassroots communities. Indigenous communities should be made aware of their rights via culture-sensitive legal literacy programmes in their own languages. Women, who are the guardians of ritual knowledge, culture and tradition, can be the focus of these initiatives. National curricula must be revised to incorporate Indigenous languages, histories and cosmologies. This will help foster intergenerational cultural pride and transmission. Technological drivers, such as digital databases, offer new scopes of heritage protection. However, all of these mechanisms should be established through participation and consultation with the communities represented. Also, these measures should conform to the "cultural firewalls" constraining access based on Indigenous governance rules. Technology should ramp up Indigenous agency, not substitute it. Bangladesh's engagement with UNESCO, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity should be revitalised. Regional cooperation through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) could lead to generate shared strategies for protecting cross-border heritage and countering cultural homogenisation.

The safeguarding of Indigenous intangible cultural heritage in Bangladesh is not a matter of conserving folkloric traditions for posterity; rather, it is a question to be resolved through cultural justice. It asks for a legal revolution that goes above integrationist approaches of legal frameworks and asserts Indigenous communities as the rightful custodians and stewards of their cultural legacies. Through these, the state can craft a trail toward an equitable, inclusive and resilient cultural future.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**

1 Rough guesses

6 Sofa's kin

11 Yellowish tan

12 Juan's wife

13 Last letter

14 Shoppers' aids

15 Hole number

16 Challenging words

18 Yale rooter

19 Sleuth Spade

20 Quite cold

21 Splinter group

23 Ennui indicators
- 25 Cart puller

27 Maui souvenir

28 Pesky swarm

30 Soft mineral

33 Cotillion girl

34 Drake's music

36 Frilly wrap

37 Like most résumés

39 Wing

40 Terrific

41 Be of use

43 Pilgrimage site

44 Spiny plants

45 Fire proof
- 46 Patriot Allen

DOWN

1 Defendant of 1925

2 Tex-Mex treat

3 Tree with triangular nuts

4 Entreat

5 Thick cuts

6 It has a point

7 Director Reitman

8 Atlan ic resort

9 Top stories

10 Mean-spirited
- 17 Sunbeam

22 Airport screening org.

24 Drenched

26 Soprano Teresa

28 Horror and mystery, for two

29 Decline

31 Nabokov novel

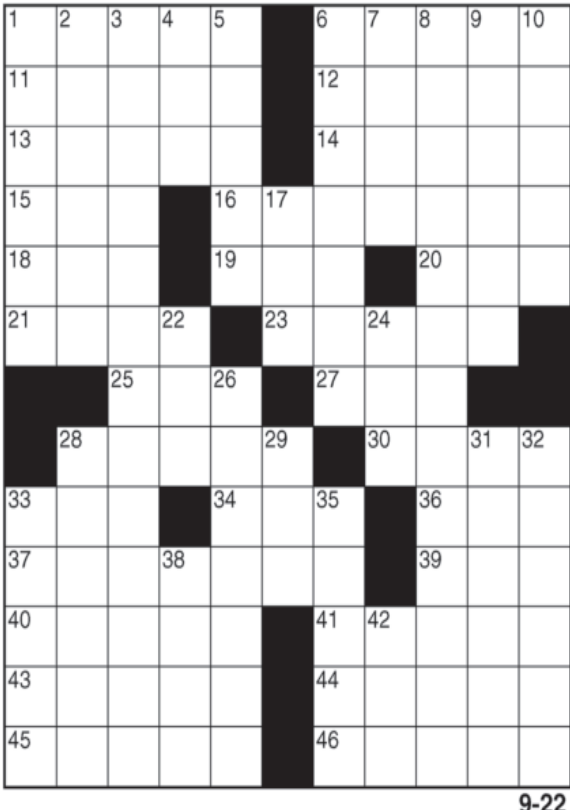
32 Radio show format

33 Church tenet

35 Dove's desire

38 Speed

42 Brewery sight



THURSDAY'S ANSWERS



WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO
dsopinion@gmail.com.

SUAVE SUDIP

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

The ever-charming Sudip Biswas Deep first won hearts with his powerful performance in the globally acclaimed series *Invisible Stories*. From the stage to the small and big screens, he has explored every medium with passion and depth. Now, he's ready to surprise audiences once again with his Chorki debut, the flash fiction romantic comedy *Perfect Wife*.

Talking about the project, Sudip smiled, "It's my third time working with Gias Uddin Selim. Earlier, I worked with him in Hoichoi's *Paanch Phoron* Season 2 back in 2020, in the episode *Three Kisses*. After that, we did a tele-fiction together, and now comes *Perfect Wife*. Working with Selim *bhai* has always been a joy. He's such a friendly person and never brings any director's ego to the set, it's so easy and comfortable to work with him."

When asked about his character, Sudip shared, "In this film, I play Pritom. His father is very rich and was once a lawyer. Pritom is the spoiled son of this wealthy man, someone who went through with a love marriage but still wastes his time playing games. His wife, who's a lawyer, ends up taking charge of everything after his father realises his son is good for nothing. That's where their love-hate dynamic begins. Then one day, a friend of Pritom's visits from the USA with his wife, and that's when things start getting really interesting. You'll see parallels in both couples' relationships, which are full of humour, tension, and deep emotion."

These days, Sudip is a familiar face on television and YouTube, where he often appears in romantic comedies. When asked if he ever feels creatively restricted by the small screen, he paused for a moment before sharing his thoughts. "Right now, there are three major mediums for actors – film, OTT, and dramas. In dramas, only a few genres tend to work, like romcoms, pure romance, family drama, or comedy. The moment you try something different, the problems start," he said with a thoughtful smile.

Although many of his recent projects are romantic comedies, Sudip has still managed to shine through unique and memorable characters in productions like *Muazzin*, *Closeup Didhahin Kache Ashar Golpo 2022*, *Fagun Theke Fagun*, *Sales Girl*, and *Noro Sundor*. Each of these roles carried something different, even within a familiar romantic setup.

Playing the role of Muazzin was one of the most challenging experiences for Sudip, as it pushed him as an actor. "For this character, I was really scared at first," he admitted softly. "I knew that if I couldn't portray him properly, it might create controversy. My co-artists, the director, and my assistant director helped me immensely to understand the body language and emotions. The character is very innocent and deeply spiritual. When people watch him, I want them to feel a sense of peace. Creating that feeling was the hardest part for me."

In *Fagun Theke Fagun*, directed by Amitabh Reza Chowdhury, Sudip stepped into a completely different world again, this time as a local barber. "When Amitabh *bhai* first told me about the role, he asked if I would be able to do it. I said yes right away and decided to take it seriously," Sudip recalled with a smile. "I went to a salon to observe how barbers work. I asked them about their tools, where they get their

brushes and scissors, and I even recorded videos of them cutting hair. For three days straight, I kept holding the scissors in my hand just to get used to them, to understand how to move them naturally. I wanted to embody that flexibility and authenticity completely."

After his powerful performance in the critically acclaimed HBO series *Invisible Stories*, I asked Sudip why we haven't seen him in more international projects since then. He thought for a moment before replying, "The HBO series came out in early 2020. At that time, I was in talks for two or three other projects. I was even locked to work again with the director of *Invisible Stories* for another project. There were also Malaysian and Indian projects lined up for me," he added. "But then, on March 28, the lockdown was imposed across the country. I ended up losing almost two years. After that, I lost the momentum. I just couldn't continue working the way I had planned. Interestingly, Pooja Bhatt had seen my performance in *Invisible Stories* and wanted to collaborate with me. But unfortunately, that too didn't work out."

After *Moyurakkhi*, Sudip hasn't been seen much on the silver screen either. Reflecting on that period, he shared, "It's really unfortunate that after *Moyurakkhi*, I worked on an anthology film with Dighi, and our part was titled *Priyo Prakton*. But due to internal clashes between producers, the film was released on Bongo instead of in theatres. I also had a few projects lined up, but after August 5, because of the situation in our country, most of the work has been put on hold."

When asked if he ever thought about directing one day, he smiled and said, "I think filmmaking is one of the hardest crafts to master. Being a director takes a completely different kind of strength and patience. Right now, I'm in love with acting. So, for now, I just want to focus on that and give it my all."



