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JULY CHARTER DEADLOCK

Govt decision on Nov 13 if parties fail to agree

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government has said it will make its own decision on Thursday if parties fail to reach an agreement on issues surrounding the implementation of constitutional reforms under the July charter by that time.

After the end of a week-long deadline set by the government, parties remained unmoved yesterday on the timing of a referendum on the reforms, an order on implementation, and the fate of the notes of dissent. Officials said the administration will wait a few more days, but is ready to act if the deadlock continues.

Contacted for comments, Energy Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan told The Daily Star yesterday, "We are waiting for the political parties' decision... If we don't get it, we will make a decision on November 13 [Thursday]."

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan echoed the stance, telling reporters at the Secretariat that the government had given parties ample time to decide.

"No decision came from them. Since they didn't sit for discussions within the seven-day window, the government will now make a decision... it has the responsibility and the authority," she said.

She said the government's doors were open to all parties. "But I haven't heard of any new invitations for dialogue. My understanding is that the

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Despite a ban, sand extraction from the Piyain river in Sylhet's Jaflong area continues in plain sight. Locals allege that poor monitoring allows traders, aided by corrupt officials, to freely lift sand from the riverbed with small boats, putting the environment at risk. The violation is even more glaring in light of the recent uproar over a similar incident at the Sada Pathor area in Sylhet's Bholaganj. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Climate finance fuels 'debt trap'

A new report places Bangladesh in "high risk" category

PINAKI ROY

Ten years after the Paris Agreement vowed climate justice for vulnerable nations, global leaders have gathered in the Brazilian city of Belém for COP30. But as negotiations unfold, Bangladesh, one of the world's least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, finds itself sinking deeper into climate debt.

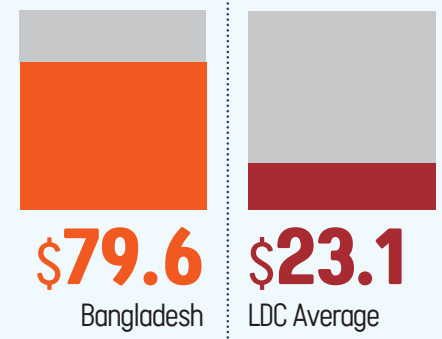
The inaugural Climate Debt Risk Index, published by Dhaka-based think tank Change Initiative, has placed Bangladesh in the "high risk" debt-trap category with a score of 65.37 out of 100, forecasting a continued upward trajectory to 65.63 by 2031.

The report, which analysed debt scenarios across 55 countries, says that global climate finance has turned into an instrument of financial burden, straying far from the grant-based, justice-driven commitments made in the Copenhagen and Paris accords.

"Bangladesh enters COP30 carrying one of the world's heaviest climate-debt burdens, not because it over-borrowed, but because the global climate finance system keeps forcing the most vulnerable to pay for survival," said M Zakir Hossain Khan, managing director and chief executive of Change Initiative.

The financial burden on Bangladeshi citizens is starkly disproportionate. According to the

PER CAPITA CLIMATE DEBT BANGLADESH VS LDC AVERAGE



study, Bangladesh's cumulative climate-related borrowing from 2002 to 2023 has created a per capita debt burden of \$79.61, about 3.5 times higher than the average for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which stands at \$23.12.

The country is now compelled to borrow \$29.52 for every tonne of carbon emitted, just

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Dhaka on high alert following crude bomb, arson attacks

MUNTAKIM SAAD

A wave of arson and crude bomb attacks at multiple locations across Dhaka yesterday, targeting public transport, institutions linked to the chief adviser and fisheries adviser, the National Citizen Party, and religious establishments, has sparked public anxiety.

Crude bombs were hurled at 11 locations throughout the day, while three buses were set on fire, prompting the authorities to ramp up security. No casualties were reported in the arson incidents.

The police headquarters directed all stations in Dhaka to intensify patrols and surveillance ahead of November 13, when the International Crimes Tribunal is scheduled to set the date for delivering its verdict in a case against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

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'Women to get full day's pay for 5-hr workday'

Shafiqur says Jamaat govt will pay for the rest three hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday reiterated that, if elected to power, his party would ensure the safety of women in workplaces.

"Women will work for five hours and receive wages for eight. Employers will pay for five hours, while the government will cover the remaining three."

He added, however, that women who wish to work eight hours would have their decision respected. He also stated that homemakers would be honoured as "Ratnagarbha mothers."

Shafiqur made these remarks while addressing a reception rally as the chief guest at the field of Islami Bank Model School and College in Mirpur last night.

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Police check documents and bags of motorcyclists at a temporary checkpoint near the U-loop on DIT Road in the Rampura TV Bhaban area. Law enforcers have stepped up security in the capital to prevent untoward incidents. Several crude bomb and arson attacks were reported in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

They came, fired, vanished Two gunmen kill top criminal in broad daylight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was like any other morning on the busy Johnson Road in Old Dhaka yesterday.

Around 11:00am, rickshaws slowly made their way past the Dhaka National Medical Institute Hospital while the nearby court area buzzed with crowds.

At that moment, a sudden and thundering sound broke the routine.

Two masked gunmen emerged from the crowd, raised their pistols, and opened fire on a man standing next to a parked car.

Their target, Tariq Saif Mamun, 55, turned and ran through the hospital gate, desperately trying to get away. The gunmen chased him, firing one round after another until he collapsed near the entrance. The entire attack lasted less than three minutes, according to witnesses.

After the incident, the killers showed no urgency. They calmly tucked their pistols into their waists, turned and walked away, disappearing into the traffic.

Police later identified the victim as a top-listed criminal and one of the ringleaders of the "Emon-Mamun Gang".

Once an associate of notorious underworld figure Sanjidul Hassan Emon, Mamun had long been locked in a deadly rivalry with Emon over control of Dhaka's criminal network, said sources.



IMAGE: CCTV FOOTAGE

Attackers shooting at victim (not in frame).

Family members said Mamun had gone to court in the morning to attend a hearing in a 29-year-old murder case and was on his way home in Aftabnagar when he was killed.

Shahinur Alam Shahin, bench assistant of Dhaka Speedy Trial Tribunal-2, confirmed that Mamun did appear in court.

"The judge took the bench around 10:30am. After one case, Mamun's name was called. He stood in the dock and marked attendance, but no witnesses appeared. The next hearing was set for February 4 next year," he said, adding that Mamun left the court around 10:45am.

The shooting sparked panic across the hospital area. Patients, attendants, and passersby ran for cover, while others stood frozen, watching a scene that felt more like a crime thriller than real life.

Police later sealed off the area and collected CCTV footage. "It was a planned hit: swift, calculated, and professional," said an officer involved in the investigation.

Lalbagh Division Deputy Commissioner Mallik Ahsan Uddin Sami confirmed that Mamun was a top-listed criminal. "We're analysing CCTV

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THE ART OF BARGAINING

A survival skill in Dhaka

ASHIF AHMED RUDRO

One of the basic traits of any metropolitan city is that it calls for a specific set of skills from its residents. Dhaka is no different. Out of all the specific skills it takes to cruise through Dhaka, bargaining is one of the most elemental ones.

Learning the hard way

You might be wondering what is so special about Dhaka that it needs a special bargaining skill? After all, you have bargained all your life – how different can it be?

Dhaka demands determination in its everyday function, and that includes bargaining too. Everywhere else, you can bargain following a rule of thumb. Unfortunately, Dhaka has no such rule of thumb. You have to know your way around to bargain successfully in this city. And the only way to do that is to learn through experience.

Which means you will need a few months' worth of experience, and a few bitter ones at that, to learn bargaining the Dhaka way. Take me for example; I once bought a pair of jeans for Tk 1,500 only to later find out that you can get those for Tk 400 if you play your cards right.

Know your audience

Perhaps the most important skill in bargaining is knowing your audience. You will have to adopt

different approaches for different types of bargaining.

When talking to a rickshaw puller, you will need to be calm and consistent. The louder you are on the road dealing with the transports, the lesser chance you have of striking a deal with them. Rickshaws will try to take advantage of the fact that you might not know your route. Successfully bargaining with them requires prior knowledge of the road.



Clothing stores, on the other hand, need a very different approach. Based on the location of the shopping mall, their asking prices will vary. And your bargaining offer needs to take that into account. It sure helps if you know your fabrics and their price range beforehand.

The trick here is that you have to be calm. It can be a challenge to hold your composure after hearing

their asking price, but do not let it influence you and be ready to walk out of the store, on to the next one when needed.

Bargaining at the wet market depends on the time of the day and the weather. On the other hand, you will have very limited chance of bargaining at a grocery.

Accept that it is trivial

A lot of people get enraged when bargaining. If you plan on living in Dhaka, then it is better if you accept that bargaining everywhere is a trivial part of everyday life in this city. The sooner you accept this the less you will be bothered by it.

When I first came to Dhaka, I met with my uncle. I remember him calling for a rickshaw who asked for double the usual fare. Instead of losing his cool, he offered half the usual fare. This invoked a reaction from the rickshaw puller. "That's not the usual fare," he had said, and my uncle retorted coolly, "Neither is what you are asking. Now you want to go at the usual fare or keep playing this game? I have time."

Surprisingly, this had worked at that time. It also taught me a valuable lesson that has helped me ever since – always keep your cool when bargaining.

Bargaining is nothing fun. It's tedious and often annoying. But it is a part of everyday life in Dhaka. Just like waiting in line, the inevitable signal at Bijay Sarani, and a number of other things. I have accepted it. Have you?

Govt decision on Nov 13

FROM PAGE 1

government will now clarify its position... People have expectations of us," she said.

Government sources said some advisers may sit today to analyse the situation and possible outlines to be discussed at Thursday's advisory council meeting.

On November 3, the interim administration urged parties to resolve disputes within a week, warning that otherwise it would "act as necessary".

As the government weighs its next move with less than a month before the expected announcement of the election schedule for polls in early February, political analysts say time is running out.

They warn that the stalemate reflects a deeper structural crisis, one that could jeopardise the upcoming transitional election if not resolved constructively. They urged parties to abandon rigid postures, compromise, and act in the national interest.

"It seems the situation has thickened, the crisis has deepened," said Prof Al Masud Hasanuzzaman of Jahangirnagar University's government and politics department.

"We've constantly seen that political parties have approached the July charter with narrow calculations, seeking advantage wherever possible. Now, at this final stage, they are engaged in pressure politics, trying to influence decision makers through political manoeuvring," he said.

"It seems the ball is now in the government's court, and the chief adviser will announce the decision unless something unexpected happens."

"If the parties' reaction is positive, it would be good for the country, but if not, it signals trouble for Bangladesh and could directly affect the election

negatively," he added.

Dhaka University political science Prof Sabbir Ahmed said the government must now act decisively. "It must have the courage to declare its position. Some will be pleased, others won't. But I don't think anyone will walk away from the electoral field," he said.

He suggested the government do its homework, assess the pros and cons of each option, prepare its stance, and give parties a day to respond.

"In my view, the government should announce its decision within a week at most. It's already been delayed too long. Not every decision will align with every party's interest," he added.

"Those who can rise above their egos at this moment will improve their public image. That's something political parties need to understand."

North South University's Prof Sk Tawfique M Haque said the government appears ready to move ahead independently. "Had the parties reached consensus, it would've been easier for the government. But from what I know, it's preparing to announce a decision on its own. The hope is that the parties will accept," he said.

He cautioned that the decision will likely go against one or more major political groups, risking further complications.

"The government should announce its decision and then call the parties one last time to urge them to accept within this framework."

"The parties must adopt an accommodative attitude and a mindset ready to compromise for the sake of the national interest," he said.

Leaders of political parties, however, sounded firm on their stances.

At a programme in Thakurgaon, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that

attempts were being made to delay the election.

"Postponing the election would spell disaster for us and for the country. We want the interim government to waste no time in announcing the election schedule and to take steps to establish an elected government without delay."

At a press conference in Dhaka yesterday, Jamaat-e-Islami Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman Azad said all parties had worked together for nine months with the consensus commission, but delays in their actions created complications in implementing the charter.

He said Jamaat had invited the BNP for talks, but the latter declined. "Still, if the BNP invites us for dialogue, we will respond," he added.

At a discussion on "Revolution and Solidarity Day", organised by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal in Dhaka, BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed said the party would join any dialogue if invited by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus. "But why are we being invited through another party?" he asked.

National Citizen Party Joint Convener Sarwar Tushar blamed BNP and Jamaat for the failure to reform national institutions. "Jamaat talks about bending fingers to get ghee out, while BNP talks about taking to the streets. Both parties think only of their own interests," he said.

"BNP had earlier agreed with the commission, the July charter order, and the referendum. Now they're denying it," he added, accusing the government of "playing a game of snakes and ladders with the people."

"Without a legal foundation for the July charter, no electoral environment can be created," he warned.

Climate finance fuels 'debt trap'

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below the LDC average of \$30.49.

