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BNP allies upset over delay in seat sharing

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

BNP's allies are frustrated after the party unveiled its nominees before finalising seat-sharing deals, leaving partners in the dark.

The party offered far fewer seats than requested by allies and even fielded its own candidates there, sparking resentment, according to over a dozen alliance leaders who spoke to The Daily Star.

More than three dozen parties under the 12-party alliance, Jatiyatabadi Samamona Jote, and Ganatantra Mancha had joined the BNP-led simultaneous movement against the Sheikh Hasina regime.

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Gono Forum, Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP), Bangladesh Labour Party, and other like-minded parties were part of the simultaneous movement.

Saiful Haque, general secretary of the Biplobi Workers Party, said, "BNP had promised to hold discussions on seat-sharing before announcing its candidates, but it didn't. This has angered its partners."

His party is part of the six-member Ganatantra Mancha, which joined



Thick smoke billows from a factory at Dewanbari Mill Gate in Gazipur's Tongi, polluting the surrounding air and environment. Factories using coal or wood as primary energy sources release harmful particulate matter, sulfur oxides, and volatile organic compounds, which can cause respiratory diseases, damage crops, and contribute to long-term air quality deterioration. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

➤ Allies sought 222 seats; BNP plans to share no more than 40

➤ Ganatantra Mancha claims BNP broke seat-sharing promise

➤ 13 seats reserved for key alliance partners

➤ Change in RPO bar allies from using BNP's election symbol

BNP in the movement.

He said the Mancha nominated him for Dhaka-8, but BNP picked Mirza Abbas for the same seat. "Except for three or four seats for Ganatantra Mancha, they have nominated their own candidates in almost all others."

On October 9, the Mancha announced its nominees for over 120 seats.

Earlier last month, BNP had asked its partners to submit their candidate lists. Together, the allies and like-minded parties sought at least 222 seats for their leaders.

The LDP, led by former BNP leader Oli Ahmed, wanted 40 seats; the 12-party alliance, 21; Gono Forum, 15; Jatiyatabadi Samamona Jote, nine; BJP, five; Bangladesh Labour Party, six; and National Democratic

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Pre-polls climate remains fragile

Says US-based International Republican Institute

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Despite the authorities' efforts, Bangladesh's pre-election environment remains fragile, said the US-based International Republican Institute (IRI) in its assessment report published on Wednesday.

It noted that the Election Commission has introduced reforms to boost voter participation and strengthen operational preparedness, including plans for out-of-country voting. To enhance security, the EC

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ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE

Govt clears draft law with death penalty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has given final approval to the draft of the Enforced Disappearance Prevention and Redress Ordinance-2025, which provides for the death penalty as the maximum punishment in certain cases of enforced disappearance.

The approval came at the 47th meeting of the advisory council held yesterday, with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in the chair at his Tejgaon office.

After the meeting, Chief Adviser's Press

Secretary Shafiqul Alam briefed reporters at the Foreign Service Academy.

Replying to a query about whether the ordinance includes any provision for rehabilitation or compensation for victims' families, the press secretary said a fund has been created to provide compensation.

"The ordinance includes provisions for establishing special tribunals, completing trials within 120 days of framing charges, protecting the rights of victims, informants and

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Farmers in Kalbila village use a wooden rope puller to remove accumulated dirt and mud from beneath the beel, preparing the land for Boro rice seedling planting in Barishal's Wazirpur upazila yesterday. The Bangla month of Agrahayan (mid-November to mid-December) is considered optimal for achieving higher yields.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Jamaat warns of showdown in Dhaka

8 parties issue govt Nov 11 ultimatum on referendum, PR system demands

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday warned that Dhaka could take on a "different look" on November 11 if the government fails to meet the party and its allies' five demands, as they plan to hold a grand rally that day.

"Before the capital turns into a sea of people, the government should accept the demands and show respect for the public aspiration reflected in the July charter. Otherwise, the scenes will be different," said Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar, addressing a gathering at the Matsya Bhaban intersection.

At another event, Jamaat Naye-e-Ameer Syeed Abdullah Muhammad Taher said, "If the ghee doesn't come out with a straight finger, we'll bend it. But we want the ghee anyway. So, take the hint. No trickery. There must be a referendum before the national election."

The five demands of Jamaat and seven

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বিভিন্ন অনলাইন ও অন্যান্য সংবাদ মাধ্যমে প্রকাশিত মিথ্যা সংবাদের বিষয়ে ইস্টার্ন ব্যাংক পিএলসি'র চেয়ারম্যান জনাব মো. শওকত আলী চৌধুরী'র বক্তব্য

সম্প্রতি বিভিন্ন সংবাদ মাধ্যম আমার নাম জড়িয়ে ক্রমাগত অসত্য এবং বিভ্রান্তিকর তথ্য-উপাত্ত সম্বলিত খবর প্রকাশ করছে, যা অনভিপ্রেত। এসকল সম্পূর্ণ মিথ্যা, মনগড়া ও বানোয়াট খবরে প্রকাশ পাচ্ছে যে, আমি ইস্টার্ন ব্যাংক পিএলসি'র চেয়ারম্যানের পদে থেকে ৮০০০ কোটি টাকা আত্মসাৎ করেছি। আমি এ সকল ভিত্তিহীন খবরের তীব্র প্রতিবাদ জানাচ্ছি।

আমি আশি'র দশক থেকে বাংলাদেশে ব্যবসা করছি। এ দেশের একজন দায়িত্বপূর্ণ নাগরিক হিসেবে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালনের মাধ্যমে অর্থনীতিতে অবদান রাখছি বলে আমার দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস। এ দেশের ব্যাংকিং, বীমা, শীপ রিসাইক্লিং, চা, সিরামিক্স, আবাসন, লজিস্টিক্স প্রভৃতি ব্যবসায় আমার উল্লেখযোগ্য বিনিয়োগ রয়েছে। আমার ৪০ বছরের অধিক ব্যবসায়িক জীবনে আমার বিরুদ্ধে একটি টাকাও আত্মসাৎ করা তো দূরের কথা, কোনো ব্যাংকে কোনো ঋণ একদিনের জন্যও ওভারডিউ হয়নি এবং কোনো সময়ে পুণঃতফসিলিকরণও চাইনি। এমনকি কখনো কোনো ব্যাংকের নিকট সুদ মওকুফের আবেদনও করিনি। আল্লাহ'র রহমতে আমি সব সময় প্রতিটি ব্যাংকের ঋণ ফেরতের নির্ধারিত সময়ের পূর্বেই তা পরিশোধ করেছি। অদ্যাবধি আমার যদি কোনো খেলাপি ঋণ না থেকে থাকে, তাহলে কোন টাকা আত্মসাৎ করে পাচার করলাম, তা আমার বোধগম্য নয়। দেশের একজন শীর্ষস্থানীয় ব্যবসায়ী হিসেবে ব্যাংক হিসাবে ৮০০০ কোটি লেনদেন একটি স্বাভাবিক ব্যবসায়িক প্রক্রিয়া মাত্র। এখানে উল্লেখ্য যে, আমি, আমার স্ত্রী ও নিজেদের স্বার্থসংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যবসায়িক প্রতিষ্ঠান করবছর ২০১৩-২০১৪ থেকে ২০২৩-২০২৪ সময়ের ১১ বছরে ১১ বার সেরা করদাতা হিসেবে জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড কর্তৃক মনোনীত হয়ে পুরস্কৃত হয়েছি।

গত কিছুদিন যাবৎ দেশের কতিপয় অনলাইন নিউজ পোর্টাল, সংবাদ মাধ্যম, টিভি চ্যানেল ও একটি স্বার্থাধেয়ী মহল আমাকে জড়িয়ে অসত্য ও বিভ্রান্তিকর খবর প্রকাশ করছে। শুধু তাই নয়, এ কুচক্রী মহলটি বিভিন্নভাবে আমার নামের সঙ্গে ইস্টার্ন ব্যাংক পিএলসি'র নামকে জড়িয়ে বিভ্রান্তিকর তথ্য ছড়াচ্ছে। ইস্টার্ন ব্যাংক পিএলসি একটি স্বনামধন্য প্রতিষ্ঠান হিসেবে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের জারীকৃত সকল নিয়ম-নীতি মেনে ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা করছে এবং এর ব্যত্যয়েরও কারো কোনো সুযোগ নেই। আমাকে জড়িয়ে ইস্টার্ন ব্যাংক পিএলসি সংক্রান্ত ব্যাপারে কোন কর্তৃপক্ষেরও কোন অভিযোগ নেই। সুতরাং ইস্টার্ন ব্যাংক পিএলসি'র চেয়ারম্যান কর্তৃক ৮০০০ কোটি টাকা আত্মসাৎ এর অসত্য ও বানোয়াট অভিযোগ সম্বলিত প্রকাশিত খবর সম্পূর্ণ মিথ্যা ও ভিত্তিহীন। সরকারের সংশ্লিষ্ট যেকোনো প্রতিষ্ঠান যাচাই করতে চাইলে এ বিষয়ে আমার পক্ষ হতে প্রয়োজনীয় সকল প্রকার সহায়তা করা হবে।


আমাকে জড়িয়ে এ মিথ্যা ও ভিত্তিহীন সংবাদ প্রকাশের সঙ্গে কারা জড়িত ব্যবসায়িক মহলের সকলেরই জানা আছে। তাই ইস্টার্ন ব্যাংক পিএলসি'র চেয়ারম্যান হিসেবে আমার সুনাম ফুল্ল করার প্রচেষ্টায় বিভ্রান্ত না হতে সকলকে বিনীত অনুরোধ করছি।

মো. শওকত আলী চৌধুরী

চেয়ারম্যান


ইস্টার্ন ব্যাংক পিএলসি

বিনম্র শ্রদ্ধা



এনসিসি ব্যাংক পিএলসি. এর অন্যতম উদ্যোক্তা পরিচালক ও সাবেক চেয়ারম্যান জনাব মীর জাহির হোসেন-এর ৯৬তম মৃত্যুবার্ষিকীতে তাঁর অবদান গভীর শ্রদ্ধায় স্মরণ করছি এবং বিদেহী আত্মার মাগফেরাত কামনা করছি।

পরিচালনার পর্দা এক যাবস্থাপনা কর্তৃপক্ষ



এনসিসি ব্যাংক

অপূর্ণ সংস্করণ

Ending with a note of optimism, he said, "I believe the next national parliament, to be formed through a free, fair and acceptable election, will be able to fulfil the people's expectations and play its role in building a democratic, just, progressive and humane state through systematic reforms."

‘Let melodies live on in every school’

Students, teachers protest scrapping of music, PE teacher posts in pry schools

STAR REPORT

Students and teachers from four major public universities yesterday staged simultaneous demonstrations protesting the government's decision to scrap music and physical education (PE) teacher posts in government primary schools.

Demonstrations were held at Dhaka University, Rajshahi University, Chittagong University, and Jagannath University (JnU), led mainly by students from the respective music departments.

Participants formed human chains, sang the national anthem, performed protest songs, and marched across their campuses.

They said music and physical education are essential for children's holistic development and that cultural education

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Protesting the decision to scrap music and physical education teacher posts in government primary schools, Dhaka University students and teachers demonstrate on the campus yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

DNCC ward office on Pragati Sarani!

Residents, experts slam city corporation, say move will choke traffic, endanger pedestrians

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA and DIPAN NANDY

The Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) has begun constructing a ward office occupying the footpath and a part of the Pragati Sarani near Baridhara point without assessing its impact on traffic and pedestrian movement.

Experts warned that building such an establishment on one of the busiest roads in the Baridhara diplomatic zone will worsen traffic congestion and disrupt city life.

Initially, DNCC planned to set up a garbage depot at the site but changed the plan following protests from residents, who complained about the occupation of the footpath. Despite the objections, the DNCC later decided to turn the spot into an office for the city corporation's employees.

Adil Mohammed Khan, president of the Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), said building an office on a busy road is “equivalent to committing a crime” as it will severely disrupt vehicular and pedestrian movement.

He said DNCC already has offices elsewhere or could easily rent one instead of occupying a public road. Khan also urged the government to stop such illogical constructions, saying the current city corporation administration seems to be repeating mistakes made by previous ones.

Contacted, DNCC Administrator Mohammad Azaz said he had decided in principle not to allow any establishment on the spot since it could create problems for vehicles and pedestrians.

He said he would visit the site soon and that he was not in favour of constructing any establishment there. He said DNCC is searching for an alternative location for both the garbage depot and the office.

The administrator, however, did not clarify whether the current project has been abandoned.

A visit to the site yesterday morning revealed that DNCC has already started construction of the Ward 18 office, occupying around 1,000 square feet of the footpath on the road from the US embassy

Pedestrians also criticised the project. “If the city corporation itself grabs footpaths, where will ordinary citizens go for justice?” said Shamsul Alam, an office employee in the area.

His colleague, Tarknath Debnath, added, “Almost every road has encroachments. No major street has remained free from grabbers and hawkers. This construction should stop immediately so pedestrians can walk safely.”

The De Mazenod Church and St Eugene's School are located



FILE PHOTO

towards Kalachandpur.

Concrete has been poured and iron rods for pillars installed. A signboard at the site identifies it as a DNCC construction project, though no workers or officials were present at the time.

Locals have expressed their opposition by writing protest messages on the signboard with marker pens, such as “You can't build an office by blocking the road” and “Six trees have been cut down here”

opposite the site. Teachers and students of the school, on October 21, formed a human chain protesting the construction.

Md Shamsul Hoque, professor of civil engineering at Buet, said constructing establishments that obstruct roads and footpaths increases the risk of accidents.