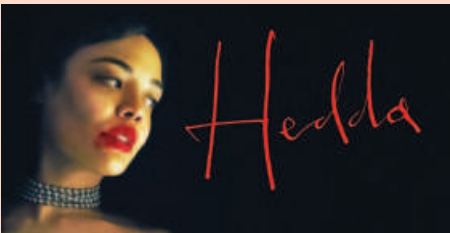
PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
The Witcher



Prime Video
Hedda



HBO Max
IT: Welcome to Derry



Paramount+
Mayor of Kingstown



Hoichoi
Nishir Daak



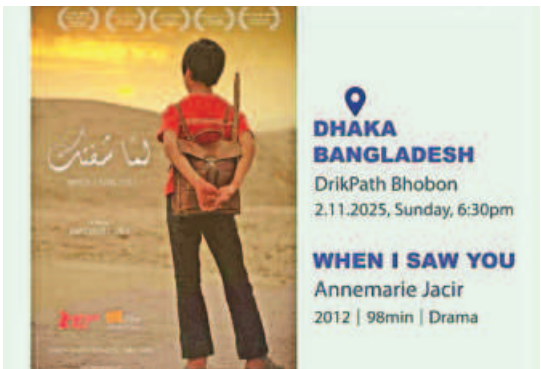
OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA



'Cartoons for Equality'
Oct 31-Nov 7 | 3 pm- 8 pm
National Art Gallery, BSA



'Ekanto Golap'
Nov 1 | 5 pm-9 pm
Anushor Ground Floor, Mirpur 1



'Palestine Cinema Days'
Nov 2 | 6:30 pm onwards
Drikpath Bhubon, Panthapath

THE ASSET

Netflix's Danish thriller *The Asset* presents a compelling examination of manipulation and moral compromise within Denmark's Security and Intelligence Service (PET). Over six gripping episodes, the series chronicles Tea (Clara Dessau), a police trainee transformed into an undercover agent. *The Asset* is a remarkable instance of spy work. All the six episodes of *The Asset* premiered on October 27 and is now trending in Netflix Bangladesh's Top 10.



WHAT'S PLAYING

'OPALITE' by Taylor Swift

Released on October 3, 2025, as part of *The Life of a Showgirl*, *Opalite* sees Taylor Swift return to her glossy pop-rock roots, blending pulsating drums, glistening synths, and electric guitar riffs with her signature storytelling. Co-written and produced with Max Martin and Shellback, the track uses the man-made gemstone opalite as a metaphor for self-forged happiness and healing after



heartbreak – an ode to creating joy rather than waiting for it. Lyrically referencing renewal and newfound love, the song has resonated deeply with listeners, debuting at No 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 and amassing over 160 million Spotify streams. Its empowering message makes *Opalite* one of Swift's most magnetic pop anthems in years.

STYLE STATEMENT

ANNE HATHAWAY

Anne Hathaway lit up the WWD Honors 2025 red carpet in a bold scarlet gown that perfectly married classic glamour with playful charm. The tiered chiffon dress, tied delicately at the shoulders, flowed with effortless movement. The rich crimson hue radiated confidence and power, while the airy layers softened the look, creating an ethereal, almost romantic silhouette. With sleek pulled-back hair, dewy skin, and a touch of coral lip, Hathaway let the colour do the talking. This was Anne in her element – elegant and unafraid to command attention.



GD-2292



TIGERS HUMBLLED

Having come into the series against West Indies on the back of four series wins on the trot, the Tigers could not even salvage some pride in the final T20I in Chattogram yesterday. The Tigers' recurring theme of failing to perform as a unit continued, with opener Tanzid Tamim once again standing out through a crucial knock while others failed to provide meaningful support. The West Indies, however, were different in this regard, as Roston Chase and Ackeem Auguste struck fifties to guide the visitors past the modest 152-run target, rendering Tanzid's 62-ball 89 in vain. Fittingly, the West Indies completed a clean sweep with a convincing five-wicket win in the final game -- their first whitewash away from home in a three-match series.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



Busy schedule ahead for Tigresses

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh women's cricket team face a packed schedule ahead, beginning with a tour of India in December under the ICC Women's Future Tours Programme (FTP), Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) officials have confirmed.

"We have been asked by the host board to be prepared for departure on either December 14 or 15. The itinerary is yet to be finalised, but as per the FTP calendar, the tour will feature three ODIs and three T20Is," a BCB official told The Daily Star.

"Preparation for the India tour will begin very soon," a player said.

According to BCB officials, the new women's FTP cycle will also commence with Bangladesh's tour of India, and the ODI leg of the series will mark the start of the ICC Women's ODI Championship campaign for the Tigresses.

Following the India tour, Bangladesh will shift focus to the Women's T20 World Cup Qualifiers, scheduled for January-February. Sri Lanka are then expected to tour Bangladesh in April next year.

As per the FTP, the Tigresses will also tour Australia and New Zealand in October and December 2026, respectively, making for a hectic and crucial year ahead for the national side.

ASHEFAQ-UL-ALAM

It took two new batters, a reshuffling of the batting line-up, a career-best T20I score from Tanzid Tamim, and Taskin Ahmed hitting a six without walking into his stumps for Bangladesh to finally cross the 150-run mark against the West Indies in their third attempt in the three-match T20I series in Chattogram on Friday.

The hosts crossed the 150-run threshold only just, getting bundled out for 151 in 20 overs -- a total the visitors chased down in 16.5 overs to take the series 3-0.

In the previous two matches, both of which ended in defeats, the Tigers made 149 all out and 135-8 respectively.

To change their batting fortunes, the management dropped middle-order batters Tawhid Hridoy and Shamim

SCORES IN BRIEF

Bangladesh: 151 all out in 20 overs (Tanzid 89; Shepher 3-36, Holder 2-32)

West Indies: 152 for 5 in 16.5 overs (Chase 50, Auguste 50; Rishad 3-43)

Result: West Indies won by five wickets, take series 3-0

Player of the match: Roston Chase

Player of the series: Romario Shepherd

“When they batted, there was dew. They were lucky to bat second, you can’t control and judge before the game.... Before the series we wanted a tough time and they gave us a tough time.”

Bangladesh captain LITTON DAS

Hossain, sent down opener Saif Hassan to No.4, and brought in Parvez Hossain Emon to open the innings and Nurul Hasan Sohan to bolster the middle-order.

But even after such wholesale changes, Bangladesh found themselves at nine down for 144 with just four deliveries left in the innings and No.11 Taskin on strike.

Thankfully for the hosts, Taskin dispatched a short delivery from Romario Shepherd -- who had completed a hattrick the same over -- for a six, and that too without knocking the stumps with his boot as he had done in the series opener.

Tanzid, who was dropped twice, was the lone warrior for Bangladesh, making 89 off 62 balls -- nearly 59 percent of the total. He had hit a half-century in the second match as well -- 61 off 48 -- but found no support

from the others in that game as well.

Depending on one batter to rescue the side is in no way a sustainable model for a team to do well; more batters have to put their hands up and execute their roles.

Bangladesh came into the West Indies series having won four T20I series on the trot, creating a sense that the Tigers have found the right balance in the format.

But even during this period, Bangladesh's batting frailties were getting exposed. The side was getting rescued by individual performances like Tanzid's and by the bowling unit, which has displayed adaptability and depth in recent times.

With around three months left before the ICC T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka, and just one T20I series on the horizon -- against Ireland at home this month -- there is simply no time left to try out other options in the batting department.

The management might bring in players like Soumya Sarkar and Mohammad Saifuddin, who are part of the white-ball setup but not in the T20 squad right now, but other than that, the majority of the squad that is facing the Caribbean side will most likely represent Bangladesh in the mega event.

If nothing else, the West Indies series showed that one big innings is not enough to put up big totals. For a team like Bangladesh, every batter has to play their role efficiently. If not, sporadic success is the best the Tigers can hope for in the long run.

Test team to start training on Nov 8

SPORTS REPORTER FROM CTG

Bangladesh's Test players are set to begin preparations for the upcoming two-match series against Ireland on November 8 in Sylhet, confirmed Bangladesh Cricket Board's cricket operations in charge, Shahriar Nafees.

"The dedicated Test players will take part in the second round of the National Cricket League (NCL), which starts tomorrow [Saturday]. They will then get two rest days before travelling to Sylhet on November 7," Nafees told The Daily Star. He added that members of the white-ball squad, who are also part of the Test setup, will join the group on the same day.

"The white-ball players will have a few rest days after the West Indies series, as they have been playing continuous cricket over the past few months," he added.

It was learnt that among the Test specialists who were not part of the three-match T20I series against West Indies, left-arm spinner Taijul Islam will not feature for Rajshahi Division in their second-round NCL match against Khulna Division in Mirpur on Saturday.

The two-match Test series against Ireland will begin on November 11 in Sylhet, while the second Test will start on November 19 in Mirpur.

The announcement of the squad and the new Test captain is expected to follow a board of directors' meeting scheduled for November 3.

Arsenal look to extend stay at top

REUTERS

Arsenal will look to extend their remarkable run of form when they travel to Burnley tomorrow but manager Mikel Arteta.

The Gunners have been in impressive form, becoming the first English top-flight team to play at least six times in a month without conceding a goal.