Overall, for every \$1 Bangladesh receives as grants, it gets \$2.70 in loans, placing it among nations facing the steepest climate-debt risks. Across LDCs, over 70 percent of climate finance arrives as loans.

"At COP30, Bangladesh will urge the world to replace loans with justice, through 100 percent grant-based adaptation finance. This is not charity; it's moral accounting," Khan said, citing an advisory from the International Court of Justice.

The period spanning 2009 to 2022 witnessed a substantial and worrying acceleration in Bangladesh's climate-related liabilities.

In this period, Bangladesh accrued \$3.4 billion in climate-related loans, data cited in the research showed, highlighting the country's growing dependence on external borrowing for adaptation and resilience.

Total external debt service costs for LDCs surged to \$50 billion in 2021 from \$31 billion in 2020, with climate

loans rising faster than repayment capacity, according to a report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). For over a decade, LDCs like Bangladesh have consistently received more climate loans than grants.

In response to mounting risks, Bangladesh formulated its National Adaptation Plan (NAP) in 2022, identifying 113 high priority interventions across eight sectors, including water resources, agriculture, and urban resilience.

Experts estimate the plan will require \$230 billion, or about \$8 billion annually, from 2023 to 2050.

But historical data reveal an enormous financing gap.

From 2002 to 2023, Bangladesh secured only \$1.41 billion in adaptation funds, less than 1 percent of its projected needs.

Similarly, while the country needs \$3.23 billion annually for mitigation under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), it has allocated just \$360 million a year between

2020 and 2024, only 11 percent of the requirement.

MISATTRIBUTION

The report also flags widespread misclassification of projects, with around \$880 million, nearly 19 percent of all climate funds, wrongly recorded as climate finance between 2002 and 2023.

These projects carry a staggering loan-to-grant ratio of 28.8, artificially inflating national debt while diverting money from genuine resilience efforts.

If the new global climate finance goal of \$1.3 trillion for LDCs fails to uphold principles of fairness and equity, the report warns, "every cyclone that hits the coast will add not just loss of life, but another line of debt".

The World Bank estimates that Bangladesh experiences an annual economic loss of about \$1 billion from average tropical cyclones. By 2050, one-third of agricultural GDP may be lost due to climate variability and extreme events.

"COP30 must end this cycle by linking finance to rights, resilience, and regeneration," Khan said.

They came, fired, vanished

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footage and trying to identify the killers."

CCTV FOOTAGE, WITNESS ACCOUNTS

The entire attack was captured on nearby CCTV cameras. One video shows Mamun sprinting through the hospital gate, with two men chasing and firing continuously.

Within seconds, they closed in and shot him from point blank range.

Another mobile phone video shows Mamun lying face-down between two buildings inside the hospital compound. One sandal had come off, and his sunglasses lay beside his head.

A man was heard shouting, "Call the doctor, hurry!" while another said in panic, "Only two men came and fired!". Moments later, Mamun was placed on a stretcher and rushed to the emergency department – just a few steps from where he fell.

A hospital source said doctors found no pulse when Mamun was brought in. He was then sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), where doctors declared him dead around 11:45am.

Md Faruk, in charge of the DMCH police outpost, said the victim's body was sent to the morgue for autopsy.

Arafat Hossain, a witness, said, "I was near the hospital gate when I saw a man running. Two men jumped off a motorcycle and started firing. The first shot was fired into the air, followed by six or seven more rounds aimed at the victim. He fell almost instantly."

Another witness added, "There

were police on the road and guards at the hospital gate – yet no one moved. Everyone just ran for cover."

Nasir Uddin, inspector (investigation) of Kotwali Police Station, however, claimed that the police rushed in just after learning about the incident.

SECOND ATTEMPT

This was not the first murder attempt on Mamun.

On September 19, 2023, Mamun was returning to his Tollarbagh home from a bar in Moghbazar. When the car he was travelling in reached the BG Press area, seven to eight criminals on motorbikes intercepted the vehicle.

Mamun got out of the vehicle amid the hail of bullets and ran, but the criminals chased him down and stabbed him in the neck and back.

During that attack, stray bullets hit a passerby, Bhuban Chandra Shil, 55, a lawyer, who later died from his injuries.

After that attack, Mamun's family said Emon had called and threatened Mamun's life. Police then said the attackers were loyal to the top-listed criminal Emon.

Police officials now suspect the same criminal group may be behind this latest attack.

Mamun's brother, Akram Hossain Sumon, told The Daily Star that the two were once allies. "Mamun got into Dhaka College in 1990. Around the same time, Emon was a student of Dhaka City College. They formed the Emon-Mamun Gang [a criminal network] in 1992."

Sumon also said Mamun had 10-12 cases against him and that he served 24

years in prison, from 1999 to 2023, for many of these cases.

"The relationship between Mamun and Emon deteriorated in jail, and the two became arch-nemesis."

Speaking to the media at DMCH yesterday, the victim's wife, Dipa, said, "No one other than Emon could have done this. A few days ago, Emon had hired people to attack Mamun."

She said Mamun had a garment business in Mirpur, and the couple lived in Altanagar with their two daughters. "Mamun left home around 9:00am to attend the court hearing. Shortly afterward, I received a phone call informing me of his death."

No arrests were made till the filing of this report around 9:00pm last night.

'Women to get full day's pay for 5-hr workday'

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The Jamaat chief said that, if elected, people would not need to come to him with their problems; rather, he would proactively work to resolve their issues on a priority basis.

He remarked that the youth's work is not yet finished—they must continue to cleanse society of "all sorts of filth."

He further stated that, if given the opportunity to form the government, Jamaat would ensure that every child receives a quality education to help reform this "decaying society."

Dhaka on high alert

FROM PAGE 1

Security has also been strengthened around key installations and religious establishments across the country.

In a statement last night, the Chief Adviser's Press Wing said the Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Rapid Action Battalion have launched a citywide manhunt to arrest those involved in the attacks. It also warned that any attempt to disrupt the nation's religious coexistence would be met with the full force of the law.

CHAIN OF ATTACKS

The attacks began early in the morning and continued until late at night.

The first explosion occurred around 3:45am in front of the Grameen Bank headquarters, an institution associated with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus. Two people on a motorcycle hurled a crude bomb at the building before fleeing, said Sajjad Roman, officer-in-charge of Mirpur Model Police Station.

Less than four hours later, another duo on a motorbike threw crude bombs at Prabartana, a business establishment owned by Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Farida Akhter, in Mohammadpur, said Kazi Rafique Ahmed, Mohammadpur OC.

Around 7:30am, four crude bombs were hurled, two targeting Ibn Sina Hospital and two others in front of Midas Centre in Dhanmondi, said Shah Mostafa Tariquzzaman, assistant commissioner of DMP's Dhanmondi Zone.

In the evening, multiple explosions rocked different parts of the capital, near Mouchak intersection around 6:00pm, in front of Bangladesh Betar in Agargaon around 6:20pm, on Khilgaon Flyover around 6:30pm, and near Shah Ali Market in Mirpur around 6:40pm.

Around 10:00pm, another bomb was dropped from the flyover, said Shah Alam, inspector (investigation) of Shahjahanpur Police Station.

The day's final and most dramatic incident took place around 11:10pm, when attackers on a motorcycle hurled a crude bomb at the NCP office at Bangla Motor, leaving a bystander with minor injuries.

One unexploded bomb was recovered from the scene, said NCP

Joint Member Secretary Mushfiq Us Salehin.

He added that party activists chased two individuals fleeing on a motorcycle after the blast. "Later, three more suspects were detained nearby, bringing the total to five. They were handed over to the police," he said.

On Friday, several crude bombs were hurled at St Mary's Cathedral in Kakrail and in front of the residences for priests and teachers of St Joseph School and College in Mohammadpur.

Meanwhile, two buses were set ablaze in Shahjhadpur and Merul Badda early yesterday morning, while another was torched around 7:30pm in front of Lab Aid Hospital in Dhanmondi, police said.

SECURITY ALERT

Following the incidents, the DMP banned all types of public gatherings around major government establishments in Dhaka, including the ICT premises, until further notice.

The spate of attacks coincided with the Awami League's online call for a "Dhaka Lockdown" on November 13, even though all political activities of the party remain banned.

Police's Detective Branch said it has intensified counter-intelligence operations and surveillance to trace those responsible.

"They [AL activists] have declared they are willing to go to any extent for their leaders. We are investigating their involvement along with others," said Shafiqul Islam, chief of the DB.

He said 34 AL leaders and activists were arrested in separate raids across the capital on charges of planning, financing and participating in flash processions.

The DMP also detained a 28-year-old Chhatra League member in connection with the crude bomb blasts, according to a statement from the Chief Adviser's Press Wing.

The government reiterated its unwavering commitment to interfaith harmony. Security was reinforced at churches, temples, mosques and other religious institutions across Dhaka.

"We have been arresting those involved in subversive activities based on intelligence inputs. Whenever anyone is found involved, we act," said AHM Sahadat Hossain, spokesperson of Bangladesh

NCP ready for either 'ballot or bullet revolution': Patwary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizens Party (NCP) Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary yesterday said the party is ready for either a "ballot revolution" or a "bullet revolution".

"If Bangladesh continues on the democratic path, NCP is ready for a ballot revolution. But if blood must be shed, we are ready for a bullet revolution too," Patwary made the remarks at a discussion organised by Jatiya Sramik Shakti at the NCP headquarters in the capital's Banglamotor.

The NCP leader accused leftist organisations of betraying the working class, saying they have used the red flag as a political façade.

Referring to a particular religion-based party, Patwary said, "We do not believe in politics that exploit religion for votes – like adding a few words to the constitution or visiting madrasas for photo ops and then forming partnerships with the Awami League. We reject such hypocrisy and want to rebuild a future where no one's religious values are destroyed amid divisions."

Coming down on BNP, Patwary said, "If BNP stands against reform, its fate will be no different from Sheikh Hasina's. Sheikh Hasina at least fled to India; where will Tarique Rahman flee?"

Patwary announced that the NCP will form a "Reform Alliance" ahead of the next general election. "The process is already underway," he said, urging voters to support reform over party loyalty. "Whether you wear the scale or the sheaf of paddy badge, in the polling booth, you should vote for reform."

He also warned against the risk of a one-party-dominated parliament. "In the next parliament, we do not want to replace one fascist with another," he said.

NCP Joint Convener Sarwar Tushar blamed BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami for obstructing institutional reforms, saying both parties prioritise political gain over national progress.

As the capital braces for November 13, officials said law enforcement agencies have been placed on highest alert.

"Every attempt to destabilise the country will be dealt with swiftly and firmly," a senior Home Ministry official said. "Our priority is public safety, national unity, and protecting the democratic transition."

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Plot afoot to erase 1971 spirit: Fakhrul

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Thakurgaon

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that a vested group was conspiring to erase the spirit of Bangladesh's Liberation War.

"An effort is underway to erase the memory of our Liberation War," Fakhrul said. "They are trying to create a perception that nothing significant happened in 1971... that we did nothing... and that only those involved in the 2024 uprising achieved everything."

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A procession organised by a BNP election aspirant moves from the Jatiya Sangsad towards Tejgaon yesterday, blocking a major portion of the road and causing long tailbacks during the afternoon rush hour. Similar processions held across the city throughout the day added to the public sufferings. The photo was taken in the Karwan Bazar area.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Work with honesty, dedication

Army chief urges Corps of Signals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman yesterday expressed hope that the Corps of Signals would continue contributing to nation building through development activities carried out with honesty, sincerity, and a strong sense of duty.

He made the remark while addressing the Annual Commanding Officers' Conference 2025 of the Corps of Signals at the Signal Training Centre and School (STC&S) in Jashore Cantonment, said an ISPR press statement.

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Abu Sayed murder trial may end by January

Says prosecution; ICT hears testimony on Rampura killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal 2 yesterday recorded the testimony of the 12th prosecution witness in the case over the killing of Begum Rokeya University Rangpur (BRUR) student Abu Sayed during the July uprising, with prosecutors expecting the trial proceedings to conclude by January next year.

"We expect to record statements of 30 to 35 witnesses in total. While we cannot say when the verdict will be delivered, we hope to complete the trial proceedings by January," said Prosecutor Mizanul Islam.

Earlier in the day, Aquib Reza Khan, a former electrical and electronic engineering student at BRUR and one of the participants in last year's anti-discrimination student protests in Rangpur, testified before the tribunal.

Aquib took part in the protest and was shot and wounded with shotgun pellets.

The witness said on July 16, 2024, police opened fire on students protesting attacks on their peers. As students attempted to enter the university campus, police blocked the gates and used sound grenades, batons, and tear gas to disperse them.

During the chaos, Aquib said he saw police beat Abu Sayed before retreating, while some teachers, staff, and Chhatra League activists hurled brick chips from inside.