“This project will not only disrupt traffic and pedestrian movement but also create safety risks in an important diplomatic zone,” he said.

NCP seeks to unite BNP, Jamaat over referendum, reform issues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party yesterday said it has taken an initiative to bring the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami to the same table to resolve disagreements over the referendum timing and the implementation process for the July charter.

NCP Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary made the announcement at a press conference at the party's central office in Banglamotor. His remarks came shortly after the interim government on Monday urged political parties to bridge their differences, preferably within a week.

Addressing the parties, Nasiruddin said, “Through the call for seven days, the government has forwarded the ball into your court. If you fail to resolve the issues now, it would be a shameful matter for you.”

“We will call on both political parties, BNP and Jamaat, to sit for a discussion,” he added.

Nasiruddin said the NCP, along with Amar Bangladesh (AB) Party, Gono Odhikar Parishad, and six components of Ganotantra Mancha, held a meeting in this regard on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the NCP yesterday began selling nomination application forms for participation in the upcoming national election. The sale will continue until November 13.

Referendum must be held on election day: Fakhrul

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the referendum must be held on the same day as the national parliamentary election.

“We are in agreement on this. No referendum will be allowed before the national election,” Fakhrul said while speaking as chief guest at a meeting marking the seventh death anniversary of Tariqul Islam, BNP Standing Committee member and former minister, in Jashore.

“A few political parties are trying to create instability with various demands. They are trying to disrupt and delay the election. The people will not accept this... We now have an opportunity to return to a democratic system. We cannot allow any conspiracy to destroy this opportunity.”

Accusing the Consensus Commission of bias, he said, “Now you're saying political parties should sit together and make decisions. Then what have you been doing all this time? You didn't do your job properly. We have always gone to the commission and given our opinions.”



We're fighting for expatriates' right to vote: Shafiqur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday said there are “systemic obstacles” preventing expatriates from casting their votes. He said his party has submitted recommendations to the government to remove these barriers.

“We sent a delegation to the government yesterday [Wednesday] with recommendations to address the issue, and they assured us they would try,” he said at a civic gathering in Sylhet city.

“I told expatriates many parties opposed their voting rights, saying they only needed to send remittances, but we fought for their right to vote.”

He also said Jamaat lawmakers would not seek personal benefits from public office. “Our MPs will not accept government plots or tax-free cars. We will live as we do now,” he said.



‘Ban use of religion in campaigns’

Jatiya Hindu Mohajote places 7-point demand before EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Jatiya Hindu Mohajote yesterday urged the Election Commission to ban the use of religion in election campaigns and ensure a peaceful voting atmosphere along with the safety of minority communities during the upcoming 13th national election.

Leaders of the organisation placed a seven-point demand during a meeting with the CEC at the EC headquarters in the capital. Mohajote Executive Secretary Palash Kanti Dey told reporters after the meeting that the commission agreed with their proposals and informed them that it was already working on these matters.

The Mohajote's seven-point demand includes strengthening security for minority homes, temples, and monasteries for 10 days before and after the election; deploying army during polls; banning campaigns and rallies at religious institutions; prohibiting use of religion in electioneering; suspending voting and launching investigations in constituencies facing attacks; and forming a central monitoring cell to ensure the safety of minority and women voters.

Govt to act if parties fail to reach decision over July charter

Says CA's press secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although political parties have been tasked with resolving disputes over the July charter, the government has also begun internal preparations on the matter, said Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam yesterday.

“If the political parties fail to reach a decision, the interim government itself will take one – the law adviser has already mentioned that. Several preparatory meetings are also being held in this regard,” he said during a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka.

“We hope the political parties will reach a decision on their own. The entire nation is now eagerly waiting for the election,” he added.

Meanwhile, the Advisory Council approved the proposed list of 28 holidays for the 2026 calendar year, including general and executive holidays.

Of these, 11 fall on weekends (Fridays and Saturdays), meaning government employees will effectively enjoy 17 days off, said Shafiqul Alam.

The council also gave final approval to the National Logistics Policy 2025, aimed at modernising transport and trade infrastructure, and ensuring environmentally sustainable logistics growth.

Five more die of dengue

DSCC to form ward based monitoring teams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With five more deaths reported yesterday, the total number of dengue fatalities this year rose to 307.

Alongside the deaths, at least 1,034 dengue patients were hospitalised in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday. With the latest figures, the total number of reported dengue cases this year reached 76,026.

Against this backdrop, the DSCC yesterday at a meeting decided to form ward-based monitoring teams involving local residents to ensure the effective application of adulticide and larvicide to control the Aedes mosquito population.

DSCC Administrator Md Mahmudul Hasan said, “Just as the responsibility of Aedes mosquito control lies with the city corporation, citizens also have certain responsibilities.” He also said sudden and random mobile court drives would be conducted at the field level.

During the meeting, citizens were urged to avail free dengue testing at three hospitals – Dhaka Metropolitan General Hospital, Dhaka Metropolitan Children's Hospital, and Nazirabazar Maternity Centre. They were also requested to report any dengue-related information within DSCC areas by calling 01709-900888.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Even amid the hustle and bustle of Dhaka's streets, two workers are seen sleeping atop large rolls of fabric on the back of a truck. One bad bump or sudden brake could throw them off the vehicle and onto the street. The photo was taken in the Kakrail area of the capital yesterday.

Unregistered medicines prescribed at BMU

Committee finds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A committee of Bangladesh Medical University has found unregistered medicines in prescriptions issued by some physicians of the university.

The committee has recommended formulating a guideline with provisions for punishment if such medicines are prescribed.

It also advised raising awareness to ensure that university physicians do not prescribe or suggest unregistered medicines for patients, according to a press release issued by the university.

The committee, led by Mohammad Abu Hena Chowdhury, dean of the Medical Technology Faculty of BMU, submitted its report to Vice Chancellor Prof Shahinul Alam yesterday.

Contacted, Abu Hena said they had reviewed prescriptions over the last three months and found unregistered medicines, prompting the recommendation to formulate a guideline to prevent the practice.

He, however, declined to give further details.

The committee also recommended printing and distributing leaflets throughout the university to raise awareness, organising seminars and symposiums, and making physicians aware of the possible punishments for prescribing unregistered medicines.

It further suggested installing large signboards at the indoor and outdoor facilities of BMU and at all entrances of the university. Letters should be sent to the chairmen of each department so they can make physicians and students aware of the issue.

Additionally, lists of medicines registered by the Drug Administration and Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution should be supplied to every department and outpatient facility, the report added.



Leaders and activists of eight like-minded political parties, who are waging a simultaneous movement to press home their five-point demand, gather at Dhaka's Paltan intersection yesterday to submit a memorandum to the chief adviser. The parties include Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Andolan Bangladesh, Bangladesh Khilafat Majlis, Bangladesh Khilafat Andolan, Bangladesh Nezam-e-Islam Party, Jatiya Gananatrik Party, and Bangladesh Development Party.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Farmers in Pirojpur turn to betel nut for higher profits

KMHABIBUR RAHMAN, Pirojpur

A growing number of farmers in Pirojpur are switching from paddy and other low-yield crops to betel nut, locally known as "supari", attracted by its profitability.

Nearly every household across the seven upazilas of Pirojpur is now engaged in commercial betel nut cultivation, with the local produce collected by wholesale buyers and supplied nationwide.

Locals said buyers from Pirojpur and other districts come directly to purchase betel nuts from growers. Improved communication to the region has enhanced accessibility and boosted trade.

Rafiqul Islam, a trader in Indurkani upazila, said he buys betel nuts directly from growers and sells to wholesalers.

"Demand for betel nuts remains high throughout the season. Prices change depending on demand," he said.

Some traders soak nuts in water for two to three months before

selling them, while others store the nuts after drying them in the sun. Small traders often purchase from growers to resell to large buyers. This seasonal trade creates temporary employment for many local people.

Mizanur Rahman from the Lahuri area in Indurkani upazila said most lands in his area are now betel nut gardens.



"Returns from paddy cultivation are low, which is why farmers are shifting to growing betel nuts," he said.

Betel nut trees bear fruit within five years and yield abundantly for 25 to 30 years, sometimes even up

to 50 years.

Rivers like Kacha, Baleshwar, Swandha, and Kaliganga enrich the soil and sweeten water in the region, aiding high-quality betel nut production, growers said.

Each tree produces nuts worth Tk 200 to Tk 500 annually, and one decimal of land yields Tk 4,000 to Tk 4,500 -- about eight to nine times more than paddy. Betel nut trees are also less vulnerable to storms, reducing risk, according to growers.

The harvest season runs for four months starting in September.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Pirojpur, betel nuts are being cultivated on 4,669 hectares of land this year. Last year, the district produced 53,205 tonnes of betel nuts, with the highest output recorded in Sadar and Mathbaria upazilas.

Md Abdullah Al Mamun, additional deputy director of DAE in Pirojpur, said, "The soil and water here are ideal for its cultivation, while pest attacks are few. Growers receive regular guidance from us."

NAT'L POLLS EC okays 66 local observer organisations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahead of the upcoming 13th national parliamentary election, the Election Commission has registered 66 local observer organisations, the EC said in a circular last night.

On September 28, the commission published a preliminary list of 73 local observer organisations eligible to monitor the upcoming polls. After completing the necessary procedures, the EC has now given final approval to 66 of them.

As per the Election Observation Policy 2025, the EC invited applications from qualified non-governmental organisations interested in registering as election observer bodies.

Banned poppy seeds worth Tk 6.5cr seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chattogram Customs House has seized around 25 tonnes of poppy seeds, valued at about Tk 6.5 crore, imported illegally through the port under false declaration.

According to customs officials, acting on a tip-off, the Audit, Investigation and Research (AIR) wing of the customs house recently inspected two containers at the port and recovered the banned items.

Import documents show that Adib Trading, a Chattogram-based firm, imported the consignment from Pakistan by declaring it as bird food. The consignment was handled by MH Trading Customs C&F Agent Ltd as the clearing and forwarding agent.

The shipment, weighing about 32 tonnes, was declared for release on October 14. Following intelligence information, the AIR wing suspended its release and, on October 22, conducted a physical examination in presence of the depot authority and representatives of the importer and agent.

During the inspection, customs officials found that approximately 7 tonnes of bird food had been placed outside the containers to conceal about 25 tonnes of poppy seeds hidden behind them.

Samples from the seized goods were sent for laboratory tests to the Plant Quarantine Wing at Chattogram Port, the Nanotechnology Centre of Dhaka University, and the Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet).

Reports from the plant quarantine office and Kuet confirmed that the consignment contained poppy seeds.

Deputy Commissioner of Customs HM Kabir told The Daily Star that if the poppy seeds are germinable, they fall under the category of "Class A" narcotics as defined in the Narcotics Control Act, 2018. "Import of poppy seeds is completely prohibited under the Import Policy Order 2021-2024. Legal action is underway against the importer for false declaration and attempting to bring in banned goods," he said.

Auto-rickshaw driver shot in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A 37-year-old auto-rickshaw driver was injured after being shot by unidentified assailants in the Kuwaish Chalitatali area in Chattogram yesterday afternoon.

The injured -- identified as Md Idris Ali -- is from Bahaddarhat Kancha Bazar.

Nurul Alam Ashik, in-charge of the Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) Police Camp, said, "Around 1:45pm, as Idris Ali was driving his auto-rickshaw in the Chalitatali area, unidentified assailants opened fire, targeting him. He was shot in the knee and collapsed on the road."

Locals took Idris to CMCH around 2:45pm.

When contacted, Jasim Uddin, officer-in-charge of Bayezid Bostami Police Station, said he was not aware of the incident.

The incident comes after a fatal shooting in the same area last night, when Sarwar Hossain Babla was killed as assailants opened fire during an election campaign for BNP candidate Ershad Ullah.

কর্মাগিয়াল স্পেস বিক্রয়

মতিঝিল সংলগ্ন নয়া পল্টনে আধুনিক ডিজাইনের প্রায় নতুন বিল্ডিং, সকল প্রকার সুযোগ-সুবিধাসহ ৭১০৭ বর্গফুটের কর্মাগিয়াল ফ্লোর বিক্রয় হইবে।

যোগাযোগ : ০১৭২৩৪১৬৮৮৮

Let melodies live on in every school

FROM PAGE 3
is integral to the nation's identity.

At DU, the programme began around 11:30am in front of the Aparajeyo Bangla sculpture.

"Civilisation survives on the foundation of art, literature, and culture. Excluding music from

primary education will hinder the mental and physical growth of future generations," said Azizur Rahman Tuhin, a faculty member of the Department of Music.

At JnU, students and teachers gathered at Sculpture Square around 11:00am, sang protest

songs, and brought out a procession.

"This protest is not for our personal gain. We want melodies to live on in every school," said Nusrat Chowdhury Zafrin, a student of the 2019-20 session.

Prof Bajlur Rashid Khan, chair of JnU's Department of Printmaking, said, "Music nurtures a healthy mind, while physical education builds a healthy body. Both are essential for children's overall development."

At RU, students of the Department of Music demonstrated in front of the Senate Building and submitted a memorandum to the vice-chancellor. Faculty and students from other departments also joined in solidarity.

"Music and PE help children develop physically, mentally, and creatively. When these are compulsory in many countries, why should Bangladesh abolish them?" said Jahin Biswas Esha, a student of the department.

Harunur Rashid, a teacher of Islamic History and Culture, said, "Cultural activities are part of a nation's identity. The government should strengthen, not eliminate, music education."

At CU, students from the Departments of Music and Physical Education gathered at the Shaheed Minar around 11:00am.

They presented a five-point demand, including reinstating the posts, introducing similar positions at secondary levels, creating a dedicated "music teacher" post in the education cadre, and prioritising music

graduates in these recruitments.