Their flawless October included Premier League wins over West Ham United, Fulham and Crystal Palace, alongside triumphs against Olympiacos and Atletico Madrid in the Champions League, and a League Cup win against Brighton.

Arteta's men currently sit atop the Premier League standings with 22 points from nine matches, four clear of second-placed Bournemouth.

"Yes (keep the foot on the gas) and maintain the level of urgency," Arteta said. "The concentration, the focus, the ambition we are showing in every game, and every game brings different challenges."

"Sometimes we have to be very patient and some of the time we have to have a different approach."

"The game against Burnley is going to be really tough. They are extremely well coached and Scott (Parker) has done really well with the club."

In-form Brazil international Gabriel Martinelli and centre-back William Saliba are out for the trip to Burnley. Martinelli limped off the pitch following Arsenal's 1-0 Premier League victory over Crystal Palace on Sunday, while Frenchman Saliba was substituted at halftime at the Emirates. Martin Odegaard, Kai Havertz and Noni Madueke also remain sidelined.



Hattrick champion Noshin wants to compete against men

ANISUR RAHMAN

Having secured a hattrick of titles at the National Women's Chess Championship, Woman's FIDE Master (WFM) Noshin Anjum has announced her intention to compete in the Open section from the next edition, aiming to challenge male opponents rather than continuing in the women's championship.

Noshin became only the second woman in Bangladesh to achieve this rare feat after the legendary Rani Hamid, who holds the record of winning the title six consecutive times since the inaugural edition in 1979 and achieved another hattrick between 2006 and 2008.

On Friday, Noshin needed only a draw against Warsia Khusbu to secure her third straight title. Khusbu accepted the draw offer after just six moves, allowing the 21-year-old to finish with 8.5 points from 11 rounds.

"It's a great feeling to finally relax after winning the hattrick title," Noshin told The Daily Star. "I will now try to play in the Open section so that I don't have to participate in the women's championship from the next edition. I narrowly missed qualifying for the Open section in the last two editions after losing in the final round of the National B Championship."

After winning her first national title in 2022, Noshin had declared her ambition



to become a Grandmaster by competing in the Open section. She is close to earning the WIM title, having already secured two WIM norms. She now needs one more norm and a 2200 rating to complete the requirements.

This year, Noshin set her sights on completing the hattrick but faced an early setback when she lost to Nusrat Jahan Alo in the third round. It was her mother's encouragement that motivated her to continue. "My mother told me that

Alo might lose points in the remaining rounds, so I should keep fighting," said Noshin. Regaining focus, she took the solo lead after the seventh round and never looked back, achieving the rare feat.

"I won't take long to reach the level of players like Liza and Shirin, but becoming the country's first Woman Grandmaster (WGM) will take time because it's quite difficult to improve rating points nowadays," said Noshin, who studies in the Department of Food and Nutrition at the University of Dhaka.

Noshin also noted that the standard of the national women's championship has risen significantly in recent years. "When I first played in the national championship in 2016, there were only a few experienced players. Now there are many young and competitive participants, which makes the tournament much tougher. Anyone can beat anyone," she said.

The young champion appealed for sponsorship support to pursue her dream of becoming Bangladesh's first WGM. "I don't have enough support to play overseas tournaments regularly. My single mother looks after me, and I try to help her financially as a contractual player for Bangladesh Navy. Without individual sponsors, it's difficult to compete abroad and earn the rating points I need to reach my goal," Noshin added.

India savours 'greatest day' in WOMEN'S CRICKET

AFP, Mumbai

India's stunning World Cup semifinal win over Australia was described Friday as the greatest day in the history of women's cricket in the country, with Jemimah Rodrigues hailed for her "innings of a lifetime".

Batter Rodrigues hit an unbeaten 127 as the hosts chased down a record 339 in Mumbai on Thursday to oust reigning seven-time champions Australia in Mumbai.

India face South Africa in the final at the same venue on Sunday as both teams attempt to win the one-day tournament for the first time in its 52-year history.

"This is the greatest day in the history of Indian women's cricket," veteran commentator Harsha Bhogle said on X.

Virat Kohli, the star batsman from the men's team, called Rodrigues's display the "standout performance", while former men's captain Sunil Gavaskar called the victory "exhilarating" and "absolutely thrilling", especially because they were clear underdogs.

"You can say that the Indian women's team has definitely come of age," Gavaskar said.

India lost three successive matches in the league phase before clinching the last



semifinal spot, in contrast to Australia's unbeaten run into the final four.

India were in trouble at 59-2 in reply to Australia's massive 338 when Rodrigues turned the game on its head in a 167-run third-wicket partnership with skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who hit 89.

Rodrigues, a middle-order batter who had a modest start in the tournament and was dropped in the league game against England, was promoted to number three and delivered when it mattered.

"When you are left and then come back into the team the pressure is way too high... today's innings was a marvellous innings," added Gavaskar.

That was echoed by former national cricketer Mohammad Kaif, who called it an "innings of a lifetime".



Man sent to jail for assaulting woman on Dhaka bus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The man seen in a recently-viral video assaulting a woman on a Dhaka bus – reportedly over the clothes she was wearing – has been arrested and subsequently sent to jail.

A team from Rab-4 detained Md Nizam Uddin, 45, from the Mohammadpur Bus Stand area on Thursday night, said Major Md Abrar Foyzal Sadi, operations officer at Rab-4.

“The suspect is a bus [driver’s] helper of Ramzan Paribahan,” Sadi told The Daily Star.

Rab later handed Nizam over to Mohammadpur Police Station, where he was shown arrested in a case filed by the victim yesterday.

Kazi Rafiq, officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station, said the arrestee was produced before a court which sent him to jail.

The assault of the young woman sparked outrage after the footage went viral on social media. The video shows the man arguing with the

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1



Mourners bid farewell to 15-year-old Palestinian Yamen Hamed, killed by Israeli forces, during his funeral in Silwad, near Ramallah in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Israel launches more strikes on Gaza Strip

Three killed; Palestinians fear a return to full-scale bombing

AGENCIES

Israeli warplanes and artillery continued to strike Khan Younis in southern Gaza yesterday, killing three people despite Israel’s claim that it rejoined the ceasefire two days earlier.

Gaza residents say they fear a return to full-scale bombing as they struggle to find food and shelter amid the supposed truce.

One Palestinian was killed by Israeli shelling and another was shot dead by Israeli forces, WAFA said yesterday. A third Palestinian died of wounds sustained from previous Israeli shelling.

The military also bombed the Shujayea and Tuffah neighbourhoods of eastern Gaza City.

Various foreign ministers will meet on Monday to discuss the Gaza ceasefire and next steps there, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said yesterday, adding that Turkey was concerned over whether the ceasefire will continue.

Palestinian group Hamas handed over two bodies of deceased Israeli hostages later on Thursday. Hamas agreed to hand over the remains of all 28 dead hostages in exchange for 360 Palestinians killed in the war. Up to Thursday, it had handed over 15 bodies.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Govt to blame for ongoing political crisis

Says Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday blamed the interim government for the country’s ongoing political crisis, accusing it of deepening divisions instead of resolving them.

“The crisis we are facing today has been created by the present interim government,” he said at a programme organised by Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Rob) to mark its 53rd founding anniversary at the Jatiya Press Club.

Later, at a programme organised by Ganashonghati

In 1971, you opposed our Liberation War. Please don’t oppose the election the people want.



Andolan, Fakhrul urged the government to end the debate over the July National Charter and its implementation recommendations and focus on holding parliamentary elections.

“What has happened, has happened. Please resolve these issues so that together we can move towards the elections, and by solving these problems, work for the welfare of the people. Move forward on that path,” he said.

At the JSD-Rob programme, Fakhrul, without naming any party, urged those demanding a referendum to stop their agitation and refrain from creating chaos.

“In the past, you opposed the independence of Pakistan’s provinces, and in 1971, you opposed our Liberation War. Please don’t oppose the election the people want,” he said.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

CHALLENGES IN POLICING 4 FINAL PART

Burnt stations hinder probes



Khilgaon Police Station

FILE PHOTO



Jatrabari Police Station

FILE PHOTO

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Following the filing of a rape case on April 9 last year, Adabor police launched an investigation. Forensic and DNA tests were conducted at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

But the probe suffered a major setback when the test reports, along with 76 case documents, evidence relating to around 100 cases and registration books, were destroyed in a massive fire started amid protests on August 5 during the mass uprising.

“The destruction of evidence delayed the submission of charge sheet in the case. The delay allowed the accused to secure bail from court, much to the frustration of the victim and the investigators,” said Sub-Inspector Rakibul Islam of Adabor Police

Station.

“We are trying to gather all related documents, but it’s proving to be a difficult task,” he added.