When students reopened the gate, police

again fired rubber bullets and tear gas. "Sayed stood with his hands raised so that police would not shoot, yet ASI Md Amir Hossain and constable Sujon Chandra Roy opened fire on him," Aquib said, adding that Sayed later died in hospital.

Meanwhile, at the ICT-1, two policemen testified as the seventh and eighth prosecution witnesses in the crimes against humanity case



over the killing of two and injuring of two others during the July uprising in Dhaka's Rampura.

Five police officials, including former DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, are accused in the case. Of them, former assistant sub-inspector of Rampura Police Station Chanchal Chandra Sarkar is in custody, while the others remain absconding.

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Deported workers call for justice

Demonstrate in front of expats' welfare ministry

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi migrant workers deported from Malaysia formed a human chain yesterday, demanding urgent support for 431 workers who were allegedly exploited by two Malaysian companies — Mediceram and Kawaguchi Manufacturing.

The protest took place in front of the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry in Dhaka, where the participants also highlighted mistreatment of Bangladeshi migrants in Malaysia.

They urged both Bangladeshi and Malaysian authorities, as well as international buyers, to ensure that affected workers receive unpaid wages, fair compensation, and justice for systemic abuses.

"We also urge the media, activists, rights community, and other relevant stakeholders to give this matter immediate attention," said a statement from the Migrant Welfare Network (MWN).

The statement accused the Bangladeshi High Commission in Malaysia and the Expatriates' Welfare Ministry of failing to protect victims of

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



COURT CORNER

MUSIC, PE TEACHERS HC questions the legality of scrapping recruitment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule questioning the legality of the government decision to cancel the recruitment of music and physical education teachers in primary schools.

The court also asked the government to explain why the amended notification issued by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education on November 2 should not be declared illegal.

Secretaries at the ministries of education, and primary and mass education and chairman of the public service commission has been made respondents to the rule returnable in two weeks.

The HC bench of Justice Fahmida Quader and Justice Md Ashif Hasan issued the rule following a writ petition by Supreme Court lawyer Sarwat Siraj Shukla.

4 Bagerhat, 5 Gazipur seats restored

HC declares EC gazette illegal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday declared illegal the Election Commission's gazette notification that reduced the number of parliamentary seats in Bagerhat from four to three and increased the number of seats of Gazipur from five to six.

The court also ordered the EC to restore the constituencies of the districts as those were earlier.

The bench of Justice Sashanka Shekhar Sarkar and Justice Faysal Hasan Arif delivered the verdict after hearing a petition filed by Bagerhat Press Club, its District Bar Association, BNP, Jamaat, Islami Andolon, and Truck Owners' Association challenging the legality of the EC's decision.

SC upholds bail for Latif Siddique

Police seek Ivy's arrest in two more cases

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that granted bail to former jute and textile minister Abdul Latif Siddique and journalist Md Monjurul Alam Panna in a case filed under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

A three-member bench headed by Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury passed the orders after dismissing two state petitions seeking a stay on the HC's order on November 6 granting them bail.

"There is now no legal bar to their release,"

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Govt okays 28 public holidays for next year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has announced the official list of public holidays for 2026, totalling 28 days off.

The list includes 14 general holidays and 14 declared under executive order. Of these, 11 coincide with weekends, allowing government employees to enjoy 17 full days off.

Following approval by the Advisory Council last Thursday, the Ministry of Public Administration issued a formal notification regarding the holiday list.

As in the current year, holidays for Eid-ul-Fitr will span five days, Eid-ul-Adha six days, and Durga Puja two days in 2026.

Offices that operate under their own laws and regulations on working hours and holidays may declare holidays in the public interest, following their respective rules.

Songs for the soul

How 'Mayer Tori' is reviving folk music in the north

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

In the remote Sonahat village under Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat, a chorus of young voices singing "Manush Bhajle Sonar Manush Hobi" (If you preach humanity, you'll become a person with a heart of gold) could be heard from afar.

A small signboard outside a tin-roofed house read "Karmoloy Gurugriha". Inside, around 60 to 70 children sat on mats. Some were playing the harmonium, some practising rhythm on the dotara (a two-string local instrument), while others were singing or playing other instruments.

Villagers stood around, mesmerised by the melody.

"At our Gurugriha, we conduct classes twice a week — on Fridays and Saturdays — where we teach folk songs and traditional instruments. Children from rural areas usually have no access to cultural education, so we're trying to give them that opportunity here," said Guru Nityananda Roy, the instructor.

"Mayer Tori", a cultural organisation,



runs the music school. As part of the initiative, over 500 children in several remote villages across Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts are learning traditional Bangladeshi folk genres such as Lalon Geeti, Marfati, Murshidi, Bhawaiya, Palli Geeti, and other forms of rural songs.

The children are also learning to play traditional instruments, including the dotara, ektara, khamak, sarinda,

tabla, flute, Bangla dhol, and violin.

Suraloy Gurugriha in Dewdoba village under Aditumari upazila of Lalmonirhat is also engaged in a similar effort under the initiative.

Guru Lopideb Nath, instructor at Suraloy Gurugriha, said, "Our students are dedicated. They don't just learn songs; they learn values — respect, compassion, and empathy."

In Halmajipara village under



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Kurigram's Phulbari upazila, Fakirul Islam instructs children under the same initiative.

"Most of our students come from working-class families. Through folk music, they dream of a brighter life. We are proud of them," he said.

Norwegian poet, photographer, and researcher Wera Saether, deeply moved by Bangladeshi folk culture, founded

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'You cannot uphold, defy constitution at once'

Farhad Mazhar on holding referendum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Poet and thinker Farhad Mazhar has questioned the authority of the interim government to hold a referendum on constitutional reforms, saying it has taken an oath to uphold the constitution.

"You can't uphold the constitution and act against it at the same time," he said. He made the remarks yesterday while addressing a discussion titled "Challenges of Building a New Bangladesh," organised by the Centre for Democracy and Peace Studies at the Jatiya Press Club.

Mazhar said taking oath under Sheikh Hasina's constitution was a "serious betrayal". Arguing that only a constituent assembly

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INTERNATIONAL

Preparations underway for Putin's India visit: Kremlin

REUTERS, Moscow

The Kremlin said yesterday it was "actively preparing" for President Vladimir Putin to visit India before the end of the year and hoped it would be a substantive trip.

Putin is due to visit India in December according to the Kremlin. He last went there in December 2021, just a few months before ordering troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

"We are currently actively preparing for Putin's visit to India," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters in Moscow.

Peskov declined to give any details about agreements that might be reached during the trip.

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi for India to stop buying oil from Russia. India is one of the biggest purchasers of Russian oil.

India and the US have signed a deal to expand defence cooperation over the next 10 years.



Health and civilian workers conduct a mass burial of Palestinians at a cemetery in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday. The Gaza health ministry said it had received the bodies of 15 Palestinian prisoners under a US-brokered ceasefire exchange deal.

PHOTO: AFP

SEPT PROTESTS Nepal police arrest more than 400

AFP, Kathmandu

Nepal's police have arrested 423 people accused of crimes ranging from murder to vandalism during a deadly mass uprising in September that toppled the government, according to police data released yesterday.

Suspects also face charges that include the illegal possession and use of weapons, as well as theft and indecent behaviour, the data showed.

"A team is looking into the incidences and we are working to collect information," Nepal police spokesman Abi Narayan Kalte said.

Youth-led protests that rallied under the loose umbrella title of "Gen Z", referring to those aged under 28, erupted on September 8 after a government ban on social media.

Thailand suspends Cambodia peace deal

Says border landmine wounds two Thai troops; Cambodia defence ministry pledges 'unwavering commitment' to peace

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand announced yesterday it was suspending the implementation of a peace agreement with neighbouring Cambodia after a landmine blast injured two Thai soldiers near the border.

The deal, overseen by US President Donald Trump, was meant to secure a lasting end to hostilities following border clashes in July that killed at least 43 people and displaced more than 300,000 civilians on both sides.

The Royal Thai Army said in a statement that the mine explosion in Sisaket province left one soldier with a severe leg injury, while pressure from the blast caused another to withstand chest pains.

Thai government spokesman Siripong Angkasakulkiat said Bangkok would cease

The deal, overseen by US President Donald Trump, was meant to secure a lasting end to hostilities following border clashes in July that killed 43 people

"the follow-up to the joint declaration", meaning the accord with Cambodia inked in Kuala Lumpur in late October, months after the two sides had agreed a ceasefire.

The next steps planned as part of the agreement's implementation included the release of 18 Cambodian soldiers detained in Thailand.

Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul told a news conference that "we thought that the security threat had

ceased, but it has not actually decreased".

Cambodian authorities did not immediately comment on the incident, but have in the past denied Thai accusations of planting new landmines along the border.

Cambodia's defence ministry pledged in a statement yesterday an "unwavering commitment" to peace.

The Southeast Asian neighbours have a dispute over parts of their border dating back more than a century, but July's fighting was sparked by Thailand's claims that Cambodia planted landmines that wounded its troops.

Thailand and Cambodia agreed an initial truce in late July after intervention by Trump, as well as Chinese diplomats and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who chairs the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) bloc.

Jamaat, allies gear

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"Not thousands, but hundreds of thousands will join the rally," he said.

He said the July charter and its implementation order are two separate issues, but BNP is treating them as one. He said although parties had worked together for nine months in the consensus commission to draft the charter, actions by some parties delayed the process.

Azad also said the door to dialogue remains open to resolve the current crisis. "The government or political parties can take such an initiative. But there is no scope to tamper with the July National Charter. Discussions, however, can be held on its implementation to find a way out of the crisis," he said.

When asked if today's rally would cause public inconvenience, he said it would be held from 2:00pm to 4:00pm and efforts would be made to end it on time. "If the traffic system works properly, there will be no major congestion," he added.

US strikes on alleged drug boats kill six more people

AFP, Washington

The US military has killed six more people in strikes on what it claims were drug-running boats. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said yesterday, bringing the total death toll in the series of attacks to 76.

Hegseth, in a post on X, said the US had carried out the strikes on Sunday in international waters in the eastern Pacific, targeting two boats "carrying narcotics" with three people on board each.

"All 6 were killed. No US forces were harmed," he said.

As in previous strikes, which began under President Donald Trump's administration in September, US officials did not release the identities of those killed, or offer evidence that they were smuggling narcotics or posed a threat to the United States.

Experts say the strikes, which have taken place in both the Pacific and Caribbean, amount to extrajudicial killings even if they target known traffickers.

Stop 'lamenting', seek 'solutions'

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change, addressed the gathering of ministers and high-ranking officials from nearly 200 countries, in a stark portrayal of the price of failure on the climate crisis.

The two weeks of talks, hosted by Brazil in the Amazonian city of Belém, will focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, setting a path for the transition away from fossil fuels, and providing the finance needed to protect poor countries against extreme weather.

Temperatures have already surpassed the 1.5C threshold agreed under the 2015 Paris treaty for the last two years, but only if that continues for several more years will the rise be judged permanent and a breach of the treaty, reports The Guardian online.

Some scientists argue it could

still be possible to bring down temperatures to the threshold again, or close to it, by measures such as cutting the powerful greenhouse gas methane, and by a rapid switch to low-carbon technologies.

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva told the opening of UN climate talks yesterday that it was time to defeat climate change deniers. "Climate change is no longer a threat of the future. It is a tragedy of the present," said Lula, slamming those who reject scientific evidence and "spread fear, attack institutions, science, and universities."

"It's time to inflict a new defeat on the deniers," he said, adding that it was far cheaper to fight to protect the climate than to wage war.

Simon Stiell also told the opening meeting of the summit: "When

climate disasters decimate the lives of millions, when we already have the solutions, this will never, ever be forgiven."

"Not one single nation among you can afford this, as climate disasters rip double digits off GDP," he warned. "To falter whilst mega droughts wreck national harvests, sending food prices soaring, makes zero sense, economically and politically. To squabble while famines take hold, forcing millions to flee their homelands, this will never be forgotten, as conflicts spread."

Some including Brazil have suggested that countries focus on smaller efforts that don't need consensus, after years of COP summits that have celebrated lofty promises only to leave many unfulfilled.

BNP faces new hurdle ahead of elections

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not nominated to remain patient, assuring them of "due respect and responsibility" within the party.

According to party insiders, the nomination list was made after five surveys conducted by Tarique's own team. Then the senior leaders met with the aspirants and held talks. The BNP high command also held a meeting with thousands of grassroots leaders at the chairperson's office in Gulshan in September where all pledged to follow party's decision.

Political analysts say the unrest has grown due to a lack of a fair and transparent nomination process, warning that failure to control it could harm the party's election performance.

Prof Al Masud Hasanuzzaman of Jahangirnagar University said poor coordination and weak communication between the top leadership and grassroots organisers worsened the situation.

"Since Tarique Rahman is not in Dhaka and is communicating with leaders virtually, the outcome has not been satisfactory, as face-to-face discussions are crucial in such matters," he said.

He said the party also ignored RPO provisions, fuelling further resentment.