Students of Jahangirnagar University held a similar protest on Monday.

On August 28, the government published the Primary School Teacher Recruitment Rules 2025, which included these posts.

Several religion-based groups opposed the move, calling instead for the recruitment of religious instructors.

Subsequently, the government issued a revised gazette on Sunday, dropping the proposed posts.

On Tuesday, it clarified that the plan to recruit 2,500 teachers across clusters had been scrapped based on the secretaries' committee's recommendation, which cited limited impact and potential disparities.

With 65,569 government primary schools nationwide, the committee deemed the proposed structure unfeasible. However, future recruitment may be considered subject to budget availability, the clarification added.

[Our DU, JnU, RU, and CU correspondents contributed to this report.]

PRAYER
TIMING

NOVEMBER 7

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:00 12:30 3:45 5:25 7:00
JAMAAT 5:35 1:15 4:00 5:30 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Bank Resolution Department

Bangladesh Bank
Head Office, Dhaka.

-: NOTICE :-

Subject: Bringing under Resolution and Appointment of Administrator to Export Import Bank of Bangladesh PLC (EXIM Bank), First Security Islami Bank PLC, Global Islami Bank PLC, Social Islami Bank PLC and Union Bank PLC

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that, Export Import Bank of Bangladesh PLC (EXIM Bank), First Security Islami Bank PLC, Global Islami Bank PLC, Social Islami Bank PLC and Union Bank PLC have been brought under resolution by virtue of the powers vested under Section 15 and 16 of the Bank Resolution Ordinance, 2025, and accordingly, with the approval of the competent authority, the following Bangladesh Bank officials have been appointed as the Administrator to these banks under Section 16 and 20 of the Bank Resolution Ordinance, 2025:

| Sl. | Name of the Bank | Name of the appointed Administrator |
|-----|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Export Import Bank of Bangladesh PLC | Mr. Md. Sawkatul Alam, Executive Director |
| 2. | First Security Islami Bank PLC | Mr. Muhammad Badiuzzaman Dider, Executive Director |
| 3. | Global Islami Bank PLC | Mr. Md. Muksduzzaman, Director |
| 4. | Social Islami Bank PLC | Mr. Md. Salah Uddin, Executive Director |
| 5. | Union Bank PLC | Mr. Md. Muksduzzaman, Director |

The Administrators of the banks under resolution have assumed charge with effect from 05 November, 2025.

The administrators appointed by Bangladesh Bank shall perform the overall managerial and administrative responsibilities of their respective banks. During their tenure all kinds of regular banking functions of those banks shall continue as usual, as permitted by Bank Resolution Ordinance, 2025. The interests of the depositors shall remain safe and secured and the detailed plan in this regard will be communicated to all concerned in due course.

Your full cooperation is earnestly requested in this initiative taken in the interest of the public.

DGP: 48/2025-3007
Date: 06-11-2025

Director (BRD)
Bangladesh Bank

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে-হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

GD-2362

DIRECTORATE GENERAL DEFENCE PURCHASE
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
NEW AIRPORT ROAD, TEJGAON, DHAKA –1215
Web : www.dgdp.gov.bd
Email : adp5army1@dgdp.gov.bd

TENDER NOTICE

1. Sealed Tenders in Local Currency are invited from bonafide Manufacturer(s) /Supplier(s) (Enlisted Firms in DGDP) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh Army.

| Ser No | Name of Items & Qty | Schedule Selling Date | Tender Opening Date | Tender No | Cost of I/T | |
|--------|---|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| | | From | To | | | |
| 1. | Item No-1: Bed Sheet Offrs (Single) and Pillow Case Offrs, Qty-6,000 Set (Wind Chime Stripe-1,000 Set, Skyway Stripe-1,000 Set, Starligh Blue Stripe-1,000 Set, White Stripe-1,000 Set, Two Color Print-1,000 Set and Three Color Stripe-1,000 Set). Item No-2: Bed Sheet Offrs (Double) and Pillow Case Offrs, Qty-18,000 Set (Wind Chime Stripe-3,000 Set, Skyway Stripe-3,000 Set, Starligh Blue Stripe-3,000 Set, White Stripe-3,000 Set, Two Color Print-3,000 Set and Three Color Stripe-3,000 Set). | 09-11-25 | 18-12-25 | 21-12-25 | 219.257.25 | 5,000.00 |

2. Tender Schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (Non-refundable) during office time between 0800 hour to 1300 hour. The Tender can be dropped latest by 1125 hour on opening date (21-12-2025) and shall be opened at 1130 hour on the specified date of opening in presence of all Tenderers (If present).

Dated: November 2025
আই এস পি আর/বিবিধ/৪৪৫

Major
For Director General

GD-2358

Israel ramps up Lebanon strikes

Hezbollah vows to defend itself

AGENCIES

The Israeli military has launched renewed air raids on southern Lebanon's Tyre district, claiming it attacked Hezbollah operatives rebuilding what it called "military infrastructure" as Israel escalates daily attacks on its northern neighbour in flagrant violation of a one-year-old truce.

In a statement yesterday, the Israeli army said it hit members of Hezbollah's construction unit and that it would "continue to operate in order to remove any threat to the territory of the state of Israel".

Lebanon's National News Agency confirmed Israeli raids near the towns of Toura and Abbasiyeh in the Tyre area but did not report any casualties. The attacks come as Hezbollah issued a firm rejection of any political negotiations with Israel.



Pakistan fires into Afghanistan despite truce

AFP, Kabul

Projectiles were fired from Pakistan into Afghanistan yesterday, an Afghan military source and witnesses told AFP, as the two neighbours resumed peace negotiations in Turkey aimed at reinforcing a fragile ceasefire.

"Pakistan used light and heavy weapons and targeted civilian areas," the Afghan military source said of the shelling, which witnesses said lasted 10-15 minutes.

"We have not retaliated yet, out of respect for the ongoing negotiations" in Istanbul, said the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Militaries from the South Asian neighbours clashed last month, with dozens killed in the worst such violence since the Taliban returned to power in Kabul in 2021.



Quarter of Swedish politicians suffer threats: report

AFP, Stockholm

One in four of Swedish elected politicians suffered threats or harassment last year, and a quarter of those affected contemplated leaving as a result, a new report showed yesterday.

The issue was brought into the spotlight in Sweden in October, when party leader of the Centre Party Anna-Karin Hatt stepped down after just five months, saying

that she did not feel safe following a slew of threats.

According to a new report by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Bra), 25.4 percent of elected representatives stated that in 2024 "they had been the victim of some form of threat or harassment, or of violence, vandalism or theft".

The report is based on a survey of elected politicians and Bra said about 7,500, out of the just over 13,300 elected representatives that

constituted the sample population, had participated.

Women were slightly more at risk with 26.8 percent of those surveyed stating that they had been victimised at least once during 2024, compared to 24.4 percent of men.

The report also said that one in four of these politicians had considered leaving as a result. In most cases, the perpetrator was either unknown or anonymous, according to the report.



People rest beside cars swept one on top of another by floodwaters caused by Typhoon Kalmaegi in Liloan, Cebu province, Philippines, yesterday. The typhoon killed at least 140 people and left 127 missing after unleashing devastating floods across the central Philippines, according to official figures, as the storm moved toward Vietnam.

PHOTO: AFP

Ukraine hits Russia's Volgograd with drones

One killed; fire reported near major refinery; dozens of flights halted; Russian troops advance north inside Pokrovsk

REUTERS, Moscow

Ukraine struck Russia with at least 75 drones yesterday, sparking a fire in an industrial area of the southern city of Volgograd, killing at least one and halting dozens of flights across the country, Russian officials said.

Ukraine has for several months been striking Russian oil refineries, depots and pipelines in a bid to undermine the Russian economy as Russian forces advance in eastern Ukraine.

Volgograd Governor Andrei Bocharov said a 48-year-old man was killed by shrapnel and that a fire was sparked in an industrial zone in the Krasnoarmeysk district of the city, which was formerly known as Stalingrad.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Firefighters work at the site of apartment buildings damaged by a Russian drone strike in Kamianske, Dnipro region, Ukraine, yesterday.

The district is home to Lukoil's major Volgograd refinery which has been repeatedly targeted by Ukraine. In 2024 the Volgograd refinery processed 13.7 million tonnes of oil, or 5.1 percent of the total volume at Russian refineries.

Russia's defence ministry said that 75 Ukrainian drones were downed overnight, including 49 in the Volgograd region.

Russian media said that 13 airports across Russia halted flights amid the drone attack. Russia said on Wednesday that its forces were advancing north inside Pokrovsk in a drive to take full

control of the Ukrainian city.

Moscow says taking Pokrovsk, dubbed "the gateway to Donetsk" by Russian media, would give it a platform to drive north towards the two biggest remaining Ukrainian-controlled cities in the Donetsk region - Kramatorsk and Sloviansk.

Russia wants to take the whole of the Donbas region, which comprises Donetsk and neighbouring Luhansk provinces. Ukraine still controls about 10 percent of Donbas - an area of

US to cancel flights as govt shutdown drags on

AFP, Washington

US officials said the scheduled capacity for flights would be cut by 10 percent in 40 busy air traffic areas nationwide today as the longest government shutdown drags on.

Federal agencies have been grinding to a halt since Congress failed to approve funding past September 30, with some 1.4 million federal workers, from air traffic controllers to park wardens, still on enforced leave or working without pay.

"There is going to be a 10 percent reduction in capacity at 40 of our locations," Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy told a White House news briefing on Wednesday, adding that the cuts would come into effect today.

Aviation Administration (FAA) chief Bryan Bedford said the reductions would be at "40 high traffic environment markets."

The official list of affected airports was expected to be published later yesterday but, according to US media outlets, flights will be reduced at some of the busiest airports in the nation, including Chicago, Dallas and Los Angeles.

Trump admin revoked 80,000 non-immigrant visas: US official

REUTERS, Washington

President Donald Trump's administration has revoked around 80,000 non-immigrant visas since its inauguration on January 20 for offenses ranging from driving under the influence to assault and theft, a senior State Department official said on Wednesday.

The extent of the revocations, first reported by Washington Examiner, reflects a broad immigration crackdown initiated when Trump came into office, deporting an unprecedented number of migrants including some who held valid visas.

The administration has also adopted a stricter policy on granting visas, with tightened social media vetting and expanded screening.

Around 16,000 of the visa revocations were tied to cases of driving under the influence, while about 12,000 were for assault and another 8,000 for theft.

"These three crimes accounted for almost half of revocations this year," said the senior State Department official, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

In August, a State Department spokesperson said Washington had revoked more than 6,000 student visas for overstays and breaking the law, including a small number for "support for terrorism."

Nancy Pelosi announces retirement

AFP, Washington

Nancy Pelosi, a towering figure in US politics and the first female speaker of the House of Representatives, announced yesterday that she would be stepping down at the next election.

"I will not be seeking reelection to Congress," the 85-year-old Democrat said in a video heavily targeted at her hometown constituents in San Francisco.

"With a grateful heart, I look forward to my final year of service as your proud representative."

During her tenure, Pelosi gained a reputation as a defender of human rights and an early advocate of gay rights.

It was her work in helping then-President Barack Obama win enactment of the 2010 Affordable Care Act, known as "Obamacare," that she sees as her greatest accomplishment.



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Sudanese students from local schools shout slogans during an organized march in Gedaref city, eastern Sudan, yesterday, protesting violations committed by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) against the people of El-Fasher. New satellite imagery has detected activity 'consistent with mass graves' in El-Fasher, according to a report by Yale researchers.

PHOTO: AFP

Quarter of Swedish politicians suffer threats: report

that she did not feel safe following a slew of threats.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Principal
Sylhet Polytechnic Institute, Sylhet-3100
<https://sylhet.polytech.gov.bd>
e-Mail: principalsylhetpoly@gmail.com

Memo No: 57.03.9131.304.07.001.25-030

e-Tender Notice

Date: 05-11-2025

e-Tender Notice will be invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.procure.gov.bd>) for following procurement.

| Tender ID No. | Package No | Package Description | Tender Publication Date and Time | Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time |
|---------------|-----------------|---|----------------------------------|--|
| 1170887 | SPI-25-26-GD-02 | Supply of Computer Equipment (3255101) | 06-Nov-2025 16:00:00 | 20-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170969 | SPI-25-26-GD-03 | Supply of Others Stationary (3255105) | 06-Nov-2025 16:00:00 | 20-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170970 | SPI-25-26-GD-04 | Supply of Teaching and Learning Materials (4112312) | 06-Nov-2025 16:00:00 | 20-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170971 | SPI-25-26-GD-05 | Supply of Raw Materials and Spare Parts for Electromedical, Civil, Mechanical and Power Technology (3256105) | 06-Nov-2025 16:00:00 | 20-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170972 | SPI-25-26-GD-06 | Supply of Raw Materials and Spare Parts for Computer Science, Electrical and Electronics Technology (3256105) | 06-Nov-2025 16:00:00 | 20-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170973 | SPI-25-26-GD-07 | Supply of Sports Materials (3256107) | 06-Nov-2025 16:00:00 | 20-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170197 | SPI-25-26-GD-08 | Supply of Engineering & Equipment for Electronics Technology (4112304) | 06-Nov-2025 11:00:00 | 23-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170255 | SPI-25-26-GD-09 | Supply of Engineering & Equipment for PLC, Robotics and Artificial Intelligence Lab (4112304) | 06-Nov-2025 11:00:00 | 23-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170272 | SPI-25-26-GD-10 | Supply of Engineering & Equipment for Mechanical Technology (4112304) | 06-Nov-2025 11:00:00 | 23-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170301 | SPI-25-26-GD-11 | Supply of Engineering & Equipment for Electromedical and Power Technology (4112304) | 06-Nov-2025 11:00:00 | 23-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170974 | SPI-25-26-GD-12 | Supply of Office Equipment (4112310) | 06-Nov-2025 16:00:00 | 20-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |
| 1170975 | SPI-25-26-GD-13 | Supply of Furniture (4112314) | 06-Nov-2025 16:00:00 | 20-Nov-2025 11:00:00 |

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.procure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Mohammed Rehan Uddin)
Principal (Additional Charge)
Phone : 02-996632529

GD-2356

Chattogram shooting is a bad omen

With polls fast approaching, we must strive to prevent political violence

The attack on a political event in Chattogram, which left one man dead and a BNP leader wounded, is a chilling warning that the biggest challenge in the coming weeks will be to maintain an atmosphere of peace and stability ahead of the planned election in February. For that to happen, all political actors and the government must make a genuine commitment to curbing the violence that too often taints the nation's political landscape.