Not only Adabor, 12 other stations under Dhaka Metropolitan Police were set alight between August 5 and 6 last year, resulting in the destruction of 1,200 case documents and 1,100 pieces of evidence, including forensic and DNA reports.

These stations are located in Mirpur, Mohammadpur, Badda, Jatrabari, Khilgaon, Paltan, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Shyampur, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Bhatara, Wari, and Khilkhet areas.

When asked, SN Nazrul Islam, additional commissioner at the DMP headquarters, said, “We have managed to collect copies of almost all case documents lost in the fires. But we are facing problems in retrieving the pieces of evidence.”

“If police fail to recover a piece of evidence in a case, the investigation team has to file a general diary and then submit its copy to the court concerned,” he added.

The police faced intense public backlash for its role in the violent crackdown including indiscriminate firing and excessive use of force against protesters during the uprising. Many police officers have been accused of suppressing dissent through arbitrary arrests, torture, extrajudicial killings, and enforced disappearance during the tenure of the Awami League government.

REELING FROM DAMAGES

Among the affected stations, the worst-hit was Jatrabari, where a devastating fire not only destroyed vehicles, case records, and evidence but also claimed the lives of at least six law enforcers.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Hornless rhino roamed Canadian Arctic 23m yrs ago



REUTERS

About 23 million years ago, a species of rhinoceros – similar in size to the modern Indian rhino but lacking a horn – made its home in the challenging environment of the Canadian High Arctic, which at the time was warmer than it is now but still experienced snow and months of wintertime darkness.

Fossils of the polar rhino, named *Epiatheracerium itililik*, were found on Devon Island, a landscape underlain by permafrost, in Canada’s Arctic archipelago. With about 75 percent of its skeleton intact, scientists gained a good understanding of the animal. Its remains were discovered in Haughton Crater, one of Earth’s northernmost impact craters, about 14 miles (23 km) wide.

The polar rhino lived early in the Miocene epoch, a time of diversification of many mammalian groups. Until this discovery, no rhinoceros was known to have lived in such a high latitude. The fossil site is in Nunavut, Canada’s northernmost territory.



As part of this year’s Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony, Buddhist devotees carry robes they had woven overnight to be formally presented to the monks, marking the end of their three-month rains retreat, known as Vassa. The ceremony, which began on Thursday, included a series of religious rituals, with monks offering prayers for global peace and harmony. The photo was taken yesterday at Rajbana Vihara in Rangamati.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

BESTINET’S AMINUL Malaysia cops looking into extradition request

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Royal Malaysia Police Headquarters, in collaboration with the authorities of Bangladesh, is handling Dhaka’s request to extradite Bestinet founder Aminul Islam Abdul Nor and his associate, Ruhul Amin, both linked to money laundering activities.

Bestinet is an IT company that operates the centralised management system used by the Malaysian government to process the entry of foreign workers into the country.

Aminul is a Bangladesh-born Malaysian citizen, while Ruhul is the owner of Dhaka-based recruitment firm Catharsis International.

Malaysian Home Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail said the matter is being managed on a government-to-government (G2G) as well as a police-to-police (P2P) basis, predicated on bilateral cooperation,



TAXIDERMY

Preserving life through art, science

How Jewel Rana's dedication brings rare specimens back to existence



SHAHIDUL ISLAM NIRAB

Inside the Jamuna Bridge Regional Museum in Tangail's Bhupur, a child was staring at a stuffed owl, mesmerised, as he wondered if it was a real bird.

"Ma, is it real? Why doesn't it move?" the child asked his mother.

"It is real, but it's not alive anymore. It's been preserved, much like a mummy you read about in books, remember?" his mother replied.

"But it looks so ... alive...", the child murmured, still in awe.

At this museum, a unique world of quiet unfolds, as if frozen in time, with numerous specimens of wildlife, including some species that have already become extinct in the country, preserved through the art of taxidermy.

These stuffed animals are no wax figurines or artificial replicas, but real creatures, long deceased. Yet, they appear strikingly vivid, as if they still harbour life within them.

Jewel Rana, the museum's curator and one of Bangladesh's very few trained taxidermists, is the man behind nearly every preserved specimen at the museum.

WHAT IS TAXIDERMY?

The term "Taxidermy" is derived from the Greek words taxis (arrangement) and derma (skin), referring to the scientific process of preserving an animal's skin and stuffing it to resemble a lifelike figure.

According to Jewel, taxidermy is as much an art as it is a science. It requires anatomical knowledge, surgical precision, and a deep artistic sense.

"Every animal has its own language of posture and presence. It takes an artist's eyes and a scientist's knowledge of anatomy to sculpt an animal's face based on its actual

skull, preserve its body, replicate the expression in their eyes, and align each feather or strand of hair meticulously," he said.

Talking to this correspondent, Jewel explained that the process of preserving an animal specimen through taxidermy begins with identifying the animal's cause of death and analysing its age, anatomy, and bone structure.

"The skin is then carefully removed, disinfected, and preserved using salt and chemicals. A body frame is built using cotton, foam, resin, glue, clay,

instruments to work on each project.

"I always begin work after taking a rabies vaccine and using proper disinfectants. Once the animal's skin is removed, the remaining carcass is buried to prevent any environmental harm," he added.

BUILDING A BIODIVERSITY ARCHIVE FROM SCRATCH

After Jewel Rana joined the museum in 2010 as an assistant curator, he embarked on his journey as a

preserve both a nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), the largest species of Asian antelope that has become extinct in Bangladesh since the 1940s, and a saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*) through taxidermy.

The nilgai, believed to have crossed the Indian border and entered Bangladesh in 2019, was found dead in Panchagarh. It took Jewel four days and around Tk 1 lakh to complete the preservation of this rare specimen.

In a country where the practice remains

sunbird, and tailorbird. The nests are collected after falling from trees, either naturally or during storms, and are then treated with chemicals to prevent decay.

Working with such fragile specimens requires extreme caution. Jewel often posts a handwritten sign near his workstation that reads: "If you pull, the rope breaks; if you don't pull, the thread holds," – in a poetic reminder of how delicate the job really is.

Delicate items like butterfly wings and insect exoskeletons are handled with tweezers, under magnifying lenses, and worked on with scientific precision.

"Even a sneeze can ruin hours of work," Jewel noted.

The museum also displays preserved bird nests, insects, animal skeletons, cultural artefacts, and over 800 photographs related to biodiversity, as well as those depicting the history of the construction of the Jamuna Bridge.

Jewel is affiliated with the Bangladesh Biodiversity Conservation Federation, which consists of over 200 environment-focused volunteer groups across the country. This network plays a vital role in locating and transporting dead animals – often victims of road accidents, electrocution, or natural disasters.

Thanks to these volunteers, the museum has collected and preserved an array of rare species, including jungle cats, fishing cats, pangolins, numerous snakes, owls, and migratory birds. The volunteers often transport the animals themselves or send word to the museum, ensuring timely preservation.

UNEXPLORED REALM WITH POSSIBILITIES

Despite the importance of taxidermy in research and education, there are only three formally trained taxidermists in Bangladesh at present.

In contrast, countries like Germany and the Netherlands hold international taxidermy competitions, offer university courses, and have stores selling stuffed specimens.

Some people even preserve their deceased pets as mementos – a practice that may seem somewhat odd here but reflects a broader cultural acceptance of taxidermy abroad.

Jewel believes taxidermy deserves institutional recognition in Bangladesh. "If we can develop training programmes and offer professional support, this could become a new vocational field," he opined.

"These preserved animals are not mere showpieces. They serve as educational tools for students, researchers, and nature lovers. Many of the specimens here are used in school demonstrations, college-level zoology classes, and biodiversity research work," Jewel noted.

Jewel frequently collaborates with the Forest Department, the National Zoo, and academic institutions.

He is also mentoring young students, especially those from zoology departments of different universities, to carry forward this knowledge.

Jewel aspires to establish a full-fledged taxidermy training centre in Bangladesh someday.

"Each animal preserved through taxidermy tells a story – not just of death, but of life, loss, and learning. Through a taxidermist's hands, the dead seem to speak again – educating the living about the beauty and fragility of the natural world," he said.



PHOTO: STAR

and colouring agents, in such a way that it replicates the animal's natural features and posture as closely as possible," he said.

For larger animals, the process can cost anywhere from Tk 80,000 to Tk 1 lakh.

In each taxidermy project, extreme precision, care, and attention to detail are necessary. Jewel uses an array of tools including pliers, brushes, hammers, scalpels, and other surgical

taxidermist under the guidance of then curator Ananda Kumar Das.

In 2013, he completed a short course in taxidermy at Dhaka University's Department of Zoology, where he trained under experts including Prof Bidhan Chandra Das, Dr Shawkat Imam Khan, and Md Delowar Hossain. A year later, he was promoted to curator of the museum.