A BNP standing committee member, speaking anonymously, said the party is reviewing controversial

➔ **BNP announced nominees for 237 constituencies on Nov 3**

➔ **Grassroots unhappy in nearly three dozen constituencies**

➔ **Clashes, protests reported in 26 districts**

➔ **Party reviewing some nominations, began talks**

nominations and will take action after completing the process. BNP leaders are also engaging with agitating local leaders to restore unity.

"The party is continuing talks with district leaders where protests have erupted, and we have already reviewed several applications seeking changes to nominees. We will calm the situation soon and take strict action against anyone who defies the party's decision," he said.

In Satkhira, protests continued for a fourth consecutive day after the announcement, with local activists demanding that the party replace its nominated candidate for the Satkhira-3 seat with Shahidul Alam, a member of the BNP's central executive committee.

Protesters blocked roads and highways and even observed a half-day strike on November 4.

Similar demonstrations occurred in Madaripur, Tangail,

Cumilla, Meherpur, Mymensingh, Chattogram, and Natore.

In Mymensingh's Gauripur upazila, a local Chhatra Dal activist died of a heart attack, and at least eight others were injured in clashes between supporters of BNP nominee M Iqbal Hossain and Tyabur Rahman Hiron, who did not get nomination; five leaders were expelled.

In Cumilla, ten people were injured in clashes between supporters of Abul Kalam and Samira Azim Dola during a political event.

In Gaibandha, authorities imposed Section 144 to prevent a showdown between rival factions led by nominee Faruk Alam and local leader Nahiduzzaman Nishat. In Chattogram, supporters of Aslam Chowdhury blocked both the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway and the railway line at Sitakunda over party leader Kazi Salah Uddin's nomination for Chattogram-4.

Malaysia steps up search for missing Rohingya boats

At least 21 dead; fate of 230 remains unclear

REUTERS, Langkawi

Malaysian maritime patrols scoured coastal waters in the Andaman Sea yesterday in search of dozens of missing members of Myanmar's persecuted Rohingya minority who police believe were on a boat that capsized and sank, killing at least 21 people.

Hundreds of Rohingyas boarded a vessel towards Malaysia two weeks ago, before being split into groups and sent to two boats on Thursday, said Khairul Azhar Nuruddin, police chief on Malaysia's northern Langkawi island, from where search operations are continuing across 255.7 square nautical miles.

There were around 70 people in the vessel that sank near Langkawi, while the fate of the other boat carrying 230 passengers remained unclear. They have found 13 survivors and seven bodies.

In Thailand, authorities have recovered four bodies, including two Rohingya girls. Over 5,100 Rohingyas boarded boats to leave Myanmar and Bangladesh between January and early November this year, says data from the UN Refugee Agency.

SPEECH EDIT BBC News says it received legal threat from Trump

REUTERS, London

BBC News said yesterday the broadcaster had received a letter from US President Donald Trump threatening legal action over the edit of a documentary broadcast a week before the US presidential election.

The BBC has acknowledged the Trump speech edit gave a misleading impression and should have been handled more carefully. The documentary broadcast last year had spliced together two parts of a Trump speech so he appeared to be encouraging the Capitol Hill riot of January 2021. "We will review the letter and respond directly in due course," a BBC spokesperson told Reuters.

Samir Shah, the chairman of the publicly-funded broadcaster, said in an interview with BBC News that it was "considering" how to respond to Trump's communication. When prompted about whether Trump would be suing the BBC, Shah said: "I do not know that yet, but he's a litigious fellow, so we should be prepared for all outcomes."

Medical college

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Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum and Saidur Rahman, the special assistant to the chief adviser for health, had both said some substandard medical colleges would be shut down or merged with others. But the move could not be implemented due to fears of backlash and possible protests, sources said.

GOVT COLLEGES

According to official documents, the health ministry reduced a total of 355 seats across 14 government medical colleges, though new allocations elsewhere brought the net cut to 280 seats.

Twenty-five seats each were slashed at medical colleges in Dhaka, Chattogram, Mymensingh, Rajshahi, Rangpur, Netrokona, Naogaon, Magura, Chandpur, MAG Osmani in Sylhet, Sher-e-Bangla in Barishal, and Sir Salimullah in Dhaka.

Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College lost five seats, while Habiganj Medical College saw the largest cut of 50 seats.

At the same time, the government added 75 seats across three institutions - 20 each at Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College in Gazipur, Tangail Medical College, and Patuakhali Medical College, officials said.

PRIVATE COLLEGES

The authorities also reduced 367 seats across 12 private medical colleges, including two where enrolment has been suspended.

The other 10 private colleges facing seat cuts are Shaheed Monsur Ali Medical College Hospital, Dhaka (15 seats), Dhaka Central International Medical College (15 seats), President Abdul Hamid Medical College, Kishoreganj (45 seats), Diabetic Association Medical College, Faridpur (40 seats), City Medical College, Gazipur (30 seats), MARKS Medical College, Dhaka (20 seats), Delta Medical College, Dhaka (15 seats), Shahabuddin Medical College, Dhaka (15 seats), Dr Sirajul Islam Medical College, Dhaka (50 seats), and MH Samorita Medical College, Dhaka (15 seats).

In addition, four private medical colleges will remain barred from new admissions as before for failing to comply with the relevant regulations. They are Aichi Medical College and Northern International Medical College in Dhaka, Northern Private Medical College in Rangpur, and Shah Makhdam Medical College in Rajshahi.

Nearly 75% CEPZ

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take corrective action."

Fire Service officials, meanwhile, said their probe committee has already updated fire safety data for all industrial establishments in Chattogram and will recommend stronger enforcement measures, especially for factories operating in export zones and industrial parks.

Several other structures inside the export processing zone were constructed without maintaining the required spacing between buildings, in violation of fire safety standards, they said.

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Water-stressed Barind, a cautionary tale for the world

Financing must for climate-resilient water management

The decline of groundwater in the Barind rice-growing region and its impact on marginal farmers, as reported in this daily, is a lesson in how the environment, the economy, and human desperation are inextricably linked. The report comes as world leaders fly into the Brazilian city of Belém for the COP30 climate summit, to discuss and agree on a global path on carbon reduction, climate adaptation, and finance. Against this backdrop, the plight of farmers in the Barind region is a microcosm of the convergent crises of climate change and resource management.

The Rajshahi region, once known as a comparatively barren area, was transformed into the "rice bowl" of Bangladesh by a technological miracle: the deep tubewell. Since the 1990s, the authorities have enabled farmers to tap groundwater, cultivating three crops a year and banishing the spectre of famine. But this region is now water-stressed, its groundwater table in freefall. What appears at first glance to be a lush landscape of crops and fruit orchards is an illusion sustained "at the cost of groundwater." The very solution of the past has sown the seeds of the present crisis.

This crisis is twofold. The first element is a changing climate. A study by the Bangladesh Meteorological Department reveals that rainfall in Rajshahi is declining by 54mm per decade, while temperatures are rising at the country's steepest rate: 0.5 degrees Celsius per decade. The monsoon, the lifeblood of traditional agriculture, is becoming less reliable, replaced by torrential downpours that the hard clay of the Barind region cannot absorb. This disrupts not only groundwater recharge but also the delicate balance of agriculture. The second element is the overexploitation of a finite resource. As farmers are forced to dig ever deeper—from 30 feet a decade ago to 80 feet today—they are just mining precious water, an unsustainable practice.

The story of Rajshahi is a cautionary tale for Bangladesh and, indeed, the rest of the world. It demonstrates that development models built on the intensive use of a single resource are perilously fragile in the face of climate change. Although the government is preparing guidelines to limit the use of water in the area, such reactionary measures will not do much to address the crisis in the long run. Therefore, the lesson for the delegates in Belém is that the agenda cannot be neatly divided into silos of "carbon reduction," "adaptation," and "finance." Rajshahi shows they are one and the same. Financing must be directed not just at clean energy, but at climate-resilient water management and agriculture. The silent killer of climate change does not announce itself with a cataclysm, but with a creeping drought, a falling water table, and the quiet despair of a farmer staring at his sterile field.

Uphold street children's rights

Govt must ensure their education, safety and well-being

In Bangladesh, around 34 lakh children live on the streets without parental care. However, their suffering is often overlooked by the state and policymakers. These children face deprivation and abuse, lack access to education and healthcare, and are even excluded from social protection systems due to state apathy. Against this backdrop, it is encouraging to hear from a group of former street children who were rescued and rehabilitated by the non-government organisation LEEDO. Fifteen of them recently joined a discussion, asking important questions about their safety, dignity, and future.

As members of LEEDO's "Young Journalist Changemaker" group, the children asked questions that exposed the deep, systemic neglect shaping the lives of those on the streets. One asked whether there is any legal remedy if a street child is harassed by police, another questioned the use of children in political programmes, and others raised concerns about the lack of rescue services and the poor enforcement of child protection laws. The responses they received from policymakers, lawyers, and rights activists were equally revealing. While a child helpline (1098) exists in the country, it is limited to divisional cities; child protection laws and agencies are in place, but implementation is inconsistent. The same goes for legal aid: despite its availability, most children cannot access it.

Although street children belong to the most vulnerable section of society, the state has never made their education and well-being a priority, which is most unfortunate. A recent survey by Caritas Bangladesh found that nearly 94 percent of street children remain excluded from government safety-net schemes. Most of them lack the identification documents needed to access education or healthcare. Another report by this daily revealed that sexual abuse is a daily reality for many of these children, particularly girls. Several other studies also paint a horrific picture of their vulnerability.

We, therefore, urge the government to act urgently to extend the child helpline to every upazila, register street children, integrate them into education and social services, and strictly prohibit their exploitation in politics or labour. A comprehensive, well-funded child protection system with adequate rehabilitation facilities is essential to bring all street children under state care. Society, too, bears a responsibility to stand by these children, as organisations like LEEDO have done. If non-government organisations can reshape the lives of street children, the government, with far more resources and reach, should be able to ensure every child in the country grows up in a safe and caring environment. By ensuring the constitutional rights and dignity of street children, we can transform them into capable, empowered individuals who will contribute meaningfully to the country's social and economic progress.

What the enforced disappearance commission report failed to address



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MD ABDUL HALIM

The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, in its report, substantiated prima facie evidence of torture in 253 cases of enforced disappearances (Eds) and established compelling evidence of gross human rights violations committed by law enforcement agencies (LEAs). However, the commission appeared to have trapped itself in the pursuit of punishing individual perpetrators rather than holding the state accountable or recommending effective remedies for the sufferings of the victims in these cases.

The report, the first of its kind, reveals that out of 1,676 complaints received, 253 cases met the definitional threshold of Eds under international law, with supporting evidence such as general diaries, criminal complaints, and media reports. The commission confirmed that the victims named in these complaints had been in state custody, that LEAs had filed false criminal cases against them when some of them reappeared, and that these individuals are now alive, with many having testified about their detention and mistreatment.

Despite acknowledging the existence of such evidence, the commission remained focused on the absence of domestic legal provisions criminalising Eds. It recommended enacting a new penal statute, which primarily looks to punish individual perpetrators and does little to ensure accountability of the state and its agencies for gross human rights violations. The commission further advocates for the utilisation of the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973, and the Army Act, 1952, as available legal frameworks, even though sufficient constitutional and statutory mechanisms for redress already exist under the Constitution of Bangladesh and the National Human Rights Commission Act (NHRC), 2009.

By narrowing its scope to criminalisation, the commission fails to acknowledge the broader principle of state accountability, overlooking reparations, public apologies, and guarantees of non-repetition to which victims are entitled under international human rights law, our constitution, and the NHRC law. This limited approach risks reducing the commission's crucial work to a purely procedural exercise, detached from the lived realities of victims and from the interim and immediate remedies they require. Although the commission discusses at length the constitutional protection of the right to life, it remains conspicuously

silent on possible constitutional recommendations for remedial and preventive frameworks, areas that are not contingent upon statutory criminal measures.

Developing international and domestic human rights jurisprudence indicates that criminal accountability, although necessary, should not be the sole avenue of justice, particularly in systems where prosecutions may take

independent of any statutory provision.

The commission's own findings, based on documentary evidence and victims' testimonies confirming their detention in state custody, meet the civil standard of proof, namely the balance of probabilities, which is sufficient to establish state responsibility for gross human rights violations. Yet, the commission made no recommendations urging the government or relevant ministries to provide compensation or guarantees of non-recurrence.

Besides, it failed to recognise that the absence of enabling legislation may itself constitute a human rights violation, thereby warranting judicial and quasi-judicial intervention. Moreover, the commission appears to have overlooked several articles of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance,

by BSF in Jammu & Kashmir (2010). Across these decisions and interventions, both the Supreme Court and the Indian NHRC have consistently held that victims of gross human rights violations must, in appropriate cases, receive compensation and other remedial protections from the state, irrespective of, and in addition to, any criminal proceedings. They have also emphasised the need to establish mechanisms that prevent the recurrence of similar violations in the future.