The brazen assault occurred while BNP's nominated candidate for the Chattogram-8 constituency, Ershad Ullah, and his supporters were distributing leaflets in the port city's Purbo Bayezid area. According to initial reports, seven to eight armed assailants arrived in a microbus, opened fire, and fled the scene. Police were quick to assert that the BNP leader was not the target but was struck by a stray bullet. They concluded that the actual target was the deceased, Sarwar Babla, a man with an extensive criminal record. The official version described the attack as the outcome of an ongoing gang feud rather than political violence.

But that is hardly any comfort. The fact that a known criminal was present at a voter outreach event is itself alarming. Reports confirm that Sarwar had been in and out of jail on charges including possession of an AK-47 rifle. Once an associate of a notorious crime boss, he later formed his own gang, waging turf wars over extortion and other illicit activities. This was not his first brush with violence, of course. Just months earlier, Sarwar narrowly escaped an ambush that killed two of his companions. The latest episode, playing out in the shadow of a political campaign, illustrates a terrifying blurring of lines between crimes and politics.

The Chief Adviser's Office has condemned the attack, promising a swift investigation and reaffirming that "violence and intimidation have no place in our political or social life." Yet history shows a darker trend: political parties across the spectrum have too often relied on unsavoury figures to supply muscle and mobilise voters. Such alliances erode public trust and undermine the integrity of elections. That practice must end.

Now, a credible investigation must go beyond apprehending the gunmen to examine why a man facing multiple criminal cases was present at a political event. Also, it is time to confront the nexus between local politicians and criminal syndicates that allows such figures to thrive. With the election fast approaching, the responsibility lies with all parties to renounce violent enforcers. For their part, law enforcement agencies must act as neutral guardians of peace.

No illegal surveillance should be allowed

Draft law forbidding unlawful interception a welcome first step

With the growth of modern technologies, countries have been increasingly tempted by the use of surveillance tools to monitor or intercept communications. The situation in Bangladesh has been no different, especially during the authoritarian rule of Awami League. As per a report by The Daily Star, between 2016 and 2024, the National Telecommunications Monitoring Centre (NTMC), police, and Rab collectively purchased surveillance equipment worth over Tk 1,382 crore. The legality of using such equipment has always been a hotly debated topic, and the risks in countries like Bangladesh, with poor safeguards and rights records, are particularly dire.

Against this backdrop, the interim government's drafting of a new ordinance to penalise unauthorised surveillance and abolish all pre-existing interception platforms, including the NTMC, marks a major shift. If approved, the Bangladesh Telecommunications Ordinance 2025 will not only criminalise unlawful interception—with prison terms of up to 10 years for perpetrators—but also place all "lawful interception" under a Central Lawful Interception Platform (CLIP), which can only act on behalf of authorised agencies based on court directives or orders issued by an Independent Oversight Council. We welcome this initiative. For a country reeling from years of arbitrary surveillance, this is a necessary first step towards restoring trust and protecting citizens' rights.

That said, we must recognise that laws alone cannot change a system. Previously, when surveillance was used to target dissidents, journalists, and activists, it happened not because laws permitted it, but because there was impunity, lack of oversight, and a political culture that saw citizens as subjects to be controlled. We must not repeat this. The new law must not become another statute that looks good on paper but fails in practice.

For it to be effective, meaningful institutional constraints as well as constant parliamentary oversight are crucial. The draft ordinance proposes that the five-member Independent Oversight Council be formed by representatives nominated by the president, prime minister, and parliament speaker each, along with two retired judges. But unless parliament—including opposition voices at the relevant parliamentary standing committee—exercises constant oversight, and unless the judiciary performs the role envisaged for it in the ordinance, the oversight structure risks becoming ceremonial. We urge civil society groups to closely study the draft and ensure there are no loopholes that can allow any state actor or agency to exploit the CLIP and conduct clandestine surveillance.

We must also safeguard against weaponisation of "national security" as a catch-all justification. Necessity, proportionality, legality, and accountability must be treated as binding principles. The authorities, present and future, must ensure that any surveillance is treated as an exception, not the norm, and is always conducted within the legal framework and by preserving the rights, privacy, and dignity of citizens.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Disputed US presidential election

On this day in 2000, the US presidential election ended in a statistical tie between Democrat Al Gore and Republican George W. Bush, only to be settled on December 12 by the US Supreme Court after a bitter legal dispute.

LESSONS FROM MAMDANI'S MAGIC

Put voters back at the centre of our politics

No compromise on holding the elections on time



Mahfuz Anam is the editor and publisher of The Daily Star.

MAHFUZ ANAM

Forget other issues and challenges, Zohran Mamdani's election as mayor of New York City proves the supremacy of the "will" of voters. He was opposed by every organised power imaginable in New York. But he was supported by "people's power," which is the only power democracy is supposed to recognise. If the official election machinery is uninfluenced, then voters can defeat all other powers in a democracy. President Trump was publicly opposed to him, so were the Republican Party and even Democratic Party high-ups (Clinton supported Mamdani's opponent), and the elite class in general, who poured in billions to oppose Mamdani, yet the voters won. Democracy prevailed. Most importantly, it broke the sense of powerlessness of the poor, the inferiority complex of the middle class, and the psychological barrier of the disempowered—that the elite can never be defeated. Nothing could have boosted the US's image as a democracy more than this.

This election has greatly strengthened our belief in elections, the power of unity among voters, and a new faith in public wisdom. A majority of New Yorkers shattered everything that the current political trend in the US stands for. Of course, Mamdani was a great speaker, and he ran a superb campaign. But the crux of it was that he sensed the public pulse and articulated it effectively, so that the voters developed trust in him. All of this would have amounted to nothing if voters did not have the courage, determination, and energy to express their views by casting their votes in record numbers.

Our election may not be similar to Mamdani's in terms of upsetting the ruling class, but it is a similar moment for us in terms of returning to democracy. Once again, we hope we are at the doorstep of a lively parliament where government and ruling party can be held accountable, where bureaucracy will once again not be the "masters" but the "public servants," as they were recruited to be, and police will enforce the law and not be "above the law" unlike before, when they have enjoyed perpetual impunity regardless of what they did. In my view, one word encompasses everything that we expect and hope from this election: establishing accountability. Our election—hopefully a free and fair one—is coming to us after 17

There is the lack of trust between political parties. Each believes that whatever is being promised before the election will not be honoured after victory. It is for this simple reason that NCP and Jamaat are insisting on a referendum, although its practicality and legality have raised many questions. The reason is simple: lack of trust in BNP's promises. It is true for all other parties as well.

long years, and for that many years, and also before it, we did not have accountability.

There is much to learn from the NYC mayoral election, even if some may say the two contexts are very different, one being in the US and the other in Bangladesh. The differences are ornamental; the similarity, in terms of holding power to account, is fundamental. And the lesson is how to touch the hearts and minds of voters, gain their trust, energise them to

work for you. There were over 50,000 volunteers, mostly young, working for Mamdani. The voters believed in him so deeply that they were willing to take all the risks that conventional wisdom would have warned them against, but they did not shy away.

Will Bangladeshi voters have that chance? The challenge is not only to appeal to them but to empower them, to give them the confidence that they matter. Mamdani explained the strategy of his campaign: while politicians usually go to voters, telling them about their plans and how implementing them would benefit the public, he, instead, went and asked what they wanted. "All said they wanted New York City to become affordable for them. So, we built our campaign around how to bring down the cost of living in the city," said Mamdani. In our case, do our politicians ever ask voters what they need or want? Will they do so this time?

After eight months of the National Consensus Commission's (NCC) dialogue, we expected a much stronger consensus among all political parties to hold a free and fair election. We did not expect them to put conditions and couple them with threats. How can anybody say that if our demands are not accepted, then there cannot be any

most likely know very little about what the July National Charter contains. With so little public knowledge, how can we conduct a referendum on such a crucial and complex document that deals with constitutional reforms? Would that be ethically and morally correct? Would such a referendum give us any authentic view of the public position on this document?

Whatever may be the impediments,

within the big parties. How the rivalries at the grassroots level will play out as the election date nears is a constant source of anxiety in holding a free and fair election.

The sad fact is that, at this final stage, we have no consensus yet on the future direction of the nation. After eight months of discussions, the government was forced to ask the political parties to come to some final

So much time, energy and resources have been spent in bringing various political parties together, taking them through an organised process of discussion, and trying to bring out their collective thoughts—all to build political consensus on fundamental issues. While that was very good indeed, no effort was made to gauge the views and expectations of the voters. Voters are never at the core of our election process; in fact, they are hardly given any importance.

the most important task before the whole nation—and one that we must pledge to implement with all our sincerity and energy—is to hold the highly anticipated national election that the country desperately needs, within the time frame announced by the chief adviser.

The term "interim government" is self-explanatory. Whatever its time frame, it is a transitory authority. Bangladesh's global relations, though greatly benefitted by Prof Yunus's personal popularity and prestige, cannot assume normalcy till an elected government is in place. Media report shows that domestic private investment sank to a five-year low in

common position within one week for the electoral process to move forward. We hope the appeal is honoured.

As we understand, the issue for Jamaat and NCP is proportional representation at the Upper House. We think it is a reasonable demand, which will make the functioning of the Upper House more effective. After all, the latter cannot be made a rubber stamp of the Lower House. It will be, if BNP's wish prevails. We think BNP should see the merit of the alternative.

Jamaat and NCP, on the other hand, should accept BNP's suggestion that coalition members be allowed to use the symbol of the umbrella party.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

election? What sort of respect for voters does that show? It is disappointing to see that Sheikh Hasina may have left, but our basic political culture of imposing partisan agenda on the people has not changed. To the best of our knowledge, there has not been a single attempt by any political party to conduct any opinion survey to find out what our people want.

So much time, energy and resources have been spent in bringing various political parties together, taking them through an organised process of discussion, and trying to bring out their collective thoughts—all to build political consensus on fundamental issues. While that was very good indeed, no effort was made to gauge the views and expectations of the voters. Voters are never at the core of our election process; in fact, they are hardly given any importance.

Take, for example, how much money and time we have spent on finalising the July National Charter, but how little effort has been made to make the general people aware of its contents. Originally, there were 84 recommendations. Now the plan is to focus on 48 of them that deal with reforming the constitution and hold a referendum on those. Don't the public have a right to know what these recommendations are, what they mean, what their implications are, and how they may affect their lives? It is our view that voters below a certain level of education, such as farmers, day-labourers, rickshaw-pullers, street hawkers, vendors, small shop owners, many factory workers, domestic help, etc.—numbering in the crores—would

the current fiscal year and there is a general sense of uncertainty and a lack of confidence among investors due to the absence of an elected government. Local entrepreneurs are reluctant to invest their money without a clear view of the coming government. So, elections must be held on time, and any impediment placed in its path can serve no other purpose than to hurt our national interest.

However, there are many challenges that need to be overcome before holding a free and fair election. There is the lack of trust between political parties. Each believes that whatever is being promised before the election will not be honoured after victory. It is for this simple reason that NCP and Jamaat are insisting on a referendum, although its practicality and legality have raised many questions. The reason is simple: lack of trust in BNP's promises. It is true for all other parties as well.

Then there is the history of abuse of the administrative machinery, which creates an unbalanced level playing field. All political parties know how the state machinery—especially the police and bureaucracy—is used to influence elections. That knowledge is fuelling the present suspicion about the neutrality of these public institutions.

The fear of political violence is also a reality that we cannot set aside. Already, disturbing signs of intra-party clashes are becoming worrisome. According to Ain o Salish Kendra data, this year, between January and September, 323 incidents of political violence took place across the country and more than half of them were

This may not be the best option. However, dissenting parties should accept it as a compromise. Though a gazette notification has already been issued, there's enough time for it to be amended if a political consensus can be reached.

As for the date of the referendum, the solution seems to already exist: do it on the same day as the national polls, as suggested by BNP. Though we strongly feel that holding the referendum as referred to above will not be fair to the voters, who do not know much about its contents, still, to remove the impediments for holding the election, NCP and Jamaat should accept the proposal. The logistics of holding it on a separate day are humongous and expensive. It is like doubling the expense, and the logistics will be impossible to manage.

Thus, we see a high possibility of a convergence of views among the three main parties.

Concluding, as we began, with the inspirational example of Mamdani's election in New York City—show the voters the respect they deserve and give them a chance to have their wishes fulfilled. Bring them to the centre of chalking out the future of Bangladesh. Let us end the culture of imposing our own wishes on voters.

Our plea is that all political parties, especially the three prominent ones, must put aside their differences and place national interest above everything else, and join hands to hold the election in February 2026. We need to stop going in circles and move forward.