Jewel is credited as the first person in the country to successfully

largely unknown and undervalued, Jewel has single-handedly preserved over 500 animal specimens for educational and research purposes at the museum.

The collection includes 138 species of birds, nine amphibians, 33 mammals, 32 reptiles, and 275 freshwater and marine fish species.

Among the museum's most delicate items are the 66 specimens of bird nests, including those of munia,

HEARING THE TIGER

Survival lessons from the Sundarbans

The tiger is a *kancha kheko jontu* (a raw flesh-eating animal). Therefore, if deer, wild boar, jungle fowl, monkeys, or other birds and animals sense the presence of a tiger in any mal (forest creek), they all leave that place immediately. When the other wildlife and birds leave, the regular forest sounds also disappear. The rhythm of sound is actually disrupted there. That silence makes us understand that a tiger is around, and we should find a different place to work in the forest.

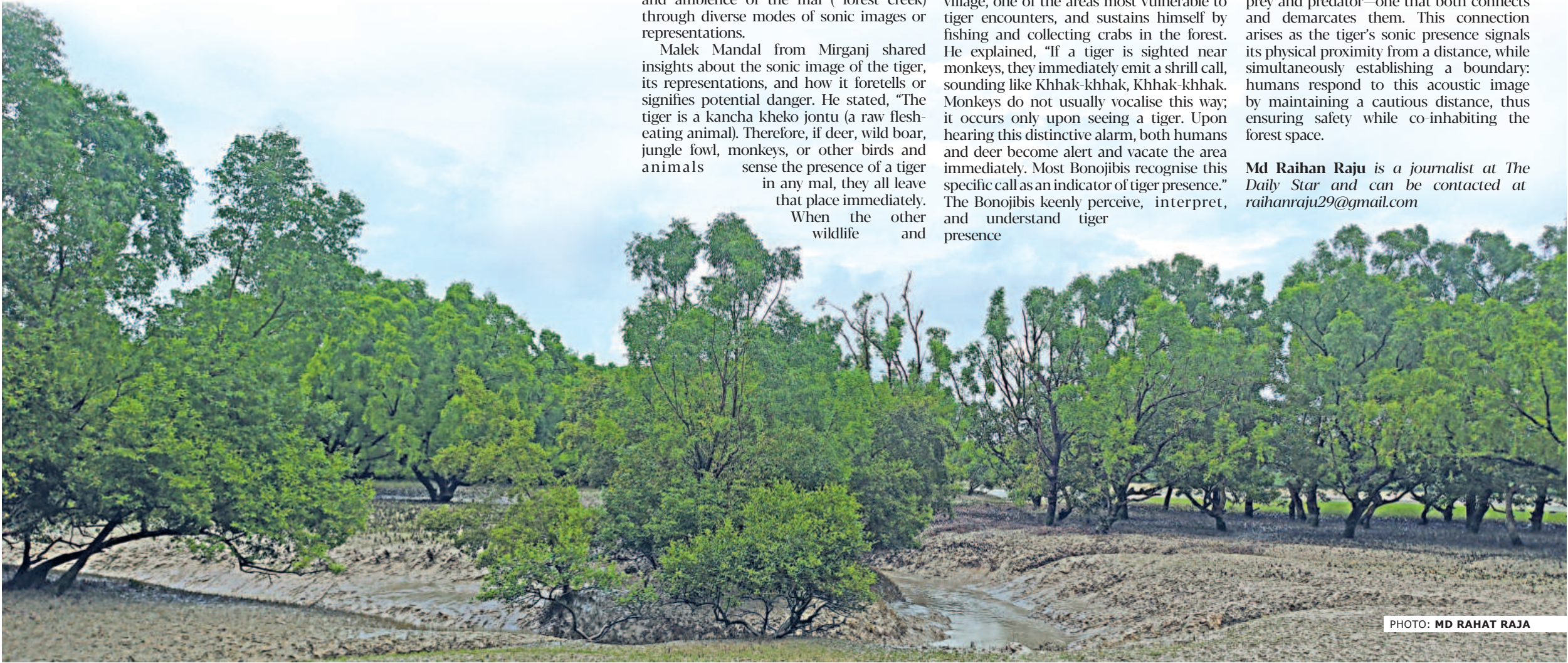


PHOTO: MD RAHAT RAJA

MD RAIHAN RAJU

The Sundarbans is often described as the “home” of tigers. But that is not the whole truth. Undoubtedly, it is a habitat and a home for multispecies, including humans, whose lives are entangled, sustained, and mutually accreted. How do the prey—humans—and the predator—the tiger—share forest space and survive together? Can the prey and predator truly live together?

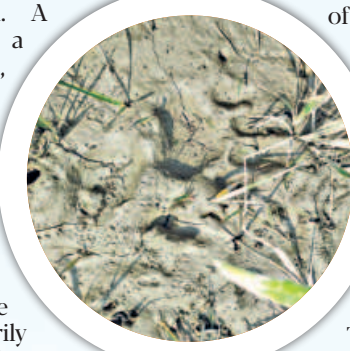
The lived experiences of the Bonojibis, as a repository of generational knowledge, reveal a world in which prey and predator coexist—though with constant risk and collaboration. A physical encounter with a tiger can be fatal; therefore, to avoid direct contact, the Bonojibis maintain a tangible distance by attuning themselves to the forest’s eco-soundscape, particularly to the sonic image of the tiger.

If anyone enters the forest, it does not necessarily mean entering a different place, but rather entering a world of distinctive soundscape produced by multiple agents, including living and other-than-living organisms in the marshy forest landscape. Every agent, be it human or other-than-human, marks its presence through distinctive tones, echoes, and rhythms, while simultaneously attuning with the forest’s embedded eco-soundscape. When the Bonojibis step into a forest creek, they can distinctly perceive a different threshold and ambience of the mal (forest creek) through diverse modes of sonic images or representations.

Malek Mandal from Mirganj shared insights about the sonic image of the tiger, its representations, and how it foretells or signifies potential danger. He stated, “The tiger is a *kancha kheko jontu* (a raw flesh-eating animal). Therefore, if deer, wild boar, jungle fowl, monkeys, or other birds and animals sense the presence of a tiger in any mal, they all leave that place immediately. When the other wildlife and

birds leave, the regular forest sounds also disappear. The rhythm of sound is actually disrupted there. That silence makes us understand that a tiger is around, and we should find a different place to work in the forest.”

If there is a tiger in the mal, the forest ambience turns silent (*nirrob*), quiet (*nistobdo*), and deep (*gombhir*). The regular rhythm, tone, and overall threshold of the place are disrupted—the usual forest ambience and embedded sounds are absent. Sometimes, such absence of soundscape, or in other words, the presence of silence, often amplifies the physical body of the tiger, as it seems the tiger mediates its presence by disrupting the known chaotic sounds and guiding



Tiger pugmarks spotted on the alluvial terrain of the Sundarbans.

PHOTO: MD RAIHAN RAJU

Bonojibis to take secure shelter or find another place. The reading of silence, in this regard, often conveys a mode of the tiger’s presence.

Both silence and sound reside in the sonic ecology in operation, functioning to signify the presence of the tiger. Suppose monkeys see a tiger—they make distinct calls or noises. In the same way, deer give different calls when tigers are spotted, and so do jungle fowl. Bonojibis understand these variations made by animals and birds as alarming signals (*bipod samket*) for others.

Another Bonojibi, Joydev, lives in Mirganj village, one of the areas most vulnerable to tiger encounters, and sustains himself by fishing and collecting crabs in the forest. He explained, “If a tiger is sighted near monkeys, they immediately emit a shrill call, sounding like *Khkak-khhak, Khhak-khhak*. Monkeys do not usually vocalise this way; it occurs only upon seeing a tiger. Upon hearing this distinctive alarm, both humans and deer become alert and vacate the area immediately. Most Bonojibis recognise this specific call as an indicator of tiger presence.” The Bonojibis keenly perceive, interpret, and understand tiger presence

through these unique calls, often identifying them as alarming signals (*bipod samket*).

Like the calls of monkeys, Bonojibis who spend long periods in the jungle and have accumulated vast experience can differentiate between the regular vocalisations of deer and their alarm calls (*bipod samket*). Deer emit this alert sound—*Taau-Taau, Taau-Taau*—which is distinct from their normal calls. Upon detecting this signal, both humans and other deer in the mal become vigilant, track the tiger’s movements, and retreat to save their lives. The Bonojibis interpret this sound as a definitive warning of tiger presence.