In contrast, Bangladesh's enforced disappearance commission's recommendations reflect an inadequate institutional understanding of how human rights protection can operate through existing constitutional and quasi-judicial mechanisms. It neither addressed the evidentiary value of its



The commission's report mostly focused on the punishment of perpetrators, not ensuring remedies, prevention, and guarantees of non-repetition of the crime.

FILE PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

years, if not decades. The state, as both violator and protector of rights, bears an immediate duty to provide remedies and preventive safeguards that operate independently of criminal proceedings.

The commission could have referred the 253 substantiated complaints to the NHRC, which possesses quasi-judicial authority to issue show-cause notices to the government and to recommend appropriate remedies. Alternatively, it might have submitted its findings to the High Court Division seeking the issuance of a rule nisi against the state, or facilitated the NHRC or civil society organisations in representing the victims on the basis of its prima facie evidence. Such measures would be consistent with precedents, such as *Nurul Amin and Others v Government* (2015), in which the Appellate Division affirmed citizens' constitutional right to compensation for loss of life and liberty resulting from a breach of public duty,

which require state parties to ensure remedies, prevention, and guarantees of non-repetition, obligations that extend well beyond the confines of criminal law.

Comparative experience from India shows how both the judiciary and its NHRC have adopted complementary approaches to address disappearances and torture. The Indian Supreme Court, in *Extra Judicial Execution Victim Families Association v Union of India* (2017) and *Union of India v Luthukla (SMT) and Others* (1999), recognised state accountability and ordered compensation for victims' families with prima facie evidence. The Indian NHRC has likewise ensured interim financial relief and recommended preventive measures in numerous cases, including the disappearance of Tayab Ali by paramilitary force (1999-2000), the killing of two civilians by India Border Security Force (BSF) in Rajasthan (2000-2001), and the killing of a 16-year-old

own report nor clarified who may rely on its findings in judicial or quasi-judicial proceedings.

Nonetheless, the report remains a milestone in documenting serious human rights violations in Bangladesh, acknowledging that "enforced disappearances are among the gravest violations of human rights, constituting crimes against humanity. When the state itself is complicit in such crimes, it not only erodes trust in public institutions but also entrenches a climate of fear." Yet, its recommendations stop short of addressing how that erosion of trust might be repaired realistically. This way, it has missed a crucial opportunity to strengthen the nation's human rights architecture that could ensure justice for victims, accountability for violations, and guarantees of non-repetition beyond the narrow lens of criminalisation.

It is time for Bangladesh to move past the politics of violence



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SHABBIR AHMED

In a year that was meant to mark a new phase of political stability under the interim government, Bangladesh finds itself revisiting old ghosts. The latest report by the Human Rights Support Society (HRSS) paints a grim portrait of our political landscape: 160 people killed and more than 8,000 injured in 1,047 incidents of political violence over just 13 months, between September 2024 and September 2025.

The figures reveal a pattern all too familiar to Bangladeshis. Of those killed, 104 were affiliated with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and 38 with the Awami League (AL). Others belonged to smaller parties such as Jamaat-e-Islami and the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF). Even more troubling, intra-party clashes claimed 88 lives. The violence reflects deep fissures within the parties where internal loyalty contests often turn fatal.

The persistent and almost predictable tragedy portrayed in the HRSS report notes a steady climb in political deaths: 82 in 2021, 92 in 2022, 96 in 2023, and 160 between September 2024 and September 2025. These numbers are not just statistics; they are signposts of a political culture

that has grown desensitised to violence.

For decades, political dialogues have been replaced by hostility. Rival parties treat political competition as warfare, where victory is measured not by fair votes or vision, but by the dominance one can impose on the streets. Elections, protests, and policy disputes frequently spill into pitched battles, while the space for reasoned debate continues to shrink.

The most unsettling aspect is how it has been normalised. Violence is now seen not as a breakdown of politics, but as its active, to some extent, only instrument. Party operatives are mobilised as foot soldiers, and young supporters are taught that confrontation is proof of loyalty. From city streets to university campuses, the language of political engagement has been replaced by the rhetoric of aggression.

This normalisation thrives in a context of impunity. When institutions tasked with upholding justice appear politically biased and aligned, accountability becomes selective and violence becomes cyclical and pervasive. Perpetrators, emboldened by political protection, act without fear

of consequence, while victims' families are left to navigate a system that offers neither recognition nor redress. The real toll of political violence is not just physical; it is psychological and moral. It corrodes public trust, breeds cynicism, and teaches citizens that power is born from intimidation, not integrity. Intra-party clashes, which claimed dozens of lives last year, are telling reminders that political patronage and personal ambition now outweigh ideology or principle.

The state, too, bears responsibility. Law enforcement often responds reactively rather than preventively, and their perceived partisanship only fuels mistrust. Without institutional neutrality, violence fills the void that governance leaves behind.

Ending this entrenched culture of violence demands more than temporary calm before the next election; it requires a structural and moral reset. Let's start with political responsibility, where party leaders must publicly commit to zero tolerance for violence and back it with disciplinary action. Rhetorical condemnation is no substitute for internal reform. Institutional nonchalance and the act of witnessing violence while actively denying it must come to an end. The police and judiciary must act with transparency and impartiality. Depoliticising law enforcement is crucial to restoring public confidence. Independent oversight is also critical; engaging civil society groups like HRSS should be strengthened, not sidelined. Particularly, an independent national observatory on political violence

could document incidents, track accountability, and recommend legal action in this case. Civic education and youth engagement should be viewed as a necessary tool to combat these malpractices. The country's youth, often used as instruments of violence, should instead be empowered through civic education, dialogue platforms, and community service programmes. Last but not least, government-supported compensation and rehabilitation schemes for victims and their families would send a powerful message.

Bangladesh cannot afford to treat these numbers as routine collateral damage of politics. Political violence is not an inevitable by-product of democracy; it is its undoing. The measure of a mature democracy lies not in the noise of rallies, but in the civility of disagreement. The HRSS report should thus serve as a national mirror. It reflects not just the brutality of our streets, but the poverty of our political imagination. For all our economic and social progress, we continue to lag in the most fundamental metric of modern statehood, the ability to resolve disputes and differences peacefully.

As Bangladesh looks towards future elections and leadership transitions, we must decide if we want to remain captive to a culture where one's party flag determines one's safety, or we will choose the path of restraint, reform, and respect for life. True political strength does not emerge from fear or force; it emanates from the courage to listen, compromise, and lead without bloodshed. Bangladesh longs for a political era that heals, not leaves scars.

How to balance potato farmers' gains with consumers' needs



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MD RAZIB

Bangladesh has experienced record-breaking potato production this year, surpassing all previous records. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) data shows around one crore tonnes of potato production in fiscal year 2023-24, which rose to approximately 1.15 crore tonnes in FY2024-25, an impressive 9.17 percent increase from the previous year.

But what led farmers to expand potato cultivation so significantly this year? Marginal farmers often grow crops that fetched higher prices the preceding year in the hope of more profit. There is no fault in their logic, as it is a survival strategy. In 2024, the market price of potatoes was quite high, averaging Tk 50-60 per kilogramme, which naturally encouraged farmers to expand cultivation this year. As a result, Bangladesh has recorded the highest-ever potato output in the FY2024-25.

However, this bumper harvest has brought deep concerns. The record high production far exceeded the annual domestic demand of around 90 lakh tonnes, creating a substantial surplus and causing potato prices to plummet. Subsequently, marginal farmers suffered severe financial losses. According to news reports and local data, field production costs stand at roughly Tk 16/kg, with added cold storage costs of Tk 6-7/kg (some local cold storages in Rangpur charges Tk 400 per 60 kg sack). Yet, in local markets across the division, potatoes are being sold for only Tk 8.5-9.5/kg, resulting in significant losses. According to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB), wholesale prices currently range from Tk 9-12/kg, while retail prices stand between Tk 15-20/kg. Over the past year, potato prices have fallen by 61-63 percent, leaving farmers struggling and the government facing challenges in managing the market surplus.

Many farmers and agricultural stakeholders have blamed the government for failing to implement previously announced measures—such as setting a minimum cold storage gate price of Tk 22/kg and procuring 50,000 tonnes of potatoes to stabilise the market. Take the case of Akhtar Mia, a potato farmer from Rangpur who cultivated



Bangladesh produced a record 1.15 crore tonnes of potatoes this season, far exceeding the annual domestic demand, causing severe financial losses to marginal farmers.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

potatoes on 25 acres of land this year. He reported an estimated loss of around Tk 30 lakh. He mentioned that in previous years, cold storage owners used to provide loans against stored potatoes, but this year those loans were discontinued. Moreover, when the government provides assistance, marginal farmers rarely benefit, as middlemen (*mahajans*) capture most of the advantages.

Evidently, potato farmers have faced substantial welfare losses this year. With prices collapsing, it is likely that many farmers

will reduce potato cultivation next year, leading to lower supply and higher prices in the market. From a consumer perspective, this means people will have to buy potatoes at prices much higher than the standard market price, resulting in consumer welfare loss. This cyclical pattern of alternating farmers' and consumers' welfare losses has been recurring in Bangladesh's potato market in recent years. So, the key question

cultivation each year. A cultivation limit could be introduced to prevent farmers from allocating excessive land to potatoes alone. Encouraging farmers to diversify into other crops would promote crop diversification, improve soil fertility, and enhance food security. Bangladesh spends a significant amount on importing food grains every year. If farmers shift towards producing a balanced mix of crops suited to local soil

Despite being the seventh-largest potato producer in the world, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Bangladesh does not rank among the top 20 exporters. According to the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), Bangladesh currently exports potatoes to 14 countries, including Singapore, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and several Middle Eastern nations. Compared to FY2021-22, exports dropped significantly in FY2022-23 and FY2023-24 due to strong domestic demand. With record-breaking production in FY2024-25, exports increased again by a significant margin compared to the previous year. The Middle East offers immense potential for expansion. Signing Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with Middle Eastern countries could enable duty-free exports, opening new markets and boosting export volumes. Moreover, developing transportation infrastructure would significantly reduce export costs. The North Bengal region, a key potato production hub, currently takes two days for goods to reach Chattogram port via Dhaka, increasing both time and costs. Establishing a direct railway route from North Bengal to Chattogram would enable faster and cheaper exports, helping Bangladesh compete more effectively in the global market.

The Rangpur division, especially the char areas, produces large volumes of potatoes and has an abundance of low-cost labour. This provides a comparative advantage for developing agro-processing industries, particularly in potato-based products such as chips and French fries. Setting up international-standard processing facilities in Rangpur could not only increase exports but also generate employment for flood-affected and low-income communities, contributing significantly to Bangladesh's GDP. For example, PepsiCo began producing Lay's chips in Bangladesh in 2023, some of which are already being exported abroad. If the government reduces supply-side constraints and improves infrastructure, the cost of doing business will fall, attracting more foreign investment in the chips industry and boosting exports.

However, Bangladeshi potatoes have relatively low dry matter content, making them less crispy and less energy efficient for chip production. The government should consider importing high-dry-matter potato seeds suitable for chip and French fry production and supplying them to farmers. This would enhance the country's competitiveness in the processed potato industry and create a sustainable export market.

arises: how can Bangladesh simultaneously protect both farmers' and consumers' welfare, where one group's gain does not come at the expense of another? To achieve this, effective government intervention is essential.

The Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) maintains data on how much land in each upazila is allocated to various crops. By analysing domestic demand and the export volume of potatoes, the DAE can predict how much land should ideally be used for potato

fertility—rather than focusing excessively on a few profitable crops—the country could save valuable foreign exchange and move towards food self-sufficiency. Although such a policy may involve high monitoring costs, it would be highly effective and sustainable for the economy in the long run, provided it is implemented with integrity and strict oversight.

If Bangladesh consistently produces potatoes beyond domestic demand, it must identify and develop new export markets.

The cobra effect: When good intentions bite back



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HUSSAIN A SAMAD

Picture colonial Delhi, a city under British rule, plagued by a slithering, venomous problem: an abundance of cobras. Fearing for public safety, the government announced what seemed like a brilliant, simple solution: a cash bounty for every dead cobra.

Initially, the policy was a roaring success. Dead snakes piled up, and rewards were paid out. Administrators in their high-collared tunics likely congratulated themselves on their approach to pest control. But then, a strange thing happened. The cobra population was not declining. In fact, the treasury was paying out more rewards than ever.

It turned out that incentives had met human ingenuity. Enterprising locals realised that if killing cobras earned money, *breeding* them could be even more profitable. Makeshift snake farms sprang up. People began raising cobras in their backyards, killing them, and collecting the rewards—a perfect, perverse business model.

When the outraged authorities finally discovered the scheme, they cancelled the bounty. And then came the final twist. The breeders, now holding cages full of worthless, venomous snakes, did the only practical thing: they set them free. The result? Delhi was left with *even more* cobras.