Why nuclear intelligence is vital for Bangladesh



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MD SHAFIQUL ISLAM

As Bangladesh prepares to begin commercial operation of the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) in late 2025, the promise of cleaner, reliable baseload power is now closer to reality. Yet with this milestone comes a parallel responsibility: ensuring the highest standards of nuclear security. Nuclear security refers to the prevention, detection, and response to theft, sabotage, unauthorised access, or any malicious act involving nuclear and other radioactive materials or related facilities from both external and internal adversaries. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) consistently underscores that the success of nuclear operations depends not only on technological excellence but also on resilient and adaptive security frameworks. Within this context, nuclear intelligence (NUCINT)—the collection, analysis, and interpretation of information related to nuclear and radiological threats—emerges as a cornerstone for safeguarding national security, peace, and stability.

Bangladesh is situated in a strategically sensitive region, bordered by nuclear-armed India and Pakistan and lying close to unstable Myanmar. The country’s geographical position, porous borders, and expanding critical infrastructure make it vulnerable to nuclear smuggling, trafficking, sabotage, and insider threats. Nuclear intelligence serves as an invisible shield, providing early warnings about illicit activities and improving the country’s ability to detect, assess, and respond to threats involving nuclear or radiological materials. For instance, integrating spectral data from handheld and portal detectors at border checkpoints can help identify radioactive anomalies in cargo, transforming isolated security measures into a proactive intelligence network.

Nuclear security traditionally relied on the “3Gs”—guards, gates, and guns—focusing on a physical protection system. However, as technology has evolved, so have the

threats. Modern security now includes cyber protection, nuclear intelligence, and insider threat mitigation. Today, adversaries do not only attack from outside; insiders with access or knowledge can cause equal or greater harm. Ideologically motivated adversaries (criminals or terrorists) may exploit vulnerabilities in transport, storage, or operational stages of nuclear material. External adversaries such as Al Qaeda or ISI have historically sought nuclear or radiological materials for malicious use, including the creation of “dirty bombs or nuclear weapons.”

Thus, NUCINT bridges physical, cyber, and human dimensions of security. It uses tools such as gamma-ray spectroscopy to detect enriched uranium, neutron sensors to identify reactor anomalies, and AI-assisted analytics to flag abnormal behaviour. Deployed at key entry points—such as Chattogram or Mongla ports, where nuclear fuel enters the country—these systems transform isolated checkpoints into a national detection network.

International obligations and Bangladesh’s commitments

Bangladesh’s approach to nuclear intelligence is shaped by international laws and standards. The Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and its 2005 Amendment obligate states to protect nuclear materials during storage, use, and transport. Complementary global conventions criminalise nuclear terrorism, terrorist bombing, and financing of terrorism. UN Security Council Resolutions 1373 and 1540 obligate states to prevent non-state actors from obtaining weapons of mass destruction and to cooperate on intelligence and law enforcement. Bangladesh adheres to these commitments and aligns with the IAEA’s Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its import-export guidelines. Together, these instruments guide national policy, regulatory practices, and intelligence-sharing with the

IAEA, Interpol, and UN bodies.

Bangladesh has strengthened its nuclear governance through several laws, including the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Act (2012), Chemical Weapons (Prohibition) Act (2006), Anti-Terrorism Act (Revised 2012) and its Rules (2013), and the Money Laundering Prevention Act (2012). These laws regulate nuclear materials, ensure safe transport, prevent financing of illicit activities,

Port bound for China. In 2022, high-value electrical cables were stolen from RNPP cranes, allegedly involving insider knowledge.

These incidents may not represent major nuclear crises, but they reveal weaknesses in detection, coordination, and intelligence-sharing. They highlight the necessity of a national NUCINT system that links border security, law enforcement, regulatory bodies, and plant operators.



Bangladesh’s geographical position, porous borders, and expanding critical infrastructure make it vulnerable to nuclear smuggling, trafficking, sabotage, and insider threats.
FILE PHOTO: STAR

and empower authorities to investigate and prosecute nuclear-related crimes. Yet, without intelligence-led implementation, legal tools remain reactive rather than preventive.

A few past incidents underscore why nuclear intelligence is urgently needed. In 2003, four members of a banned militant outfit were arrested for attempting to smuggle 225 grams of uranium oxide near the Indian border—later traced to Kazakhstan—potentially usable in a “dirty bomb.” In 2014, police in Dhaka seized a “uranium-like” substance along with a radiation meter and a gas mask. In 2017, radioactive material was detected in a container at Chittagong

Policy and intelligence integration

Global cyber-attacks—such as cyber intrusions on Iranian nuclear facilities—have proven that nuclear security now extends beyond physical barriers. Digital systems that control reactors, cooling systems, and radiation monitoring devices can be targeted remotely. For Bangladesh, cyber-nuclear intelligence must be integrated into security planning to monitor network traffic, predict anomalies, and intercept malicious codes before they disrupt safety systems.

To institutionalise NUCINT, Bangladesh could consider establishing a nuclear intelligence cell under the National Security Intelligence (NSI). This unit should

include experts in nuclear engineering, cybersecurity, law enforcement, radiation science, AI analytics, and emergency response. Recruitment must be merit-based and technically rigorous to maintain credibility and confidentiality.

The cell would act as a central coordination hub, linking the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority, Nuclear Power Plant Company Bangladesh Limited, security agencies, universities, customs, ports, coast guards, and the Prime Minister’s Office. Its role would be collecting and analysing intelligence related to nuclear materials and threats; Facilitating real-time data sharing among stakeholders; Conducting risk assessments, tabletop exercises, and incident simulations; and coordinating with international bodies like the IAEA, Interpol, and Saarc regional platforms.

For Bangladesh to become a responsible nuclear state, several priorities are essential: integrate physical, cyber, and nuclear intelligence systems for real-time situational awareness; establish a national detection architecture with portal monitors, drones, mobile labs, and handheld devices at ports, airports, and border crossings; develop a nuclear forensics laboratory to trace intercepted materials and support criminal investigations; train specialised personnel in radiation detection, cyber defence, intelligence analysis, and crisis communication; enhance regional cooperation with India, China, and Saarc states and global partners like IAEA and Interpol to share best practices and intelligence.

Nuclear intelligence is not merely a technical tool or a silent report. It is the nervous system of nuclear governance and the country’s sovereignty, built on integrity and sensitivity, and designed to turn invisible threats into actionable insights. As Bangladesh transitions from a nuclear newcomer to an operating nation, NUCINT must serve as its first and last line of defence. If Bangladesh institutionalises nuclear intelligence, strengthens communication among agencies, and develops knowledgeable human resources while upholding regional and international obligations, the country will emerge as a responsible nuclear nation. The atom must remain a symbol of peace, prosperity, and progress—not a source of risk or danger.

Redirecting money spent on migration will boost small businesses



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KHONDKAR SIDDIQUE E RABBANI

Every year, about 22 lakh young Bangladeshis enter the job market. Finding no work, nearly 10 lakh borrow or sell family assets, each spending Tk 5-10 lakh to migrate abroad for menial jobs and many end up exploited or even perish at sea. If we do the math, that’s over Tk 75,000 crore leaving the country every year. If even a fraction of this were invested locally—say by one or two lakh of those youths—employment and GDP both will be boosted. Skilled workers could still go abroad as respected professionals rather than cheap labour.

A major criticism of the interim government is its failure to come up with a clear plan to lift millions out of poverty or revive the economy. Yet this could be achieved even within the few months the government has, if certain policies were changed.

Based on my four-decade-long work with small and medium enterprises (SMEs), I can assert that Tk 5 lakh is enough to start a small

enterprise. So why don’t people invest? The answer is fear. Entrepreneurs are constantly harassed because of trade licenses, VAT, and tax rules that empower predatory officials. Rent-seekers linked to political networks inflate costs further. These expenses, of course, cannot be shown in official accounts, but then small entrepreneurs (SEs) are often accused of keeping excessive margins and end up being punished by mobile courts through crippling fines or even jail sentences. The result? The life savings and years of effort of these entrepreneurs collapse.

Perhaps that is why many young people risk dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean Sea rather than investing in a small business at home. This fear, not lack of funds, blocks the potential for huge local investment.

What needs to be changed

The remedies are not complex, but they demand courage, understanding of local realities and humane behaviour from

policymakers. Also, we need to ask ourselves, what is it that we want from the SMEs? Obedience to strict government regulations, whether practicable or not, or being able to deliver good quality products and service to consumers? I believe the latter is the answer, as I put forward some suggestions to this end.

Create a distinct SE category requiring special support to survive and grow. Remove “Medium” enterprises from the SME label. The millions of youth we are talking about start small.

A recent SME Foundation study found 90 percent of SMEs never took bank loans, yet policy circles keep fixating on credit. What the entrepreneurs need most is an environment that lets them experiment and grow. The amount spent on migration alone dwarfs any credit programme.

SEs should be exempt from trade license, VAT, and income tax. Government revenue from them is negligible, but entrepreneurs lose a lot to corruption. Someone once raised a question why a paddy thresher seller needs a license for selling the machine when a farmer does not need a trade licence to grow paddy.

Rather than policing, launch a responsible entrepreneurship campaign so that producers self-regulate, maintain quality, and protect the environment. Mutual trust among producers, traders, and consumers will prove stronger than fear-based enforcement. A system built on fear encourages a culture of bribery and drives good products out of the

market. In addition to the formulation of favourable policies, strong oversight is vital.

Transform the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection into “Seed,” whose officers would train small entrepreneurs in management, accounting, and technology—directly, or through partnerships with Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), Bangladesh Industrial and Technical Assistance Center (BITAC), Bangladesh Machine Tools Factory Limited (BMTF) and universities. Instead of policing, Seed should provide advice, consultation and motivation, strengthening the entrepreneurs and awakening their inner sense of responsibility. Merge SME Foundation and Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) into Seed, creating one dynamic agency. Seed should not give loans or build industrial zones; banks and private initiatives can do that. However, Seed should link up SEs with them and create employment for thousands of university graduates.

Agriculture flourished in Bangladesh because of a tax-free environment, which eliminated harassment. Furthermore, the Agriculture Extension Department provided necessary support and advice. SEs deserve the same.

Most small ventures start as home experiments. Forcing them to move to distant commercial zones will kill the initiative. China allows countless home-

based businesses, drawing on family and community workforce. In Bangladesh, they exist unofficially and entrepreneurs’ fear of the authorities often pushes them to operate in hazardous conditions. Legalising home-based enterprises under Seed’s supervision would allow them to take adequate safety measures and unleash huge grassroots industrialisation.

Large Bangladeshi industries depend entirely on imported technologies and cannot adopt indigenous innovations. Hence, very few products developed by BCSIR over the last seven decades reached the markets. Universities and research bodies must build active partnerships with small rather than large industries. Seed can coordinate this collaboration.

Each year in Bangladesh, millions of youths seek work, while billions of dollars flow out through migration. Yet the alternative lies within reach. If policy shifts from courting foreign investors to empowering local entrepreneurs, the nation can mobilise its own capital for productive growth. Investing in small enterprises is not charity; it is smart economics, the fastest route to job creation and resilience.

Supporting small enterprises can transform Bangladesh from a remittance-dependent nation into one driven by innovation, dignity, and self-reliance. The capital exists. The youth are ready. Only courage and vision are needed from our policymakers.

CROSSWORD

BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

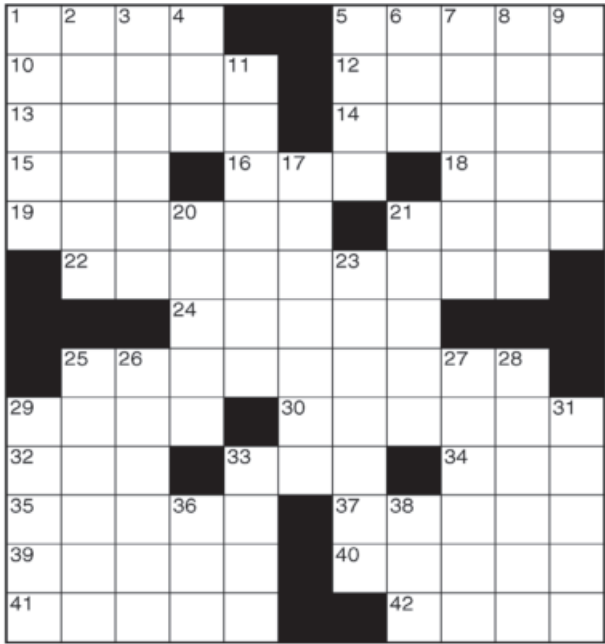
- 1 Shore eroder
- 5 City on the Loire
- 10 Shaq of the NBA
- 12 Start
- 13 Alarm
- 14 ‘Superman’ star
- 15 Lot sight
- 16 Coquettish
- 18 Phone bill addition
- 19 2015 Paul Rudd movie
- 21 Campus area
- 22 Deficit
- 24 Characteristic
- 25 Cascade
- 29 Ring of light
- 30 ‘Gave it my best’
- 32 Nest item

33 Low digit

- 34 Butter unit
- 35 Battery end
- 37 Omit in pronunciation
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- 1 Puccini opera
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- 5 Thatcher, e.g.
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- 8 Show
- 9 Spirited horse
- 11 ‘Smiley’s People’

writer

- 17 Smallest Great Lake
- 20 Words to live by
- 21 Saudi Arabia neighbor
- 23 Age for a quinceañera
- 25 “Siegfried” composer
- 26 Candidate of 2000
- 27 Lusty drive
- 28 Sluggish
- 29 Body pump
- 31 Garb
- 33 Addition column
- 36 Expected
- 38 Auction unit



SATURDAY’S ANSWERS

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PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MONSHED

A sneak-peek into the unlikely pairing of Antik Mahmud and Dilara Zaman

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

Previously, Antik Mahmud had teamed up with the legendary Abul Hayat for a special animated video. This time, he is partnering with renowned actress Dilara Zaman, who will be lending her voice to a cartoon for the very first time. Interestingly, this unusual collaboration had been on Antik's mind ever since he worked with Abul Hayat.