Jungle fowl in the forest naturally fear foxes. When they encounter a tiger, they mistake it for a large fox and fearfully take flight. Unlike domestic hens, jungle fowl can cover long distances in flight, like other forest birds. When they emit loud, frantic calls and move chaotically, Bonojibis interpret it as an indicator of tiger presence. The usual call of the jungle fowl, locally called *bon morog*, is *Kot-Kot*, but these alarm calls—distinct from their normal vocalisations—are filled with fear, signifying the presence of a predator.

Joydev reminded, “After laying eggs, a jungle fowl may produce prolonged, harsh alarm calls, such as *Kot-kot-kotash, Kot-kot-kotash, Kot-kot-kotash*. Similarly, a jungle fowl restlessly produces such sounds when a tiger is nearby. Hearing this, Bonojibis in the mal become vigilant, recognising that a tiger is in the vicinity, and retreat from the area to avoid danger.”

The sonic image of the tiger emerges through the acoustic soundscape produced by other-than-human agents within the forest. It signifies a nodal point between prey and predator—one that both connects and demarcates them. This connection arises as the tiger’s sonic presence signals its physical proximity from a distance, while simultaneously establishing a boundary: humans respond to this acoustic image by maintaining a cautious distance, thus ensuring safety while co-inhabiting the forest space.

Md Raihan Raju is a journalist at The Daily Star and can be contacted at raihanraju29@gmail.com

THE HIDDEN WORKFORCE

Inside Dhaka’s domestic work economy

SELIM JAHAN

Let me begin by making references to three notable literary works of Bangla literature. The first is a short story by Mahashevti Devi—*Ajir*. The other two are Ramapada Chowdhury’s novels—*Asroy* and *Kharij*. All these three works revolve around domestic workers. Even though the plot of each work is different, their main focus is identical: even though we cannot survive without the services of domestic help, we use them for our vested interests, sometimes overtly, sometimes covertly. Domestic workers are linked to our families, but they are not part of our families.

Even though, historically, the labour markets for domestic workers spanned both rural and urban areas, in recent times the labour markets and employment of domestic workers have expanded quite substantially in urban areas, particularly in the capital city of Dhaka. The labour market for domestic workers in Dhaka is stratified in terms of three locations—the high-end Gulshan–Banani–Baridhara market for the richer-class residences; the market for upper-middle-class and middle-class residences; and the market for lower-middle-class residences. It is important to remember that the majority of domestic workers in Dhaka city are women, and thus this labour market for domestic work has a female face.

The Gulshan–Banani–Baridhara labour market for domestic workers is rather centralised and exclusive. This labour market has some specific traits—for example, the employers of this market are either expatriates or wealthy Bangladeshi families. The domestic workers who operate in this market are somewhat better qualified in terms of education and skill. Generally, they can prepare various kinds of cuisines, take better care of children, and have the skills to organise various household events. Sometimes, the entire responsibility of running the household rests with them. These domestic workers have specific and better job contracts, whose terms and conditions are favourable. Most of

these domestic workers are Christians and come from indigenous backgrounds. Letters of reference from previous employers play a major role in their employment and job changes as well.

In the second market, since most ladies of the house are service-holders working outside the home, the responsibilities of running the household, including taking care of children, are entrusted to domestic help. In this market, the domestic workers sometimes have better bargaining power, as a result of which the lady of the house becomes a hostage to them. In recent times, the salaries of workers in this market and their benefits have improved.

The third market for domestic workers is in a more disadvantageous position. Domestic workers in this market have low salaries, and their other benefits are rather limited. Therefore, children and teenagers are dominantly present in this market as domestic workers. Since the lady of the house carries out most of the household chores, the role of the domestic worker becomes that of a ‘helper’. Naturally, the skill levels of domestic workers in this market are rather low, and the chances of their job mobility are also limited.

At present, many households in the city treat their domestic help with care and kindness and provide many comforts, quite unlike the feudal treatment of domestic workers in the past. On the negative side, some employers do not pay the domestic workers on time and withhold a part of their salary as a means to prevent them from leaving the current job.

Domestic workers sometimes become victims of persecution and violence, which stretches from physical to emotional abuse. Physical abuse, denial of food, and extreme physical torture are parts of the punishment inflicted by employers on domestic workers. One particular form of violence that domestic workers face is sexual violence. Sometimes such violence is reflected in sexual harassment; sometimes it becomes extreme in the form of rape. Between 2008 and 2013, 300 domestic workers were reported in newspapers to have died because of persecution and violence.



ILLUSTRATION: REHNUMA PROSHOON

In order to provide protection to domestic workers and to ensure their interests, Bangladesh formulated policies for the protection and welfare of domestic workers in 2015. These policies focused on the working conditions of domestic workers, their well-being and welfare, employer–employee relations, etc. Those policies also emphasised the rights of domestic workers, proper wages and salaries for them, as well as their other benefits, including leave, rest, and protection from child labour. Bangladesh has recently passed the Labour Law (Amendment) Ordinance 2025, which includes domestic workers under formal legal protection for the first time. Domestic workers are now included under the definition of ‘labour’ in the law, giving them the same legal rights and protections as other workers.

The fundamental question is what can be done for the well-being of domestic workers in Bangladesh. Some of these measures would be legal, some economic, and others social. It is heartening to see that the new labour law covers domestic workers as part of the formal labour law framework of the country. But the issue would be the implementation of that

framework for domestic workers. We should recognise that domestic workers are relatively weaker compared to other labour groups within the formal labour force of the country. Therefore, specific attention must be paid to their welfare, as there are particular personal and work hazards that they may face in their workplaces. Thus, the issue of unionisation of domestic workers is of prime importance. The new law that allows domestic workers of Bangladesh to form their own unions should be used to mobilise these workers. In 2001, a national domestic workers’ union for women was founded. That was the first initiative in the country to have a labour union for domestic workers. At present, this organisation is working in 24 areas of Dhaka city. Its work includes group meetings, night schools for domestic workers, etc. Five years later, in 2006, a network for the rights of domestic workers came into being. Right now, 26 organisations are members of this network, which include 14 human rights organisations and 12 labour unions. About 5,000 domestic workers are members of this network. All these initiatives are funded by Manusher Jonno Foundation

and the International Labour Office (ILO). With the opportunity to form their own unions under the new labour law, these workers will become a strong collective body to fight for their rights and protect their interests.

From the economic perspective, three issues are important. One, rules and laws must be enacted for proper and equitable salary structures for domestic workers; there should be similar rules and regulations for other benefits for them. Two, the contributions of domestic workers must be integrated into the country’s gross national product (GDP). This will not only recognise the contributions of domestic workers to the Bangladesh economy, but it will also strengthen their demands for better economic and social benefits. Three, more robust and credible data must be collected on domestic work and workers.

In the social arena, the human and labour rights of domestic workers must be integrated into the policy and legal framework for domestic work. Along with this, the living arrangements of domestic workers at employers’ houses must be improved to acceptable conditions. In addition, various social rights of domestic workers should be ensured. It goes without saying that the legal framework for domestic work must contain provisions to stop and redress all kinds of persecution and violence against domestic workers. Along with such a legal framework and policies, a social movement must be strengthened to enhance social awareness and human empathy.

In the global arena, a United Nations convention on domestic work and workers exists. The 189th ILO Domestic Workers Convention is quite a significant charter on domestic work. Till 2024, only 35 countries have ratified the ILO convention. Bangladesh has signed the convention but has not ratified it yet. Prompt measures must be undertaken in this respect.

Selim Jahan is former director of the Human Development Report Office under the United Nations Development Programme and lead author of the Human Development Report.

SAVING TO DEATH

How not to rescue wild animals

Towards a National Policy for the Rescue, Rehabilitation, and Release of Wild Animals in Bangladesh



▲ **REZA KHAN**

An eight-foot-long python recovered from the Asambasti Coconut Garden area of Rangamati town on September 30, 2025. The python was rescued by the Forest Department and later released in Kaptai National Park.

PHOTO: FOREST DEPARTMENT

Across Bangladesh, both government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are frequently rescuing wild animals from urban settlements, roadsides, villages, markets, and even forests. Unfortunately, most of these animals are being released without proper care, treatment, physical fitness, or assessment of suitable habitats. There is no post-release monitoring either. The result is high post-release mortality, disease transmission, and ecological imbalance.

Bangladesh currently lacks an official rescue, rehabilitation, and release policy for wild animals. On a broader scale, and as a nation, the country has even failed to declare a national policy on wildlife management and conservation. Consequently, rescue and release activities are often ad hoc, uncoordinated, and undocumented. To ensure animal welfare, biodiversity conservation, and public safety, there is an urgent need for a national framework under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and the Forest Department's Wildlife Wing.

This policy brief proposes an evidence-based, ethical, and practical approach to developing such a framework, aligned with the IUCN *Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations* (2013) and adapted to Bangladesh's realities.