This is the cobra effect: a well-meaning solution that backfires due to a poorly planned incentive, making the original problem worse. It is a tough lesson in unintended consequences, where the very tool meant to fix an issue ends up fuelling it. Several historical examples illustrate the principle. In French colonial Hanoi, authorities offered a bounty for each rat tail submitted to

combat an infestation. Soon, officials noticed rats in the city with no tails. Rat catchers were simply catching them, snipping off the tail for the bounty, and releasing the rodents back into the sewers to breed, ensuring a steady income. During China's Four Pests campaign in the 1950s, the government declared sparrows an enemy for eating grain. The population was mobilised to exterminate them. The unintended consequence? With their primary predator gone, the locust population exploded, contributing significantly to a devastating famine. The goal was to protect the harvest; the result was destruction.

This global phenomenon has clear and costly parallels in Bangladesh, where numerous policies, launched with the best of intentions, have been haunted by the same flawed logic. In 2010, driven by pressing energy shortages and global climate goals, the government mandated that new buildings must install rooftop solar panels to get a grid electricity connection. The noble goal was to boost renewable energy. However, what the government incentivised was not "production of solar energy"; it was "getting a grid connection."

Building owners complied. Many installed the cheapest, lowest-grade panels possible, often without proper installation or inverters. Once the connection was secured, these systems were often neglected. Today, reports suggest 80-90 percent of these mandated systems are non-functional, gathering dust and turning into e-waste. A regulatory hurdle was cleared, but the green energy goal was lost.

Similarly, to boost foreign exchange and support industrial growth, Bangladesh offers generous

cash incentives on export proceeds, particularly for garments and food. The goal is to encourage legitimate trade. The incentive, however, has encouraged widespread fraud.

This has given rise to "phantom exports"—fictitious shipments where documents are forged to claim subsidies for goods that never left the country. Between 2017 and 2021, dozens of companies reportedly laundered over Tk 300 crore through such ghostly consignments, often with alleged complicity from officials. The incentive designed to build the economy is, in some cases, actively draining it by rewarding the *paperwork* of exporting, not the actual economic value.

To ensure food security and keep rice prices stable, the government heavily subsidises chemical fertilisers. This makes fertiliser cheap. The result? Farmers, ignoring soil tests and expert recommendations, often apply 2-3 times the recommended dose, especially of urea.

This over-application has led to diminishing returns, with rice yields plateauing despite rising fertiliser use. Worse, it poisons the land. Excessive nitrogen depletes soil organic matter, increases acidity, and threatens drinking water. The subsidy, meant to secure the food supply, is degrading the very soil it depends on. This creates a dangerous long-term dependency, where future food security may rely on importing ever-larger quantities of chemical inputs simply to maintain yields on depleted land.

There are lessons in these backfires for those who listen: (i) humans follow the reward, not the intention, and they are masters at finding shortcuts to reward. If a loophole exists, it will be found and exploited. (ii) The metric is not the mission. When you reward a proxy, people will optimise for that proxy, not the actual goal. The goal in Delhi was "fewer live cobras," but the metric was "more dead cobras." This error is everywhere: in education, it leads to "teaching to the test" rather than genuine learning; in business, it leads to hitting sales quotas rather than building customer value. (iii)

A policy never does just one thing. A solution is often an intervention in a complex system, and it will create ripples. Ignoring these "second-order effects" is the most common path to failure. Wiping out sparrows does not just mean fewer sparrows; it means a new, bigger problem with locusts. Policymakers must always ask: "and then what happens?"

How can policymakers avoid this cobra effect? The lessons from these failures point to a clear path forward: (i) game the system first. Before

launching a policy, ask the most cynical questions: "how could this be cheated? What's the laziest, most corrupt way to get this reward?" This "red teaming" or pre-mortem analysis can reveal fatal flaws before they go live. (ii) Reward the real goal. Design incentives that are tightly aligned with the outcome you want, not the activity you think will get you there. Do not reward dead cobras; reward a verifiable drop in the live cobra population. Do not reward installing solar; reward producing solar energy. (iii) Test, Learn,

and Adapt. Pilot policies on a small scale. See what strange behaviours emerge. Treat the initial rollout as an experiment, not a final declaration. Be humble enough to admit a plan is backfiring and change course quickly. Ultimately, the cobra effect is a powerful lesson in humility. It reminds us that when we try to change a complex system—whether it is an ecosystem, an economy, or a company culture—we must be prepared for the system to alter our plans in ways we never anticipated.

Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability Studies (IDMVS)
University of Dhaka

Professional Master of Disaster Management (PMDM) Admission
18th Batch, Session: 2025-2026 (January-June)

Required Qualifications and Other Information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum undergraduate degree in any discipline with a minimum CGPA of 2.50 (out of 4) or 2nd class/division at all levels of education. ▪ Those who require equivalent certificate or migration certificate, must submit their document(s) before admission. ▪ CLASS ON FRIDAY! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PMDM Written Test 2025-2026 (January-June) of the Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability Studies (IDMVS), University of Dhaka will be held on 12 December 2025 (Friday) at 10.00 am. ▪ An applicant with a degree from UGC unapproved program of any university is not eligible to apply for admission. ▪ The application fee is 1500 BDT. The application form must be collected and submitted between 5 October 2025 – 11 December 2025. ▪ For detailed information, please visit our office Room No. 6081, Arts Building, 5th Floor, University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000 (9.00 am to 4.30 pm on Saturday-Thursday) & (10.00 am to 7.00 pm on Friday). ▪ For further information, please call at 01918864314, 01711790898, 01760010744; Email: idmvs@du.ac.bd; Web: https://du.ac.bd/body/IDMVS ▪ For online application, please visit at https://du.ac.bd/webPost/97/20973

Director
Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability Studies (IDMVS)
University of Dhaka

Trade Disruption, Strategic Response: Bangladesh in the New Global Order

A seminar titled "Shifting Trade Landscape in Asia and the Pacific: Implications for Bangladesh" was held on 16 October 2025 at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka. Jointly organised by UNDP Bangladesh and The Daily Star, the seminar brought together government officials, trade experts, private-sector representatives, and academics. Participants highlighted that rising protectionism from punitive tariffs to fragmented supply chains is reshaping global trade. For Bangladesh, this underscores the need to tap into dynamic Asian markets and reduce dependence on traditional export destinations. Discussions focused on strategies for diversifying trade, rationalising tariff structures, and strengthening competitiveness amid deepening global trade uncertainties.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Diversify Markets & Products**
Expand beyond Western markets; strengthen regional and bilateral trade links.
- 2. Simplify Tariffs**
Rationalise duties, reduce gaps, and create predictable, transparent tax systems.
- 3. Strengthen Multilateral Regional Engagement**
Leverage WTO, ASEAN, RCEP, and CPTPP frameworks for stable market access.
- 4. Boost Domestic Competitiveness**
Improve logistics, reduce bureaucracy, and fully implement trade facilitation measures.
- 5. Invest in Skills & Human Capital**
Upskill workforce for AI, digital trade, and high-value industries.
- 6. Harness Technology & Innovation**
Promote AI, digitalisation, and innovation to enhance productivity and entrepreneurship.
- 7. Adopt Dual-Track Strategy**
Combine export diversification with domestic capacity building for resilient, inclusive growth.

The Daily Star



Owais Parry
Country Economic Adviser
UNDP Bangladesh (Keynote Speaker)



The Asia-Pacific region has experienced significant shifts in trade, investment, and economic growth. Starting with gradual trade liberalisation, followed by regional integration initiatives and structural reforms, progress in many parts of this region is quite evident. With rapid technological changes, rising trade restrictions, and the emergence of AI, the region faces both risks and opportunities that demand a careful assessment and strategic adaptation.

Trade patterns across the region vary widely. Some countries such as Singapore, Vietnam, and the Maldives are highly trade-dependent, with trade accounting for a significant share of GDP. External trade as a share of GDP for Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Pakistan is relatively smaller, reflecting both historical development paths and size of the domestic market. Recent shifts, including US reciprocal tariffs, have disrupted traditional export flows, prompting countries to diversify markets and strengthen intra-regional trade. ASEAN, for example, has increasingly integrated forward and backward linkages, producing more final goods regionally rather than merely assembling components for export to other destinations.

Investment trends also reflect these adjustments. Countries such as Singapore and Vietnam continue to attract substantial FDI, particularly in services and manufacturing, while Indonesia is scaling up domestic industries through targeted industrial policies. Technology diffusion, especially in AI and digital trade offer opportunities but also bring with them uncertainties. Policymakers are navigating how to harness these innovations while mitigating risks against the backdrop of global debates on de-globalisation and industrial policies.

Asia-Pacific's economic trajectory remains strong. The region contributes roughly 40-50% of global GDP, 60% of global GDP growth, and a growing share of the global middle class, which is projected to reach 3.5 billion by 2030. Yet growth is uneven, with some countries advancing rapidly while others continue to face structural constraints. Domestic production capabilities, workforce skills, and investment in technological adoption are critical factors that will shape competitiveness and economic resilience.

Looking ahead, uneven industrial development among countries in the region and policy implementation gaps may limit benefits from regional integration. However, opportunities exist to leverage intra-regional trade, diversify export markets, and build domestic capabilities in manufacturing and services. Technological adoption, and human capital development remain key to sustaining growth and resilience in an evolving global environment.

In summary, Asia-Pacific's experience shows that proactive and smart policies can turn disruptions into dynamism. While external shocks and policy uncertainties present challenges, the region's long-term growth potential, technological diffusion, and expanding middle class provide a strong foundation. A new generation of industrial and trade policies are critical for economies in this region to navigate through this fast-moving landscape to write the next chapter of Asia's journey towards a greener and inclusive economic development.

Dr Mohammad Mahfuz Kabir
Research Director, Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS)
(Panel Discussant)



Over the past few years, global trade has experienced a pronounced shift from openness to protectionism, particularly under the resurgence of tariff-based policies initiated during the Trump administration. The so-called "Asian miracle," which once defined East and Southeast Asia's rapid integration into global value chains, is now challenged by new barriers that threaten the momentum of export-led growth models. The rise of reciprocal and punitive tariffs has also disrupted the progress of multilateral negotiations under the WTO, pushing nations toward bilateral and regional trade arrangements.

Bangladesh's export economy has been directly impacted by these developments. The imposition of a 20 percent tariff on key export items to the United States has placed additional pressure on the country's competitive edge. In response, Bangladesh proposed several measures to strengthen trade relations, including increasing imports of US commodities such as maize, wheat, scrap iron and steel, oilseeds, and cotton, as well as addressing non-tariff barriers.

The negotiation process was primarily government-led, with indirect inputs from private sector bodies such as importers and chambers of commerce. Importantly, the engagement focused solely on tariffs rather than a comprehensive trade agreement. Discussions continue on the feasibility of future frameworks such as a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) or a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), both of which could offer more stable access to the US market and beyond.

As Bangladesh approaches its LDC graduation, the evolving trade landscape demands a recalibration of strategy. Diversification of export destinations, particularly in the Middle East, Latin America, and East Asia has become a strategic priority. Ongoing negotiations with Japan, South Korea, the UAE, and Malaysia aim to establish bilateral and regional partnerships to safeguard post-graduation market access. While immediate export gains remain uncertain amid global economic slowdown, the broader focus on long-term trade resilience and negotiated market integration positions Bangladesh to adapt to the emerging realities of a more fragmented global trading system.

Md Hafizur Rahman
Administrator Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI)
(Panel Discussant)



Global trade dynamics have undergone a marked transformation in recent years, reflecting a growing wave of protectionist tendencies among developed and developing economies.

The period leading up to 2024 witnessed an unprecedented rise in protectionist measures from an estimated six billion to over two trillion dollars driven by countries employing trade remedy instruments such as anti-dumping, countervailing, and safeguard measures. This trend indicates an unmistakable shift away from the liberalisation that once defined globalisation, culminating in the United States' imposition of reciprocal tariffs that reshaped the discourse around fair and open trade.

A key concern emerging from this new

trade environment is the weakening of the multilateral trading system under the WTO. The declaration of "national emergency" by the United States under Article 21 of GATT has exposed loopholes in the WTO's rule-based system. While the article allows exceptions during times of war or national crisis, it lacks precise definitions, enabling broad interpretation and unilateral use. This has reignited global debate over WTO reform and the need to safeguard the institution's integrity. Although the United States has disrupted the functioning of the WTO Appellate Body, the organisation's framework continues to underpin most global trade relations, as 165 of 166 member states remain aligned with its rules.

Despite challenges, the WTO remains indispensable due to its comprehensive coverage that regional or bilateral arrangements cannot fully replicate. Agreements such as the CPTPP, RCEP, and ASEAN frameworks demonstrate potential but remain limited in scope and slow in implementation. Bilateral agreements, while faster to negotiate, often expose smaller economies to asymmetric power dynamics and compromise on policy space. Bangladesh's eagerness to sign FTAs must therefore be balanced with strategic caution, ensuring negotiations are informed, gradual, and reflective of national interests.