"Last time, when I recorded with Abul Hayat sir, I mentioned that I wanted to work with Dilara Zaman ma'am. A year removed, that dream came true. It took me a year to come up with the perfect script," said Antik.

Though he didn't want to reveal too much about the new project, he did open up about Dilara Zaman's character. "She plays Amena *apa*, who lives in an old-age home," he explained.

"But just because her character lives there, doesn't mean the story will be sad. There's actually a funny angle – Amena *apa* decides that she wants to become a YouTuber! The story follows her journey as she learns how to become famous on YouTube.

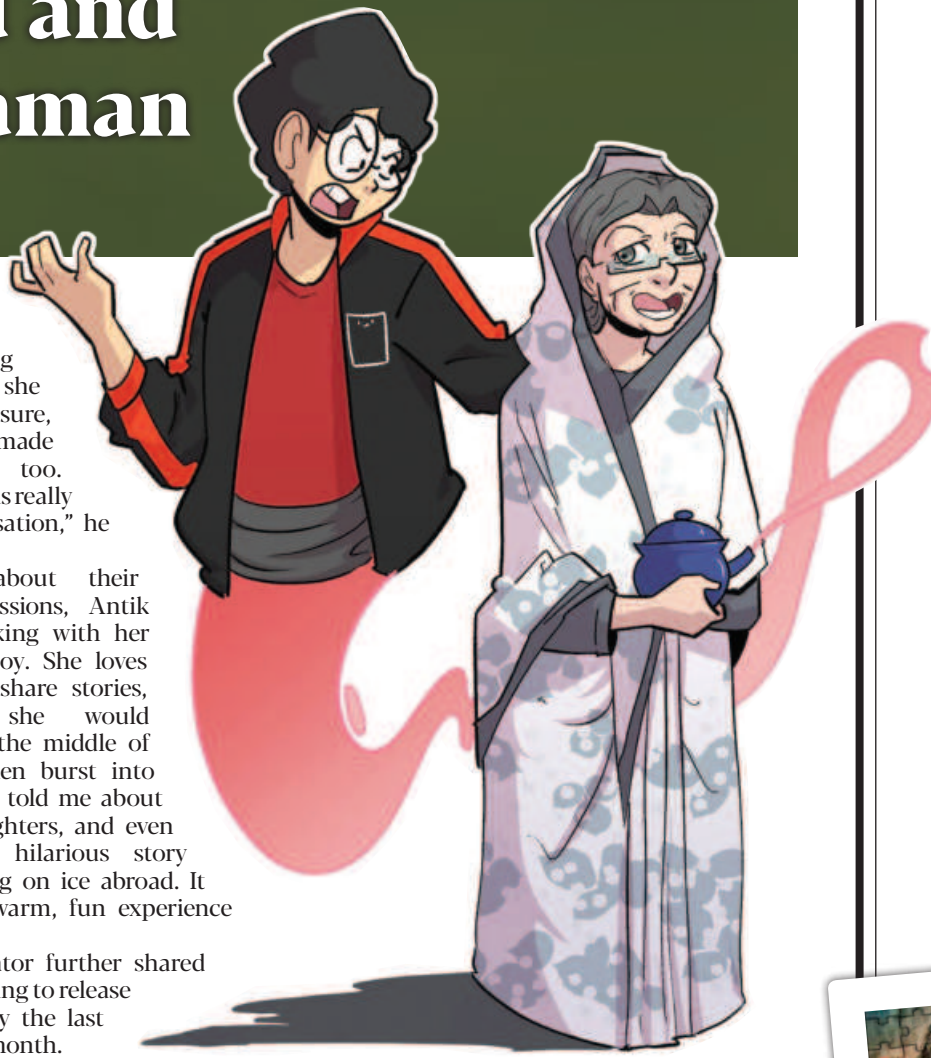
Antik also laughed as he recalled his first interaction with Dilara Zaman ma'am and how nervous he was before meeting her. "When I worked with Abul Hayat sir, I went to his house and could see his expressions directly. But with Dilara Zaman

ma'am, most of our communication happened over the phone. I was really nervous because she kept asking me what she should wear to the recording – 'Should I wear a saree or a salwar kameez?' she asked. I was so confused and I told her 'Ma'am, you'll only be recording your voice!' Since it was her

first time doing voice acting for a cartoon, she was a bit unsure, and that made me nervous too. However, it was really a fun conversation," he chuckled.

Talking about their recording sessions, Antik added, "Working with her was such a joy. She loves to talk and share stories, sometimes she would scold me in the middle of recording, then burst into laughter. She told me about her two daughters, and even shared this hilarious story about slipping on ice abroad. It was such a warm, fun experience overall."

The animator further shared that he is hoping to release the project by the last week of this month.



Star Cineplex celebrates 'Humayun Ahmed Week' with four classic films



To commemorate the 77th birth anniversary of noted author and filmmaker Humayun Ahmed on November 13, Star Cineplex has announced a special celebration titled **Humayun Ahmed Week**, running from November 7 to 13.

According to a press release, four of Humayun Ahmed's most popular films – **Amar Ache Jol**, **Ghetuputra Komola**, **Noy Number Bipod Sanket**, and **Daruchini Dwip** – will be screened throughout the week.

The films will be shown across Star Cineplex branches at Shimanto Shambhar, Sony Square, and the Bangladesh Army Museum. During this period, visitors can enjoy a special "Buy One, Get One Free" ticket offer.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Agricultural Quest of Sultan'

As part of SM Sultan's birth centenary celebrations, University Press Limited and Duniyadari Archive present a special discussion on Pavel Partha's manuscript **Sultan's Agricultural Inquiry**. Featuring noted scholars and artists, the event explores the visionary painter's ties to land, labour, and ecology in Bangladesh's cultural landscape.

Date: Friday | November 7, 2025
Time: 4pm onwards
Venue: University Press Limited, RH Home Center, Green Road



সুলতানের কৃষি জিজ্ঞাসা
পাবলি প্যাথ পিয়ার্সন
ড. ফিরোজ হাফিজ, লিঙ্গা, প্রবাস বিজ্ঞান
প্রবীণ রাস মাসুদ, শিল্পী ও লিঙ্গা
সেহরান হাফিজ, শিল্পী ও লিঙ্গা
ড. উম্মেদ ফাহিম, লিঙ্গা, প্রবাস বিজ্ঞান

Arifin Shuvoo and Mondera-starrer 'NeelChokro' set for OTT release



After a successful theatrical run during Eid-ul-Adha, the much-anticipated thriller **NeelChokro (Blue Circle)** is set to make its OTT debut on iScreen this November 13. The announcement came through a teaser released by the platform earlier this week.

Directed by Mithu Khan, the film stars Arifin Shuvoo and Mondera Chakroborty in

lead roles. The cast includes Fazlur Rahman Babu, Shirin Alam, Khaleida Akter Kolpana, Shahed Ali, Priyonti Urbee and Masum Rezwan. The screenplay has been co-written by Mithu Khan and Nazim Ud Daula.

NEWS

Stored with hope, lost in silence

FROM PAGE 12

It is the same story over at Molla Cold Storage in Joypurhat's Khetlal upazila, which sold 30,000 sacks of potatoes belonging to traders.

One such trader is Golam Mostafa, who had stored 10,000 sacks in the cold storage, of which 2,000 sacks are gone without his knowledge.

"We sold half the potatoes belonging to traders who had a large quantity stored with their permission," said Mustafizar Rahman, manager of Molla Cold Storage.

Compensation is being given based on the current market rate of potatoes.

When probed further about taking the traders' consent for selling the potatoes, he said they took written permission from 45 large traders.

Like Molla Cold Storage, Hafizur Rahman Beez Himagar in Khetlal also sold potatoes belonging to traders.

About 4,000 sacks

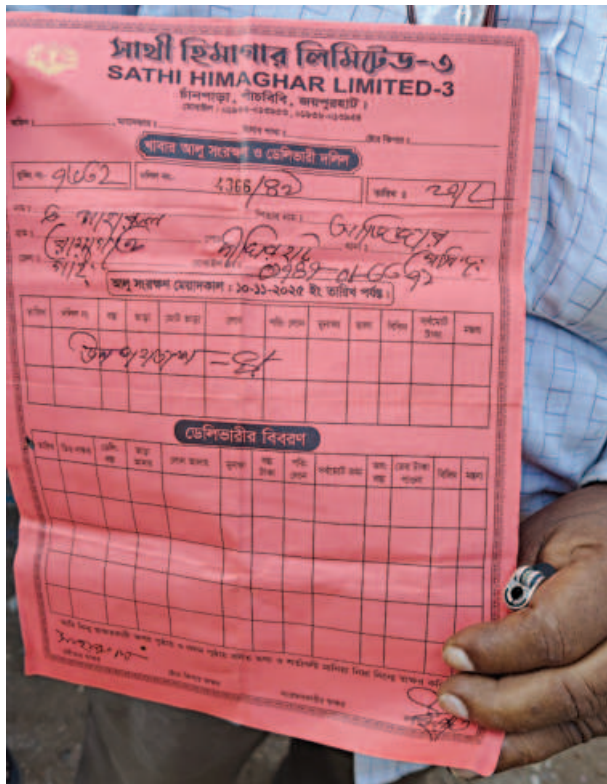
belonging to local traders were sold, according to Belal Sarkar, the manager of the cold storage.

Asked why they sold before the deadline, he said: "There were too many potatoes. We sold some because we thought it would be difficult to remove all the potatoes from the cold storage by the end of November. Besides, we had a condition with the farmers and traders to withdraw their potatoes by September 30."

Selling a farmer's or trader's potatoes without their knowledge is a crime, said Mehdi Hasan, Joypurhat district agricultural marketing Officer.

"We have warned the cold storages. If they commit the same offence again, we will recommend the cancellation of their licences. We will formally notify the cold storage owners in writing," he added.

The cold storage owners have been instructed not



to sell farmers' potatoes before the contract expiry dates of November 10 and 15, said Mostafa Azad Chowdhury Babu, president of the Bangladesh

Cold Storage Association.

"If farmers file written complaints with us against those who have already sold their potatoes, we will take strict action against them."

National Revolution and Solidarity Day

FROM PAGE 12

fateha at the grave of late president and party founder Ziaur Rahman at 10:00am.

The BNP's Dhaka north and south city units will also take out a procession from the party's Nayapaltan central office at 3:00pm. All district and upazila units will carry out similar programmes.

In addition, BNP's associate bodies and all units will organise various events, including discussions, cultural events, photo exhibitions, distribution of educational materials among orphan students, and documentary screenings.

Special supplements will also be published in newspapers to mark the day.

On November 12, the party will hold a discussion at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

Observing the day, BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said in a Facebook post that the soldier-people revolution

of November 7 marked not only a major turning point in Bangladesh's history, but also the beginning of nationalist politics opposing imperialism. The revolution, he said, played a crucial role in protecting the nation's sovereignty.

He wrote that, on that day, driven by patriotism, soldiers and citizens took to the streets vowing to protect national independence and restore democracy. "For this reason, the revolution of November 7 is regarded as a highly significant event in Bangladesh's history."

"I believe that in the spirit of November 7, all nationalist forces must unite to build a strong democracy. For that, protecting national independence and sovereignty is very important at this moment."

Announcing the programmes at the party's Nayapaltan office on Sunday, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said November 7 is a

very important day in Bangladesh's political and national history, as it brought a historic change in the country's politics.

He said the unprecedented unity of the people and soldiers that day paved the way for Ziaur Rahman's entry into politics and his efforts to rebuild the nation through major economic reforms.

During his rule, the country experienced a wave of development, and a spirit of enthusiasm spread among the people. Sadly, the enemies of Bangladesh brutally killed president Ziaur Rahman at the Chattogram Circuit House, marking another dark chapter in our history, he said.

Fakhrul said the philosophy of Ziaur Rahman, based on Bangladeshi nationalism, "can never be defeated. That's why the BNP has never been defeated – it has risen again and again from the ruins, just like the mythical phoenix."

"November 7 remains

an important day in our political life. We want to remember this day with respect and move forward with the spirit of revolution and solidarity it represents," the BNP leader added.

BNP pledge bound to implement July charter

FROM PAGE 12

and wounded of the July uprising by ensuring that no new questions are raised or crises are created regarding the implementation of the July charter, it said.

The party has also urged the government to take sincere and effective actions to ensure the national elections are held on time.

Last night's meeting of the highest policymaking body of the BNP was held at BNP chairperson's Gulshan office. Party acting chairman Tarique Rahman presided over the meeting from London.

Fugitive crime boss ordered hit on Sarwar

FROM PAGE 12

Bostami area, first came under the spotlight after the murder of ward councillor Liaquat Ali Khan in June 1999. He was accused in the case but was acquitted due to lack of witnesses.

In July 2000, six now banned Chhatra League activists were heading to a rally when armed men ambushed their microbus at Bahaddarhat. The armed men killed eight people on the spot, including the six.

Sazzad was accused of leading the killing mission. He was arrested later that year with an AK-47 assault rifle. He got bail in 2004 and fled the country.

Police sources say Sazzad pulled all the strings of the underworld from abroad. Nur Nabi Maxon, Sarwar, Akbar, and "Chhoto Sazzad" were his key hands.