BACKGROUND

Bangladesh's wild rescue rush: Between compassion and confusion

As Bangladesh races toward modernisation, a quiet crisis is unfolding in its forests and fields — one of displacement, confusion, and survival. Once known for its compassion toward animals, the nation is now grappling with the unintended consequences of rapid urban and agricultural expansion. This growth has

and rehabilitation of wild animals have gained visibility — becoming a symbol of both progress and the problems that accompany it.

Shrinking forests, rising encounters

The boom in development has devoured landscapes that once sheltered wildlife. Bushes, reed beds, and grasslands have been replaced by concrete, shrimp farms, and monoculture plantations. Forests have fragmented under the combined pressures of land grabbing and commercial exploitation.

As a result, wild animals, desperate for food and space, have begun venturing into human territories, while humans continue to encroach deeper into animal habitats. This has led to more frequent human-animal conflicts, injuries, deaths, and emergency rescues.

A WAVE OF RESCUE — BUT AT WHAT COST?

Rescuing wild animals has become a public spectacle, fuelled by social media and viral content. Young people, NGOs, and government agencies compete to be seen as good samaritans. However, many rescues end in premature deaths or renewed suffering.

Animals are sometimes confiscated from illegal smugglers or private collectors, while others are retrieved from the homes of wealthy individuals who treat exotic creatures as status symbols. Yet, after the photo opportunities, most rescued animals are hastily released — often into unsuitable habitats, at the wrong time, and without medical checks or proper rehabilitation.

A May 2025 *Mongabay* investigation questioned the true outcomes for wild animals after their “rescue”, and several national reports have highlighted the plight of these animals.

Mammals in peril

- Bengal Slow Loris — Often seized from traders in Dhaka or Sylhet, these nocturnal primates are released into random forests such as Bhawal or Lawachara without proper

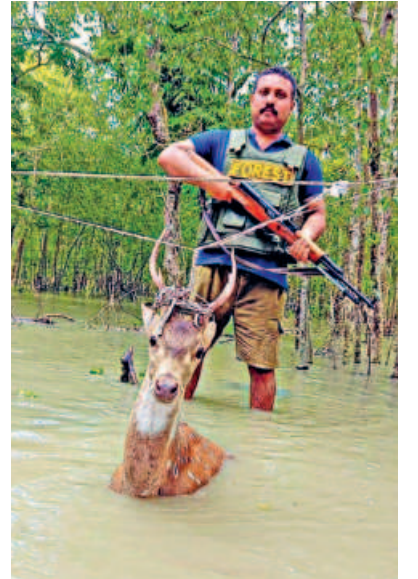
forests lacking suitable fruit trees.

- Rhesus Macaque — Captured from urban temples and released in random reserves, they often clash with native troops or spread disease.

Birds without nests

- Oriental Pied Hornbill — Confiscated and released into tiny forest fragments without fruit trees.
- Hill Myna — Released in urban parks with no nesting cavities.
- Barn Owl — Set free in daylight, leaving them vulnerable to predators.
- Parakeets — Released far from their natural range, near rice fields.
- Black Kite — Freed from police stations before regaining flight ability.

- Reptiles released to wrong realms
 - Indian Rock Python — Released too close to human settlements, causing panic.
 - Monocled Cobra — Handled by untrained personnel and released near highways.
 - Monitor Lizards and Turtles — Dumped into ponds or canals without assessing water quality.
 - Star Tortoises — Released in humid areas instead of dry scrublands, leading to fatal infections.
- Hundreds of foreign and exotic species are being smuggled into the



A deer found trapped in a poacher's snare, rescued by forest officials.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SUNDARBAN EAST FOREST, BANGLADESH / FACEBOOK

country, and the Wildlife Wing of the Forest Department is actively confiscating them.

THE WAY FORWARD

While the intent behind wildlife rescue is often noble, its execution reveals a lack of scientific planning. True rehabilitation requires trained personnel, health screenings, species-specific release protocols, and long-term monitoring — not viral videos or rushed releases.

WHY A POLICY IS NEEDED

Animal welfare

Many rescued animals are physically injured, stressed, or diseased. Immediate release without treatment violates ethical standards of animal care.

Birds kept in tiny cages by illegal bird vendors are being released almost instantly, causing serious threats to wild populations of birds and other animals, as such malnourished and untreated birds are traditionally known to carry diseases.

Ecological integrity

Releasing species into the wrong habitat (e.g., plains species in hilly forests and vice versa, or countryside animals into the Sundarbans) disrupts the local ecology and genetic integrity of wild populations. Ecologically and behaviourally, animals released into alien habitats will always remain physically weak and psychologically inferior to those already living and occupying established territories. Moreover, resident animals know where to find food and how to hide in the event of approaching danger.

Disease prevention

Without quarantine periods ranging from one to three months, zoonotic and epizootic diseases can spread to wild or domestic animals — and even to humans.

Accountability and data

Currently, there is no record of the number of animals rescued, their release locations, or their survival rates. Additionally, there is no system in place to track animals after release or to monitor their post-release conditions. This issue arises because current forest cadre service employees are primarily recruited to manage forests from a forestry perspective. Furthermore, even wildlife officers, who are employed for this purpose, cannot enter a forest without prior permission from a cadre service officer or a non-cadre service ranger. This is a significant flaw in national wildlife management and

conservation efforts.

Alignment with international standards

The IUCN and many neighbouring countries (India, Sri Lanka, Thailand) have established clear reintroduction and release protocols. Bangladesh can adopt and localise these successfully.

CURRENT CHALLENGES AND INSTITUTIONAL GAPS

Bangladesh lacks a dedicated wildlife department responsible for managing land, water, air, and all biodiversity within a forested area. Currently, all land, water, and natural resources are managed by personnel recruited under the Forest Department's Wildlife Wing, where wildlife biologists have no role. These biologists are often regarded as ‘imposters’ within forestry operations.

There exists no central policy or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for rescue, rehabilitation, and release. Inadequate facilities: There are no designated rescue and rehabilitation centres in most divisions. A few that have been declared by the Forest Department exist in name only — established for formality, funding, or the utilisation of funds — without adequate workforce or facilities.

Lack of trained staff: Forestry staff and NGO volunteers often act without prior wildlife-handling knowledge, training, or veterinary guidance.

Limited veterinary support: Only a few veterinarians are skilled in wildlife treatment.

Overlapping roles: NGOs, local administrations, and the Forest Department's Wildlife Wing often perform overlapping or conflicting functions.

In 2024, a group of macaques rescued from a construction site in Dhaka was released near a residential park, where they began raiding households and were later re-captured — a cycle of suffering that proper rehabilitation could have avoided.

PROPOSED POLICY FRAMEWORK

A National Policy on the Rescue, Rehabilitation, and Release of Wild Animals should be adopted under the MoEFCC, with the following components:

1. National coordination mechanism
 - Establish a wildlife rescue and

preparation, and serving, equipped with proper vehicles.

- At least one wild animal rescue ambulance, created by converting a large pick-up truck, with first aid and emergency treatment and care facilities. The government might request donor agencies to provide one or two such wild animal rescue ambulances.

- Veterinary treatment units and isolation cages to be built following international benchmarking standards.
- Soft-release enclosures for adaptation to be built in suitable locations.

- All rescued animals must be recorded in a database capable of storing species name, sex, age, and condition, as well as their history in the facilities and eventual fate.
- Record-keeping and SIM- and satellite-based tagging systems are necessary.
- All rescued animals must have a microchip inserted into their bodies.

4. Authorised release sites
 - Designate species specific, ecologically appropriate release areas.
 - Prohibit release into urban, village homesteads, or agricultural landscapes.
 - Conduct pre-release habitat assessments and post-release monitoring.

5. Capacity building and training

Develop and conduct regular training modules for Wildlife Wing staff, NGOs, zookeepers, and veterinarians. Include safe capture, handling, species identification, and welfare assessment. Partner with universities and veterinary schools for technical expertise.

6. Data management and reporting

Create a national wildlife rescue database accessible to the MoEFCC, Forest Department, universities with wildlife departments, and registered NGOs.

Track each case with GPS coordinates, photos, treatment details, and survival outcomes.

7. Public awareness and engagement

Educate the public on responsible rescue practices through posters, television, and social media. Disseminate guidelines on what to do when encountering injured or displaced wildlife. Promote citizen reporting via

WILDLIFE RESCUE AND REHABILITATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN		
Time frame	Key actions	Responsible agencies
Short-term (0-1 year)	Form WRRC, draft policy and SOPs, identify pilot sites	MoEFCC, FD Wildlife Wing
Medium-term (1-3 years)	Establish 3-4 regional centres or modify existing ones, develop training modules, initiate data system	FD Wildlife Wing, Universities, NGOs
Long-term (3-5 years)	Scale up nationwide, formalise monitoring and evaluation	MoEFCC, FD Wildlife Wing

rehabilitation council (WRRC) under the Wildlife Wing of the Forest Department, with support from wildlife biologists working with national and internationally recognised organisations.