As Bangladesh approaches LDC graduation in 2026, the need to recalibrate its trade strategy has become urgent. The comfort derived from current tariff advantages is temporary, given their unilateral nature and lack of predictability. Without a stable and rule-based framework like the WTO creates uncertainty, which could hinder long-term export-oriented investment. Strengthening engagement within the WTO, forming coalitions, and leveraging diplomatic and economic advocacy are critical steps for Bangladesh to sustain its influence within multilateral forums.

Domestically, parallel reforms are required to enhance competitiveness and reduce trade costs. Bangladesh's logistics performance remains significantly lower than regional peers such as India and Vietnam, driven by inefficiencies in licensing, certification, and regulatory duplication. Reducing bureaucratic layers such as redundant trade licenses and import-export registration requirements would help streamline trade operations. Implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement provisions in full could substantially lower transaction costs and strengthen export competitiveness, particularly in markets affected by rising tariffs.

Looking ahead, diversification beyond traditional Western markets will be vital. Expanding engagement with Asian economies, including those within ASEAN and East Asia, can open new opportunities and reduce vulnerability to market-specific shocks. Through a dual strategy: active multilateral participation and internal capacity enhancement, Bangladesh can navigate the shifting global trade order while securing a more resilient and inclusive economic future.

Dr Zaidi Sattar
Chairman and Chief Executive
Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh (PRI)
(Panel Discussant)



Global trade has experienced significant disruption in recent years, with the introduction of reciprocal tariffs marking a major departure from long-established principles of comparative advantage. This shift, particularly evident since April 2025, has altered the basis of international trade, with countries

now engaging in negotiations and exchanges influenced more by reciprocal tariff advantages than by efficiency or production capacity. For Bangladesh, this evolving landscape presents both challenges and opportunities.

Bangladesh maintains one of the highest tariff structures globally, with average import duties around 28% and total trade taxes reaching approximately 54%. Such a system complicates the country's ability to engage in free trade agreements (FTAs), whether bilateral or regional. In contrast, regional groupings such as ASEAN operate with significantly lower average tariffs of around 5%, highlighting the gap that must be addressed if Bangladesh aims to participate effectively in reciprocal trade arrangements. The complexity of the tariff structure further complicates trade. Multiple overlapping duties: customs, regulatory, supplementary, and value-added taxes have created a system that deviates from WTO norms. While initially intended to be trade-neutral, many of these duties now function as protective measures. A notable disparity also exists between tariffs on inputs, around 13%, and outputs, approximately 45%, resulting in a high effective rate of protection that affects competitiveness and production incentives.

Historical experience suggests that rationalisation of tariffs can yield positive outcomes. In the 1990s, Bangladesh implemented trade liberalisation and tariff reduction measures, which lowered nominal tariffs by approximately half. During this period, customs revenues increased significantly due to higher import volumes, and trade and GDP growth expanded. This demonstrates that tariff rationalisation, when combined with complementary structural reforms, can enhance trade efficiency without compromising revenue.

Current policy discussions emphasise the need to revisit and complete these reforms. Rationalising tariffs, reducing the gap between input and output duties, and transitioning toward more predictable and transparent tax systems are central to enhancing competitiveness. Strengthening multilateral engagement, alongside domestic trade facilitation measures, can position Bangladesh to navigate a fragmented global trade environment effectively. By addressing these structural challenges, the country can maintain export growth, attract investment, and integrate more fully into the evolving global trading system.

Dr Fahmida Khatun
Executive Director
Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) (Panel Discussant)



Global trade has undergone significant shifts in recent years, marked by disruptions that have altered the traditional dynamics of international commerce. The recent report titled "Disruption, Diversification, and Divergence" captures these changes, emphasising the relevance of this evolving trade landscape for Bangladesh.

The report and speakers highlighted that the global trade order has shifted from a system based on comparative advantage to one increasingly shaped by reciprocal tariff arrangements, especially since April 2025, a disruption with major implications for Bangladesh's tariff reform and export strategy. Historically, engagement in global trade has brought economic, social, and technological gains to participating countries. Multilateral systems such as the WTO were established to facilitate liberalised trade and maximise these benefits. However, the effectiveness of the multilateral trading regime has declined over time, with many countries increasingly turning to bilateral or plurilateral agreements as global protectionism intensifies.

For Bangladesh, these changes have direct implications. The country's export-led growth, particularly in ready-made garments, has

benefited from past global frameworks, such as the Multi-Fibre Arrangement, and supportive domestic policies like bonded warehouses and back-to-back letters of credit. These combined factors allowed Bangladeshi entrepreneurs to expand exports more successfully than many other least developed countries. However, the current trade environment requires countries, including Bangladesh, to reassess strategies and adapt to new realities, as global trade is essential for economic growth and no country can be entirely self-sufficient. Competitiveness and demand in international markets remain crucial for continued export performance.

Continuing an export-led growth strategy is important, but it should be complemented by strengthening the domestic economy. Bangladesh's large population offers considerable potential for domestic consumption, which can contribute significantly to GDP growth if disposable income and productivity increase. Skills development, particularly in response to technological changes such as artificial intelligence, is critical to improving labor productivity, creating new employment opportunities, and maintaining competitiveness in key industries like garments and pharmaceuticals.

Additionally, tariff rationalisation remains a key priority. A complex structure heavily reliant on indirect taxes limits private sector investment and reduces export competitiveness. Simplifying tariffs and creating a more predictable trade environment, along with improving infrastructure, reducing bureaucratic barriers, and promoting technological adoption, are essential steps.

In conclusion, Bangladesh's strategy should combine a robust domestic economy with a continued focus on export-led growth. Investments in human capital, technology, and enabling domestic policies will allow the country to navigate the disrupted global trade landscape, enhance competitiveness, and sustain economic growth while generating employment opportunities.

Tanvir Mahmud
Senior Governance Specialist
UNDP Bangladesh



Global trade is facing significant shifts, driven by rising tariffs, fragmented supply chains, and complex geopolitical dynamics. For Bangladesh, navigating this changing landscape requires a dual-track strategy: outward adaptation through diversified markets and products, and inward resilience by strengthening domestic capacity. Empowering entrepreneurship is central to this approach, ensuring that businesses can access finance, build skills, and overcome bureaucratic barriers. Building an entrepreneurial mindset in public institutions is essential to overcome coordination gaps and ensure collective action toward national development.

Technology, particularly artificial intelligence, offers opportunities to enhance productivity, innovation, and competitiveness. At the same time, national capabilities and institutions must be strengthened to negotiate effectively, remove investment barriers, and respond strategically to global developments.

Inclusive and sustainable growth remains a priority. Trade and investment policies should protect workers, farmers, and young entrepreneurs while fostering innovation and social security. As Bangladesh approaches LDC graduation, leveraging human capital, technology, and strategic partnerships will be critical to ensuring that the country's economic transformation is equitable, resilient, and forward-looking.

The panel discussion was moderated by Syed Yusuf Saadat, Project Economist, Transformative Economic Policy Programme (TEPP) for UNDP Bangladesh.

Satkhira's Nowshin, Nur to attend COP30 in Brazil

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The world's largest climate summit, the 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30), is set to begin in Belém, a city in Brazil's Amazon region.

More than 12,000 delegates from 150 countries are gathering there with renewed pledges to raise a planet battered by global warming, rising sea levels, and natural disasters.

Among them are two students from Satkhira - Nowshin Islam and Nur Ahmad Zidan - who will share the realities of life in Bangladesh's climate-vulnerable coastal areas. They will represent Bangladesh as child delegates, offering an opportunity to bring voices of coastal communities to a global stage.



Nowshin Nur

Nowshin, a class-eight student at Pratapnagar United School in Ashashuni upazila, lives in Pratapnagar union.

Her parents, Shahidul Islam and Jesmin, are both teachers. Since 2021, Nowshin has been involved in campaigns for children's rights and climate justice in coastal regions.

Nur, also a class-eight student, lives in Jatindranagar village under Munshiganj

union in Shyamnagar upazila and studies at Sundarbans Secondary School.

His parents, GM Roisuzzaman and Laeka Khanam, are also teachers. He serves as president of both the central and upazila committees of the Coastal Children's Forum.

Their participation in COP30 has been facilitated by the NGO Jagrata Juba Shangha (JJS). Project manager Nabokumar Saha said JJS has been working in 10 coastal upazilas to strengthen children's leadership and amplify their voices.

Sharing her hopes, Nowshin said, "I'm going to Brazil to speak about the struggles of coastal children. Because of climate change, our education is disrupted, food becomes scarce, and child marriage increases. It's everyone's responsibility to leave behind a liveable planet for the next generation."

Nur said, "Life on the Satkhira coast is a daily struggle for survival. Losing homes, saline water intrusion, and ruined farmlands - these are part of our lives now. We will tell world leaders not to shift the burden of their past mistakes onto us. We will demand compensation from those responsible for the most carbon emissions."

They are expected to return home on November 20.

Deported workers call You cannot

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"modern slavery" and instead fostering an environment of retaliation.

Nironjon, a former Mediceram worker who was recently fired and deported for protesting non-renewal of work visas, said he went to Malaysia in 2023 and faced irregular and reduced payments.

"We demanded our rights as humans, but were treated like second-class citizens. When we sought legal status and reimbursement, we were threatened and forced onto flights," he said.

Omar Faruq, a former worker of Kawaguchi Manufacturing, said they suffered passport confiscation and unpaid salaries for over seven months.

"Our appeals to authorities brought no help," he said. "The company closed without paying our wages. Thousands of migrant workers in Malaysia face the same situation. Complete reform is needed."

According to MWN, Kawaguchi was a major supplier for global brands such as Sony, Panasonic, and Daikin.

Workers reportedly paid high recruitment fees and faced wage irregularities beginning in 2022, with salaries going entirely unpaid for seven months by September 2024.

After months of hardship and strikes, 308 Bangladeshi workers were reimbursed for recruitment fees and compensated for their suffering.

However, their unpaid wages remained unsettled despite a consent order issued by Malaysian authorities following a settlement meeting on December 24, 2024.

MWN said the Taiwanese owner of Kawaguchi still owes 3 million Malaysian ringgit to 251 migrant workers, while the company has since shut down without clearing its dues - a failure it described as a "serious lapse" in Malaysia's labour governance system.

Abu Sayed murder

FROM PAGE 3

Witness Kamrul Hasan, an ASI of DMP's Crime Command and Control Centre, testified that on July 17 last year, the then commissioner issued an order via wireless communication to "use maximum force" and fire from kneeling positions with Chinese rifles.

An audio clip of the instruction, later played in court, was submitted as evidence.

Constable Abdur Rahman testified that on July 19, 2024, while posted at Rampura Police Station, he heard gunfire after then OC Moshirur Rahman and ADC (Khalilganj Zone) Rashedul Islam arrived in a BGB armoured vehicle from the TV Bhaban area

and ordered police to open fire on protesters.

He later learned that a man named Nadim and an elderly woman were killed, and a six-year-old child was injured. He said he later saw a video showing former SI Tariquul Islam Bhuiyan and Chanchal Chandra shooting a man hanging from the ledge of an under-construction building near the station.

The witness said the then DMP commissioner later visited the station and gave OC Moshirur Tk 1 lakh in appreciation of the police's actions that day.

Defence lawyers cross-examined the three witnesses, alleging their statements were false and tutored. The witnesses denied the allegations.



PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 11. Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha. AZAN 5:00 12:45 3:45 5:22 7:00. JAMAAT 5:35 1:15 4:00 5:25 7:30. SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SC upholds bail

FROM PAGE 3

said their lawyer Barrister Sara Hossain.

Advocate ZI Khan Panna and Sara Hossain appeared for Latif, while Sara Hossain and Advocate Md Ramzan Ali Sikder represented Panna.

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

Meanwhile, the SC chamber judge yesterday adjourned until tomorrow the hearing of state petitions seeking stay on the HC verdict on November 9 that granted

bail to former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor Selina Hayat Ivy in five separate cases.

Justice Md Rezaul Haque asked Ivy's lawyers to serve the bail orders to the attorney general's office.

Meanwhile, police have sought court permission to show Ivy arrested in two more cases.

The applications for Ivy to be "shown arrested" were filed on Sunday afternoon with the judicial magistrate courts, said Inspector Kaium Khan, in-charge of the court police outpost.

The court fixed November 13 for a hearing on the petitions.