Maxon died mysteriously in India and with Sarwar and Akbar gone, "Chhoto Sazzad" became Sazzad's right hand in 2015.

But "Chhoto Sazzad" is now in jail, which created room for Mohammad Raihan, accused in 15 cases, to assume Sazzad's main man.

Sazzad controls the illegal sand, cement, and brick kilns trade as well as extortion in Bayezid Bostami with Raihan.

Raozan and Hathazari

are also strongholds of the gang.

Slain Sarwar's brother Md Alamgir yesterday told The Daily Star, "My brother had disputes with Sazzad over trade. He was in the sand and cement trade, but Sazzad opposed him. Sazzad had tried to kill him twice before but failed."

Sarwar's family allege that Raihan was behind the killing.

Police say Raihan was behind several recent killings, including a double murder in March this year in Bakalia. Two men were shot dead after a car chase. Sazzad was allegedly the target and he narrowly

escaped.

Despite several raids, police have yet to arrest Raihan.

CMP Commissioner Hasib said, "Sarwar had a criminal history and was likely the main target of the attack. Many of those behind the incident are already in jail, but there is a clear instigation from abroad."

On December 4, police raided a flat in the Oxygen area, but "Chhoto Sazzad" fired at officers and escaped via the roof. Two policemen and a civilian were injured.

Hasib Aziz, commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police, later announced a Tk 5 lakh bounty on "Chhoto Sazzad".

FROM PAGE 12

The arguments, lasting more than 2 1/2 hours, came in appeals by the administration after lower courts ruled that Trump's unprecedented use of the law at issue to impose the tariffs exceeded his authority. Businesses affected by the tariffs and 12 US states, most of them Democratic-led, challenged the tariffs.

Conservative Chief Justice John Roberts told US Solicitor General D John Sauer, arguing for the administration, that the tariffs are "the imposition of taxes on Americans, and that has always been the core power of Congress."

The tariffs - taxes on imported goods - could add up to trillions of dollars in revenues for the United States over the next decade. The US Constitution gives Congress the authority to issue taxes and tariffs.

Roberts suggested that the court could apply its "major questions" doctrine, which requires executive branch actions of vast economic and political significance to be clearly authorized by Congress.

"The justification is being used for a power to impose tariffs on any product, from any country, in any amount, for any length of time. I'm not

suggesting it's not there, but it does seem like that's major authority, and the basis for that claim seems to be a misfit," Roberts said.

The Supreme Court applied the "major questions" doctrine to strike down key policies of Trump's Democratic predecessor Joe Biden.

Trump has heaped pressure on the Supreme Court to preserve tariffs that he has leveraged as a key economic and foreign policy tool. A ruling against Trump would mark a significant departure for the court, which has backed him in a series of decisions allowing on

an interim basis his far-reaching actions in areas as varied as his crackdown on immigration, the firing of federal agency officials and banning transgender troops.

Trump invoked the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, or IEEPA, to impose the tariffs on nearly every US trading partner. The law lets a president regulate commerce in a national emergency. He became the first president to use IEEPA for this purpose, one of the many ways he has pushed the boundaries of executive authority since returning to office in January.

Latif Siddique gets HC bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted bail to former jute and textile minister Abdul Latif Siddique and journalist Manjur Alam Panna in a case filed under the Anti-terrorism Act.



The HC bench of Justice ASM Abdul Mobin and Justice Md Sagir Hossain passed the order following two separate petitions.

There is no legal bar for Latif Siddique and Manjurul Alam to get released from jail if the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court does not stay the HC's bail, their lawyer ZI Khan Panna told The Daily Star.

After the order, the lawyer said the HC granted bail to his clients on the ground that they were not involved in any terrorist act and the allegations brought against them are false.

Meanwhile, Latif Siddique's brother Abdul Quader Siddique expressed satisfaction at the HC order.

On August 29, a Dhaka court ordered police to send Abdul Latif and 17 others to jail in the case filed by SI Amirul Islam of Shahbagh Police Station.

DNCC removes 1.25 lakh illegal banners in a month



UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka North City Corporation has removed a total of 1,25,000 illegal banners and festoons across the city over the past month.

DNCC Administrator Mohammad Ejaz disclosed this following a review meeting at the city corporation headquarters yesterday.

During the meeting, officials presented detailed statistics from the campaign conducted across 52 wards in DNCC's 10 zones.

According to the report, Zone-3 saw the highest number of removals at 29,441, followed by Zone-2 with nearly 25,000, Zone-4 with 18,000, Zone-5 with 12,000, and Zone-9 with around 11,000 banners and festoons cleared.

Since last month, DNCC has designated nearly 30 locations across the city for free poster placements, after which a coordinated operation to remove illegally installed banners, posters, and festoons was launched.

The campaign covered all 52 wards under the 10 DNCC zones and will continue as part of the city's ongoing cleanliness efforts.

PHULBARI IN KURIGRAM

8yrs on, locals still cut off after dam collapse

S DILIP ROY

For the last eight years, residents of Banglabazar village in Barovita Union of Phulbari upazila, Kurigram, have been struggling to move in and out of their area after a flood in 2017 washed away part of an earthen dam.

The flood destroyed about 200 metres of the dam, leaving a deep crater that fills with water every monsoon. Since then, villagers have been using banana rafts to cross from July to mid-January each year.

Majibur Rahman, 65, said, "After the flood washed away the dam, we have been living like people stranded on an island. During the rainy season, we risk our lives crossing the water on banana rafts."

Monser Ali, 55, said around 55 children from the village go to school, and some have fallen into the water while trying to board the rafts. "The alternative route is 4-5 kilometres longer. If the dam or a



small bridge could be built, our sufferings would ease."

Barovita UP Chairman Ataur Rahman Mintu said repairing the dam would require a large budget. "We are trying to have the repair included in this fiscal year."

Kurigram Water Development Board

Executive Engineer Rakibul Hasan said the dam had long been declared abandoned, so no funds could be allocated for its repair. "The local administration and public representatives should find alternative measures to solve the issue," he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Once feared extinct, river terrapin returns to Sundarbans

PARTHA CHAKRABORTY, Bagerhat

Once thought to be lost forever, the critically endangered Batagur baska, or northern river terrapin, is slowly making a comeback in the Sundarbans, thanks to years of conservation and breeding efforts.

Decades of relentless hunting, along with habitat loss and pollution, had driven this freshwater turtle species to the brink of extinction.

The Batagur baska, native to Southeast

Asia, is among the rarest turtle species in the world. Adult females can weigh up to 27 kilogrammes, while males are smaller, usually around 12 to 14 kilogrammes. Males can be identified by their darker shells and head markings of yellow, red, and black during the breeding season.

The species once thrived across the river deltas of the Sundarbans, stretching to Myanmar, Thailand, and Malaysia. However, widespread poaching, sandbank encroachment, harmful fishing nets, and

river pollution drastically reduced their numbers, leading many experts to fear the turtle had disappeared entirely around 2000.

In 2008, a team of wildlife biologists discovered eight surviving Batagur baska individuals – four males and four females – in ponds in Noakhali and Barishal.

The Forest Department transferred them to Bhawal National Park in Gazipur, where a small-scale breeding programme

he said.

Under the programme, the eggs are carefully buried under sand in special incubation chambers, and once the young turtles emerge, they are reared in water tanks under close observation. Gradually, as they grow and become acclimatised to natural conditions, they are released into semi-wild enclosures.

Between 2017 and 2025, a total of 106 young turtles has been released into the ponds and creeks within the Sundarbans.

At present, Karamjal hosts 457 Batagur baska turtles, including 11 identified males and four females. Forest officials have created sandy enclosures within the centre to ensure safe nesting areas for the adults.

To understand their survival and adaptation, researchers have attached satellite transmitters to 21 male turtles before releasing them into various rivers.

The breeding programme, now managed jointly by the Forest Department, Prokriti O Jibon Foundation, and Austria's Vienna Zoo, with past support from the Turtle Survival Alliance in the United States, has focused on improving breeding techniques, temperature control for incubation, and a suitable diet for hatchlings.

"This is a milestone in Bangladesh's conservation history. It proves that with proper planning and scientific commitment, even a nearly extinct species can be brought back," said Md Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, divisional forest officer of the East Sundarbans Division.

"Our next goal is to restore their natural habitats, stop poaching, and raise awareness among local communities so these turtles can once again thrive in the wild."



EMPLOYMENT IN MALAYSIA

ACC to sue 11 for embezzling Tk 525.22cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has decided to file separate cases against 11 individuals on charges of embezzling and laundering Tk 525.22 crore collected from 3,331 job seekers for employment in Malaysia, confirmed ACC Director General Md Akhter Hossain yesterday.

The accused are: Ruhul Amin, owner of M/s Amin Tours and Travels; Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury, chairman, and Shahana Ferdous, managing director of Merit Trade International Ltd; Shamim Ahmed Chowdhury Noman, owner of Sadia International; Iqbal Hossain, chairman, and Badruddoza Chowdhury, managing director of Imperial Resource Ltd; Moniruzzaman, chairman, and Alamgir Kabir, managing director of RRC Human Resource Service Ltd; and Abdullah Shahed, former managing director, Zainal Abedin, director, and Shamsher Ahmed, director of Thanex International Ltd.

According to case details, they charged up to five times the official rate of Tk 78,990 per worker.

During the process, they violated the registration conditions set by the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) and the Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA), and illegally conducted recruitment operations.

1,500kg of jatka seized in Amtali



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A joint team seized 1,500 kilogrammes of jatka (young hilsa) worth around Tk 9 lakh from three passenger buses on the Amtali-Kuakata regional highway yesterday noon.

The confiscated fish was later distributed among local orphanages and underprivileged families.

According to the Amtali upazila joint forces, the jatka was being transported to Dhaka from Kuakata in three buses – Bhai Bhai, Sohel, and Subha-Surha Paribahan.

Acting on a tip-off, a team led by Lt Nakib Nasrullah, commander of the BN detachment and chief of the Amtali upazila joint contingent, along with members of the navy, police, and senior fisheries officer, conducted a drive in the Churikata area and seized the fish from the luggage compartments of the buses.

100 structures knocked down in Gazipur

UNB, Gazipur

Around 100 illegal establishments were destroyed in the Joydebpur Railway Junction area in Gazipur yesterday.

A mobile court conducted the eviction drive in the area in the afternoon.

A number of shops – including fruit, tea shops and dwelling houses – were removed during the drive. Gazipur Metropolitan Police, Railway Police and City Corporation members were present during the drive.



Three completely transfixed children play a game of marbles in the Chandmari area of Barishal, sharing in the joy of this popular and enduring pastime. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS



Gazan archer here to fly Palestinian flag

Wearing black sunglasses and a white hat, with a quiver marked by the Palestinian flag slung across her shoulder, archer Rasha Yahya Ahmed drew attention at Dhaka's Paltan Outer Stadium on Thursday as she trained ahead of the 24th Asian Archery Championships, beginning November 8. For the first time, Palestinian archers are competing in an international event hosted in Bangladesh. Rasha, born in Gaza and now based in the UAE, expressed gratitude for the warm reception she received in Dhaka. Having taken up archery only three years ago, she has already represented Palestine in Korea and Qatar. "We came not just to participate, but to compete," said Rasha, who will contest in the women's recurve individual event. Representing her homeland, she added, "Every time we raise our flag, it means so much."

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Financial safeguards in place, but integrity unchecked

ASHFAQ UL-ALAM

While the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has implemented financial safeguards to prevent a repeat of last season's payment fiasco in the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), it has been far less proactive on the issue of ensuring the league's integrity.

On Thursday, the BCB named five franchises who will compete in the upcoming 12th edition. Out of the six teams that competed previous season, only two -- Dhaka Capitals and Rangpur Riders -- will feature in the next one, joined by new teams Chattogram Royals, Rajshahi Warriors and Sylhet Titans.

The BCB has already taken Tk 2 crores from each team as franchise fee for this season and all of them will have to submit another Tk 10 crores as bank guarantee by next Thursday.

Last season, the board had not taken bank guarantees from all of the teams -- only eventual winners Fortune Barishal had deposited Tk 3 crores. The BCB later regretted this decision once the season kicked off.

Players from many franchises started complaining that their dues were not getting cleared, the chief offenders being Durbar Rajshahi, whose overseas players boycotted matches over not receiving daily allowances, and Chittagong Kings, whose owner did not even bother showing up in an emergency meeting held mid-season by the board with the teams to address the league's issues.

Both of those franchises are not a part of the tournament this season as the board has seemingly conducted a much stricter vetting process this time.

"We have followed due process during screening of the interested organisations," member secretary of the BPL governing council Itekhaz Rahman Mithu told The Daily Star.

"Last season there were two key issues. One was players' payments being due at end of tournament. This is why we are asking for the Tk 10 crore bank guarantee," he added.

A profit-sharing model will be implemented in the upcoming BPL as the board will share 30 percent of its profits with the franchises. In the case of non-



payment, this amount will be withheld by the board and used to clear the dues.

However, the previous edition was also plagued by allegations of fixing, which tarnished the league's reputation globally and prompted the board to form a three-member inquiry committee in February.

After an extensive investigation, the committee recently submitted a 900-page report to the board in late October, which included names of players, support staff and others who are suspected of being involved in corrupt activities.

However, the BCB has chosen not to make the report public and has instead handed it over to Alex Marshall, the

chief of its new Bangladesh Cricket Board Integrity Unit (BCBIU), who is investigating the allegations.

"They [three-member committee] have taken interviews and created a list of players under suspicion. After Marshall completes his investigation, he will give his opinion on it. Of course, there would be further investigation, evidence will be collected. There is no proof yet, there is a list of suspects," a BCB official said on conditions of anonymity.