Include representatives from the MoEFCC, Forest Department Wildlife Wing, universities, NGOs, veterinarians, and law enforcement.

The council should oversee implementation, data collection, and inter-agency coordination.

2. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Drawing on IUCN guidelines and regional experience, with adaptations for Bangladesh's native species. Cover every stage: rescue → transport → food and feeding-housing care → veterinary care → quarantine → rehabilitation → release → post-release monitoring.

3. Regional rescue and rehabilitation centres

Establish at least one centre per division, linked to major protected areas.

Facilities should include:

- A wildlife rescue manager with a degree and experience in wildlife management.
- Proper housing facilities for rescued megafauna, birds, and reptiles to be built under the guidance of wildlife, zoo, or safari management experts. These must have a continuous supply of water and electricity and be connected by road networks.
- Facilities for food storage,

mobile apps or hotline numbers.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

- The MoEFCC should initiate the drafting and adoption of a national wildlife rescue and release policy.
- Pilot rehabilitation centres should begin in Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna, Rajshahi, and Sylhet regions.

- Mandatory veterinary oversight must be required before any release.
- Database and transparency mechanisms should be instituted for accountability.
- Encourage cross border learning with India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

- Integrate the initiative within the broader Wildlife Conservation Master Plan under the Forest Department's Wildlife Wing.

Bangladesh has the expertise and dedication — what is needed now is an organised, ethical, and scientifically guided policy framework to protect its wildlife from good intentions that go wrong.

Dr Reza Khan is a wildlife biologist and conservationist with over four decades of experience in wildlife research, zoo management, and biodiversity conservation in Bangladesh and the United Arab Emirates. He has worked extensively in wildlife rescue, sanctuary management, and community-based conservation initiatives.



▲ **The Forest Department's Wildlife Crime Control Unit and the Social Forestry Division of Dinajpur rescued 74 wild animals from Swapnopuri Park and Mini Zoo in Nawabganj upazila, Dinajpur, on January 24, 2025**

led to severe deforestation, fragmented forests, and the genetic isolation of wildlife populations as monocultures of timber trees and crops replace natural habitats, depriving a wide array of species of their homes and livelihoods.

Historically, affection for animals in Bangladesh was largely limited to domesticated cats and dogs. Respect for wildlife, common in neighbouring countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, and India, did not take strong root here. However, in recent years, the rescue

acclimatisation. Many die from stress or starvation.

- Common Palm Civet — Rescued from urban areas and released in broad daylight, these animals often become easy prey or roadkill.
- Fishing Cat — Found near shrimp farms in Khulna, Satkhira, and elsewhere, these cats are captured and released without consideration of territorial needs or prey availability.

- Binturong — Rare animals seized by law enforcers and released into



Sundarbans faces a new test as ECO-TOURISM SURGES

DIPANKAR ROY

Before dawn breaks over the braided channels that carve through the Sundarbans, a small crowd gathers on the riverbank in Khulna. The air tastes of brackish water and diesel; the sky is bruise-coloured, and the horizon already hums with the low throb of boat engines.

Among the travellers is Abir Abdullah, a Dhaka-based businessman who has waited years to step into this mangrove labyrinth.

"It used to take eight to twelve hours to reach Khulna by road," he says, folding his shawl against the pre-dawn chill. "Now I board a midnight bus, get off in the morning and go straight to the launch within three to four hours. Three days of forest cruising, I want to see Dublar Char and join the Rash Puja."

crabs and golpata. Tourism, once marginal, is now emerging as a major alternative source of income.

Tour operators and local entrepreneurs have moved quickly to capture the opportunity.

The Tour Operators Association of Sundarbans (TOAS) reports around 65 registered launches operating out of Khulna, with another five to seven boats plying similar routes outside the association.

The operators maintain about 200 trained tour guides, while a separate cluster of smaller operators in Mongla runs day trips to Karamjal and Harbaria.

Luxury cruises are no longer rare.

In the past two years, several high-end



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Kailashganj and Dhangmari.

Names such as Jangalbari, Iraboti, Golkanon, Bonlata and Mangrove Haven have become familiar to weekenders and out-of-town families.

Most cottages represent capital commitments of Tk 1.5 to Tk 2.5 crore. Resort owners say their businesses have produced steady alternative incomes for hundreds of families, including hotel staff, boatmen, guides, food suppliers and handicraft vendors.

Local entrepreneurs also report contributing to community needs by supplying potable water, supporting remote health outreach and partnering on education initiatives.

"We wanted to create an economy around the forest without destroying it," says Zakaria Hossain Shawon, general secretary of the Resort Owners Association of Sundarbans.

"If we can show that the forest can generate sustainable livelihoods through careful tourism, then fewer people will risk illegal extraction," he said.

THREAT TO A FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM?

The ecosystem of the Sundarbans is a complex and fragile one. As tourism flourishes at a remarkable pace, there are concerns regarding the impacts on the forest.

According to Forest Department records, Sundarbans visitor numbers have climbed sharply in recent years, from 128,175 in fiscal year (FY) 2015-16 to 216,143 in FY 2022-23.

In FY 2023-24, 211,057 tourists visited, generating roughly Tk 3.6 crore in revenue.

Operators note a 45 percent rise in domestic visitors after the Padma Bridge opened, with foreign arrivals also doubling.

in Shoronkhola, Andharmanik in Chandpai Range, Shekherlek and Kailashganj within Khulna range -- to ease pressure on seven core sites in Kotka, Kachikhali, Dublar Char, Hiron Point, Harbaria, Kalagachhia and Karamjal.

Yet environmental fragility and human dependency complicate management.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

On the ground, perspectives are pragmatic. Nilufa Khatun, who once collected golpata and honey to supplement family income, says her life changed when a nearby eco-cottage began hiring local women for housekeeping and food preparation.

"Now I earn regular money, my children go to school," she says. "We still go into the forest sometimes, but less often."

But operators like Nazmul Azam David, general secretary of the Tour Operators Association of Sundarbans, stress safety and regulation.

"Many small operators are offering one-day trips from Mongla and Munshiganj. We have 57 registered vessels, 25 of them luxury, but need proper safety checks, crew training and coordination among government agencies so tourists are protected and the forest is not overused," he said.

The private sector is responding with mixed incentives.

Sea Pearl's Khulna Manager SM Musfiqur Hasan says their cruises regularly charge Tk 12,000-Tk 22,000 per person and draw well in peak season.

"The Padma Bridge has changed travel patterns," he says. "We now run two or more tours every week during the season. Investment is flowing in, but investors expect good governance and long-term planning."

If the masterplan and community initiatives succeed, the Sundarbans could become a model of eco-centred tourism that sustains both people and nature. But whether it keeps its wild heart depends on choices made today.

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Abdullah's eagerness reflects a recent wave.

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The upgrade has opened the path for a rapidly expanding tourism economy that promises livelihoods and local investment. At the same time, it also raises critical questions about conservation of one of the most important forests in the whole world.

NEW TOURISM FRONTIER

The Sundarbans, Bangladesh's 6,017-square-kilometre share of the global mangrove, contains a dizzying range of biodiversity: 334 species of plants, 315 bird species, 210 fish species, six species of dolphin and a threatened population of the Royal Bengal tiger.

For decades, the forest sustained a complex human ecology. Roughly 35 lakh people live around the Sundarbans, of whom about 6 lakh depend directly on it for honey, fish,

launches and cruise ships have entered the market, and companies such as Sea Pearl Beach Resort & Spa have introduced two lavish tour vessels.

Package prices vary widely. Budget travellers can join two-night, three-day wooden trawler trips for as low as Tk 4,500 to 7,500 per person.

Popular three-day packages for mainstream tourists range from Tk 7,500 to Tk 10,000. For a more comfortable cruise on air-conditioned launches or luxury vessels, prices rise to Tk 14,500 to Tk 22,000 per person.

Entry fees to the forest remain nominal for local visitors, set at Tk 1,050, but steep for foreigners at Tk 10,500 -- a strategy to attract foreign exchange while keeping domestic access affordable.

Along the riverfronts that border the Sundarbans, the landscape of livelihoods is changing fast. An eco-cottage boom has transformed coastal settlements.

A recent survey documents at least 23 eco-resorts and cottages across Mongla, Banishanta (Khulna), Kailashganj and Shyamnagar (Satkhira), and local owners claim around 120 such facilities in the wider Khulna district, including Dacope's