The only immediate impact the 900-page report will have in the upcoming BPL is that the suspected players will be monitored more than the rest, according

to sources.

According to BCB vice-president Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, the BCB will not reveal the names until it "knows for sure" as it does not want to put players who are under suspicion but not guilty in a tough spot.

But by not revealing the suspected individuals' names and allowing them to participate, the BCB is attracting suspicion over BPL at a time when the league is in desperate need of an image makeover. Like the decision of not taking bank guarantees, this could end up being a call the board ends up regretting later on.

Women's league gears up with Asian Cup in mind

SPORTS REPORTER

The 7th Women's Football League, scheduled to start on December 15, will allow each club to field up to two foreign players as the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) aims to boost competitiveness ahead of next year's AFC Women's Asian Cup in Australia.

The last edition, completed in May 2024, saw only three top teams -- champions Nasrin Sporting Club, runners-up Ataur Rahman Bhuiyan College Sporting Club (ARBCSC), and third-placed Bangladesh Army FC -- play just three matches among themselves.

This season, seven of the nine previous teams -- excluding ARBCSC -- have applied for club licensing, alongside six new clubs including Bangladesh Ansar, Bangladesh Police FC, BKSP, and Rajshahi Star.

"So far, 13 clubs have applied for licensing, and the First Instance Body is working on it and will issue licences on Saturday," BFF women's football committee chair Mahfuza Akhter Kiron told The Daily Star yesterday, adding that they can organise the league with 13 teams if all meet the criteria.

"Once licensing is complete, the transfer window will open this month... We decided to allow two foreign players to boost league competitiveness and give national team players a challenging environment ahead of the Women's Asian Cup."

Plans to create a pool of national players were dropped after approving foreign signings. "The league will initially be a single round-robin, but a double-leg format is possible if a sponsor is secured," she added, further informing the competition is likely to be held at either Kamalapur stadium or the National Stadium.

SHORT CORNER

Rishad gets full NOC for Big Bash during BPL slot

January 19, 2015 was the last time that a Bangladesh player appeared in the BBL, when Shakib Al Hasan played the tournament. Last season, Rishad Hossain could have been just the second player to appear but did not get an NOC from the board to play for Hobart Hurricanes last season due to BPL commitments. This season, Hurricanes roped in Rishad again and BCB has granted him full NOC for the tournament.

India thump Australia to take 2-1 lead in T20 series

India took a 2-1 lead in their T20 series against Australia with a 48-run demolition of the home side on Queensland's Gold Coast on Thursday.

Chapman blitz powers Black Caps to thrilling win over West Indies

Powerful batting by Black Cap Mark Chapman carried New Zealand to a three-run victory in the second T20 against West Indies in Auckland on Thursday night.

Djokovic to face Alcaraz in ATP Finals groups

Novak Djokovic will take on Carlos Alcaraz in the group stage of the upcoming ATP Finals while Jannik Sinner could face a derby with Lorenzo Musetti.

*** Read full stories on The Daily Star's website*

Financial firepower fuels English dominance in UCL

England's top clubs are dominating this season's Champions League, showcasing the Premier League's unmatched financial strength. With all six English representatives sitting in the top 12 of the 36-team group phase, and five recording victories in the latest round of fixtures, their collective power has been hard to ignore. Fueled by record-breaking transfer spending, English clubs look poised to rewrite Champions League history if all six progress to the knockout stage.

PHOTO: REUTERS



➡ For the second time in four rounds, five English clubs won in a single Champions League game week -- an unprecedented feat before this season.

➡ All six Premier League clubs are in the top 12 halfway through the group stage; four are currently in the top eight.

➡ A potential record six English clubs could reach the last 16 -- surpassing the five that advanced in 2017.

➡ Premier League clubs' summer spending exceeded £3 billion, more than the combined outlay of the Bundesliga, La Liga, Serie A, and Ligue 1.

➡ Arsenal are second overall, level on points with Bayern Munich, and are the only side yet to concede a goal.

➡ Manchester City moved up to fourth after a 4-1 win over Borussia Dortmund.

➡ Liverpool climbed to eighth after defeating Real Madrid, while Newcastle United sit sixth following three straight wins.

➡ Tottenham Hotspur, unbeaten and 10th, crushed FC Copenhagen 4-0 -- highlighted by Micky van de Ven's standout strike.

➡ Chelsea, in 12th, were held 2-2 by Qarabag but remain in strong contention for a playoff spot.



PHOTO: REUTERS



A high-flying Erling Haaland struck to haunt his former club Borussia Dortmund in Manchester City's 4-1 Champions League rout on Wednesday. The strike was his 27th of the season in just 17 matches for club and country, and it also made him the first player to score in five consecutive Champions League appearances for three different clubs -- Red Bull Salzburg, Dortmund and City. Phil Foden netted a brace, while Rasmus Hojlund added another as City climbed to fourth on 10 points. [Inset] Meanwhile, Barcelona rescued a 3-3 draw in a thriller at Club Brugge, with teenage sensation Lamine Yamal involved in all three equalisers. Brugge were denied a late winner after a soft foul on goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny, who counted his lucky stars.



National Revolution and Solidarity Day today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP will observe National Revolution and Solidarity Day today, marking the civil-military “uprising” that led to the release of then army chief Ziaur Rahman on this day in 1975. The party has chalked out elaborate programmes, including discussions, to commemorate the occasion. Amid political turmoil, soldiers and civilians on November 7, 1975, jointly freed the then chief of army staff from captivity in Dhaka cantonment, paving the way for him to assume power. To mark the day, the party flag will be hoisted at all BNP offices across the country this morning, while senior leaders will lay wreaths and offer

SEE PAGE 8 COL 5



CRADLED BY LILIES... A juvenile pheasant-tailed jacana rests gracefully among pink water lilies in a pond in Chattogram’s Annanya residential area. Native to tropical Asia, from India to Indonesia, this elegant bird thrives in shallow freshwater lakes and marshes carpeted with floating vegetation. Its long toes and claws let it stride effortlessly across lily pads while feeding on insects, molluscs, and aquatic plants. Known for its dramatic tail and striking plumage during breeding season, the pheasant-tailed jacana is the only migratory jacana species. Juveniles, like this one, wear softer browns and creams. Though listed as Least Concern by the IUCN, it faces threats from habitat loss and pollution.

PHOTO: KAMOL DAS

Fugitive crime boss ordered hit on Sarwar

Say police sources

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Operating from overseas, fugitive crime boss Sazzad Ali, alias “Boro Sazzad,” continues to control Chattogram’s underworld. His armed gang collects extortion money, controls their turf, and eliminates rivals on his orders, police say. Sazzad once exerted power through two key deputies, Sarwar Hossain Babla and Akbar Ali, also known as “Dhakaiya Akbar”. About a decade ago, both broke away to form their own gangs. Over the last six months, they were shot dead in public, reportedly on Sazzad’s directives, police sources said. On Wednesday night, Sarwar was shot dead during an election campaign in the port city’s Panchlaish area. On May 23, Akbar was killed in Patenga. According to police sources, Sazzad’s followers often open fire if their demand for money is not met. More than five lakh residents of Chandgaon, Bayezid Bostami, Panchlaish, Hathazari, and Raozan police station areas live in fear. Since August 5 last year, Sazzad’s group has been linked to 10 murders, including two double homicides. The gang members kill rivals to keep control of their turf and also work as contract killers. Police sources said Sazzad, of Chalitetali in the Bayezid

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Lost ‘sovereignty’ in New York

Says Trump after Mamdani win

AGENCIES

President Donald Trump yesterday said the United States had lost “sovereignty” after New Yorkers elected leftist Zohran Mamdani as their next mayor. “We’ll take care of it,” Trump said without explaining what he meant, while claiming the country’s largest city would become communist. In a speech in Miami a day after Mamdani’s convincing victory, Trump added that the Florida city “will soon be the refuge for those fleeing communism in New York.” “The decision facing all Americans could not be more clear: We have a choice between communism



and common sense,” he said, also casting the choice as between an “economic nightmare” and an “economic miracle.” The speech marked the first anniversary of Trump’s election victory against Democrat Kamala Harris, reports AFP. “We rescued our economy, regained our liberty, and together we saved our country on that magnificent night 365 days ago,” Trump told his audience of supporters. Meanwhile, Mamdani on Wednesday announced an all-female team of co-chairs for his transition team, including former Federal Trade Commission chair Lina Khan, reports CNN online.

BNP pledge bound to implement July charter

Party urges others not raise new questions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has asked the interim government to ensure the legal implementation of the issues agreed upon in the July charter. After long and detailed discussions at the National Consensus Commission, several issues with notes of dissent were agreed upon, and these were signed on October 17, said a press release signed by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir issued after a BNP Standing Committee meeting last night. It said the BNP, as a signatory to the document, endorses them and are pledge bound to legally implement them. It said the BNP strongly believes that all parties will stay united to implement the charter agreed upon during the consensus commission discussions and would, under no circumstances, raise new questions or create crises to delay the upcoming polls. The BNP would pay respect to the martyrs

SEE PAGE 8 COL 8

Displaced shelter in ‘unsafe’ Gaza buildings

Warns UN; Israel kills two Palestinians over ‘yellow line crossing’

AGENCIES

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) yesterday warned that most of its facilities in Gaza City have “sustained heavy damage” from two years of Israeli attacks. Many other facilities that Palestinians are taking shelter in across the Strip are also severely damaged and “unsafe”, according to UNRWA. “Returning families also face the risk of unexploded ordnance,” it warned. The Norwegian Refugee Council said only 100 aid trucks are entering Gaza daily through the UN system as the NGO and other humanitarian organisations are “effectively barred” from bringing in desperately needed assistance. Shaina Low, communication adviser for the council, said even basic tents are a rare commodity for hundreds of thousands of displaced people. “Many people do not even have tents,” she told Al Jazeera. “The people who have tents in Gaza are the ones who are lucky.” Meanwhile, Israeli army said yesterday it killed two Palestinians in the central Gaza Strip after they allegedly crossed the ‘yellow line’ into Israeli-held territory, despite a US-brokered ceasefire. The “yellow line” is the first withdrawal line outlined in the initial phase of the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, which took effect on October 10. It separates areas

still under Israeli military control in the east from those where Palestinians are permitted to move in the west. The United States on Wednesday presented a draft UN Security Council resolution to partner nations aimed at bolstering President Donald Trump’s Gaza peace plan, including by greenlighting an international security force, Washington’s mission said. US Ambassador Mike Waltz shared the draft with the 10 elected members of the Security Council and several regional partners – Egypt, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Turkey – a spokesperson for the US mission said in a statement. No date has been set to vote on the draft, reports AFP.

- Israel declares Egypt border area closed military zone
- US circulates draft UN resolution for Trump’s Gaza plan
- Iran’s FM praises ‘accurate’ attacks on Israel during war

Stored with hope, lost in silence

Cold storages sell off 54,000 sacks of potatoes without farmers’ consent

MOSTAFA SHABUJ, back from Joypurhat

Jahidul Islam, a farmer from Chanpara area of Panchbibi upazila, had 100 sacks of seed potatoes stored at Sathi Himagar-3 cold storage. But when he arrived at the cold storage yesterday to take back his potatoes, he learnt that those had already been sold – without his knowledge. “How will I plant potatoes now? They are saying that they will give me compensation, but seed potatoes are more expensive now,” he said. Like Jahidul, many farmers are now facing a crisis of seed potatoes after three cold storage authorities in the Joypurhat district sold 54,000 sacks of potatoes belonging to farmers and local traders without their permission and before the expiry of their contracts. “How could they sell so many sacks in violation of the law?” asked Shishir Mondol from Panchbibi Upazila, who had stored 1,200 sacks in the cold storage but found only 143 sacks. Shamsul Haque, manager of Sathi Himagar, admitted to selling the potatoes of farmers and local traders. “This year, an excess of 26,000 sacks beyond our capacity was forcefully stored by farmers. Because of this, some potatoes started to rot. Therefore, we told the farmers’ agents to withdraw their potatoes, but they did not. Therefore, we sold around 20,000 sacks of potatoes.” Farmers coming to collect their potatoes now are being given money based on the current market price. “Those claiming seed potatoes are being given some from our own limited stock,” he said.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Scientists find world’s largest spider web

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Researchers have discovered what could be the world’s largest known spider’s web, an arachnid “megacity” teeming with tens of thousands of the insects in a cave on the Albania-Greece border. The newly discovered web is a massive structure spanning 100 square metres and home to a colony of 69,000 domestic house spiders, also known as the barn funnel weaver or Tegenaria domestica, and 42,000 Prinerigone vagans, a species of sheet weaver spiders. Social spiders are known to make communal webs that may host thousands of the insects, but finding giant web structures inhabited by otherwise solitary species is already quite rare. But never before had researchers documented a cooperative web woven by multiple individuals of different spider species. Explorers first came across the giant web during an underground wildlife survey in 2022.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Displaced Palestinians run to fill containers with water in Gaza City yesterday, amid a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas.

TRUMP’S TARIFFS

US top court casts doubt on its legality

REUTERS, Washington

US Supreme Court justices raised doubts yesterday over the legality of President Donald Trump’s sweeping tariffs in a case with implications for the global economy that marks a major test of Trump’s powers. Conservative and liberal justices alike sharply questioned the lawyer representing Trump’s administration about whether a 1977 law meant for use during national emergencies gave Trump the power he claimed to impose tariffs or whether the Republican president had intruded on the powers of Congress. But some of the conservative justices also stressed the inherent authority of presidents in dealing with foreign countries, suggesting the court could be sharply divided in the outcome of the case. The court has a 6-3 conservative majority.

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