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC (An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board). Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212. Web: www.powergrid.gov.bd. e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি. পাওয়ার গ্রিডের জিএমডি, সিলেট দপ্তরের আওতাধীন নিম্নলিখিত দরপত্র e-GP পোর্টালে প্রকাশিত হয়েছে।

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার শিল্প মন্ত্রণালয় বাংলাদেশ শিল্প কারিগরি সহায়তা কেন্দ্র (বিটাক) ১১৬(খ), তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা ঢাকা-১২০৮। নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি. শিল্প মন্ত্রণালয়ের পত্র নং- ৩৬.০০.০০০০.০০০.০৭৪.১৪.০০০২.১৪-৫২, তারিখঃ ০৪-১০-২০২৫ মাধ্যমে প্রাপ্ত ছাড়পত্র অনুযায়ী বাংলাদেশ শিল্প কারিগরি সহায়তা কেন্দ্র (বিটাক)-এর রাজস্ব ছাড়পত্র নিম্নবর্ণিত শূন্য পদসমূহে অস্থায়ীভিত্তিতে বিধি মোতাবেক প্রদেয় অন্যান্য ভাতাদিহীন পদের পার্শ্বে বর্ণিত বেতন অনুযায়ী সরাসরি জনবল নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের নিম্নলিখিত অনলাইনে (https://bitac.teletalk.com.bd) ওয়েবসাইটে নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

০৬.১০.২০২৫ (মোহাম্মদ সাইফুল্লাহ) উপপরিচালক (প্রশাসন) মহাপরিচালক-এর পক্ষে



ZARIF FAIAZ

The waiting room is quiet enough for you to hear your own breathing. Your hands find the cool edge of the chair, your mind flips through notes, and the door opens with your name on it. In those early seconds, the panel is already forming an impression. You cannot control every thought in the room, but you can control how you arrive. Confidence in an interview is not a personality trait reserved for extroverts. It is a set of behaviours that signal preparation, clarity, and calm.

Your body should tell the same story as your words. Sit tall with both feet on the floor and a relaxed upper body. Angle your torso towards the person who asks each question, then return to the group so nobody feels excluded. Keep gestures above the table where they can be seen, and let them match your points rather than fluttering without purpose.

Confidence starts long before you shake hands. Research the employer beyond the first page of the website. Read recent news, scan the annual report, note how the organisation talks about customers and culture, and map your skills to what they value. Prepare three or four short stories that prove you can do the job. Build them around a simple structure: the situation, the task, the action, and the result. Practise aloud until each story runs cleanly in two minutes. If the interview is remote, test your camera, light your face, and place the lens at eye height. Choose clothes that match the setting and help you feel like the working version of yourself.

How you speak matters as much as what you say. Begin answers with a signpost that shows your route. Try a sentence such as, "There are two parts to this", or "I would approach it in three steps." Keep sentences short, finish your thought, and stop. Silence is useful. A three-second pause reads as composure, not panic.

Vary your pace, enunciate the ends of words and land on verbs rather than letting ideas trail into qualifiers. If you lose your thread, own it, take a sip of water, and restart with a clear topic sentence. Precision beats polish.

Your body should tell the same story as your words. Sit tall with both feet on the floor and a relaxed upper body. Angle your torso towards the person who asks each question, then return to the group so nobody feels excluded. Keep gestures above the table where they can be seen, and let them match your points rather than fluttering without purpose. Make eye contact in friendly bursts of a few seconds at a time. If handshakes are in play, offer your hand with a small smile and a simple greeting. In a video interview, look into the lens when you make key points, not at your own image, and keep the frame from mid torso to just above the head so your expressions and gestures register.

Difficult questions are where real confidence shows. The salary question is best handled with a range tied to market data and the role's scope, followed by a reminder of the value you bring. When asked about a weakness, pick a real skill you have already started to improve, explain the steps you took, and show the impact of those steps. For gaps or setbacks, be brief on the circumstance and detailed on accountability and learning. The same story frame still works: what happened, what you did, what changed, and what you would do next time. Panels are not testing for perfection. They are testing for judgment and growth.

Listening is an underrated confidence signal. Let the interviewer finish the question. Paraphrase tricky prompts to confirm understanding. Take brief notes that capture the hook words you want to hit, not full sentences that drag you out of the room. Ask for clarification rather than guessing if a question seems ambiguous. People who listen well buy themselves time and reduce the risk of wandering for answers. When it is your turn to ask questions, focus on substance. Ask about the first ninety days, the metrics that define success, how decisions get made, and how the team learns from projects that do not land.

Nerves will show up, so plan for them rather than wishing them away. Use your body to settle your mind. One reliable method is the physiologist's exhale: breathe in through your nose for four counts, exhale through pursed lips for six, repeat three times. Longer exhales nudge the nervous system towards balance. Plant your feet, release your shoulders, and feel the chair support you. Build a pre-interview routine that you can repeat every time. It might be a short walk, a review of three achievements, and two minutes of quiet breathing. Small rituals cue performance. On the day, aim for an alert not amped. Coffee can help, but tension needs space to dissolve.

Your content also creates confidence. Bring a point of view on the work. If asked how you would approach a problem, sketch a simple plan with trade-offs. Show that you can choose. Connect your examples to outcomes the employer cares about, such as revenue, risk, reputation, speed or user satisfaction. Translate jargon. Replace abstract claims with tangible evidence. A single sentence with numbers can carry a paragraph of adjectives. When you do not know, say so and offer how you would find out. Curiosity and method often impress more than improvisation.

Close with intent. When the chair asks if you have anything to add, take the invitation. In two or three sentences, join the dots between the role, your strengths and your motivation, then thank the panel for their time. Ask about next steps and timelines. Follow up within 24 hours with a short note that references a point from the conversation and restates your interest. Polite persistence is a professional signal.

Confidence is a practice, not a mood. You build it by doing the work that lets you walk into the room already aligned with the task. You show it by speaking with economy, moving with purpose, and treating every question as a chance to demonstrate judgment. Do these things, and the panel sees what you want them to see. Not a perfect candidate, but a dependable colleague who will learn quickly and make the team better.

ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

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Eligibility:
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Minimum experience: 5 years



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Senior Specialist Quality

Deadline: November 17

Eligibility:
● Diploma or above in Textile Engineering or Apparel-related disciplines.

Minimum experience: 6 years



North South University

Research Associate (Qualitative)

Deadline: November 28

Eligibility:
● Master's degree (MPH, MSc, or equivalent) in Public Health, Epidemiology, Global Health, or related fields.

Minimum experience: 5 years



EBL Securities PLC.

EBL Securities PLC.

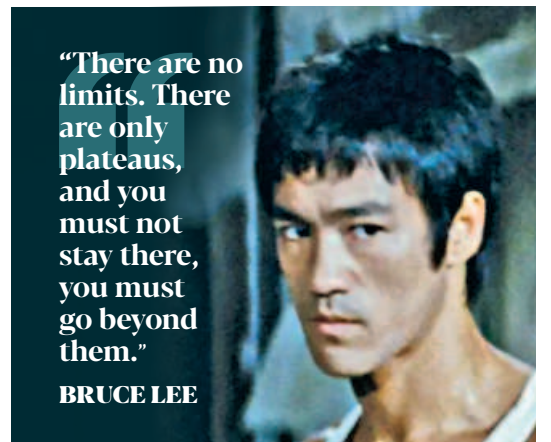
Business Executive, Business Development Department

Deadline: November 30

Eligibility:
● Bachelor's or Master's degree from a recognised institution.

Minimum experience: 1-5 years

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



BRUCE LEE

AI could replace human jobs in 10-20 years, warns DeepSeek researcher

NEXT STEP DESK

Victor Chen Deli, a senior researcher from Chinese AI firm DeepSeek, has recently expressed pessimism about artificial intelligence's long-term effect on employment and society. He made the remarks during a rare public appearance at the World Internet Conference in Wuzhen, China.

Chen stated that while AI would benefit humanity in the short term, he anticipates significant job losses within 5-10 years as the technology becomes capable of performing more human tasks. "In the next 10-20 years, AI could take over the rest of work and society could face a massive challenge," he said, adding that technology companies would need to act as "defenders" against these impacts.

This appearance marked DeepSeek's first major public engagement since the company gained global attention in January by releasing a low-cost AI model that performed competitively with leading US systems.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Where women lead the line: A NEW ROUTE TO RMG SUPERVISION

ZARIF FAIAZ

For years, women have been the public face of Bangladesh's ready-made garments industry. The empowerment narrative is familiar. Yet on most production floors, women remain concentrated in helper and operator roles. Where day-to-day decisions are taken, the picture is stark. Only around 3 to 5% of supervisory posts are held by women, a share that was lower still a few years ago.

That gap has begun to attract sustained attention from brands and global buyers. Over the past five to seven years, buyer requirements on gender inclusion have prompted management to review who leads production lines and why. The message from the market is clear. Inclusion is tied to performance, compliance and reputation, and leadership matters as much as headcount.

BYETS, the Building Youth Employability Through Skills project, first focused on operator-level training for women. Factory managers then asked for something more targeted. They wanted a pathway that would take high-potential staff into first-line leadership. Some plants did not seek operator training at all, instead requesting a supervisory course open to women and to mixed cohorts.

The response is a Supervisory Skills Training course designed to link skills to progression and make local delivery the default. The course runs for 104 hours over one to two months. It was developed and piloted with an international consultant in eight factories using a single, transferable module. Early results led to a handover to CSS, the programme's training service provider, which is now

rolling it out through local partners. Cohorts are intentionally mixed. The aim is to normalise women's authority in settings that mirror real production lines, and to build team dynamics that carry back onto the floor.

Delivery to date covers eight factories, with roughly 200 supervisors trained. The original plan was for about 80 participants, ten per factory. Demand outstripped those projections, so cohorts were expanded. The next phase is set to reach at least 10 additional factories, with



an indicative throughput of a further 200 supervisors by January.

Cost, however, has been a persistent barrier. Reliance on international consultants priced many factories out of the service. BYETS has addressed this by capacitating local providers to deliver the same module at a lower cost, reducing both fees and scheduling bottlenecks.

To help those providers enter the market and build a client base, the programme is subsidising engagement with two factories initially per provider. The objective is a

training offer that can stand on its own commercially, with quality assured and price within reach for a broad range of factories.

A gender lens sits at the centre of the model. The issue is not only the number of women in the workforce. It is their absence from decisions that affect pay, productivity and working conditions. To close that gap, BYETS is prioritising women operators who have completed operator-level training and fast-tracking them into the supervisory pathway. Training is paired with assessment, and advanced modules are offered where specific gaps are identified, so that new supervisors step into roles with the skills and confidence to lead.

If the approach scales, three outcomes are within reach. First, a direct pipeline from operator roles to first-line leadership, especially for women. Second, closer alignment with buyer expectations on gender inclusion at the supervisory level. Third, a cost-effective, locally delivered training market that can be replicated across factories without constant external support.

Bangladesh's garment industry has already reshaped economic prospects for millions of women. The next shift is to ensure that experience translates into authority. By combining progression-focused training with local delivery and clear demand from factories, BYETS is helping move leadership opportunities from exceptional to expected.

The BYETS project is funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and implemented by Swisscontact.

Meta to invest \$600 billion in US AI infrastructure

Meta Platforms has announced it will invest \$600 billion in US infrastructure by 2028, with a focus on building "industry-leading AI data centres".

NEXT STEP DESK

In an official announcement, the company stated the investment aims to advance AI technology while creating jobs and supporting local economies. Meta said it is "building industry-leading AI data centres right here in the US" to help the nation maintain its "technological edge". The company emphasised that these facilities are crucial for developing what it describes as "personal superintelligence for everyone".

According to a Reuters report on the matter, the recent commitment follows CEO Mark Zuckerberg's previous announcement to President Donald Trump about the \$600 billion investment. Meta stated it is strengthening communities through sustainable construction and grants to local schools and nonprofits.

Hosts disappoint in compound events

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh's hope of producing something good in compound events of Teer 24th Asian Archery Championships took a jolt after women's team fell short of securing a bronze medal while the three archers were eliminated from the individual events at the National Stadium on Monday.

However, three male recurve archers moved into the round of 16 beating their respective rivals in the elimination round.

Bangladesh compound women's team beat Kazakhstan by 230-226 points to move into the semifinals where they lost by 234-227 points against India. Then they lost the bronze-medal match against Iran by 227-224 points.

Nawaz Ahmed Rakib, Sohail Rana and Ashiquzzaman also disappointed in men's compound individual event in the first round, leaving Himu Bachhar as the only compound archer with a chance of winning a medal.

Mithila Akter, too, was eliminated from the first round while Bonna Akter, Pushpita Zaman and Kulsum Akter are set to play in the round of 1/16 after getting byes in the first round.

In recurve men's team event, Bangladesh were eliminated from the pre-quarterfinals despite a brilliant start in the first round where they handed a straight 6-0 set points defeat to Vietnam. Against South Korea, though, they lost by 5-3 set points in the pre-quarterfinals.

It was a mixed journey for the local recurve archers as Rakib Mia and Abdur Rahman Alif moved into the round of 1/16 but Olympian Sagor Islam suffered a 6-4 defeat to Le Quoc Phong of Vietnam in his first elimination match. Ram Krishna Saha, who finished ahead of all Bangladeshi recurve archers having ranked 10th, will play his first match of 1/16 round today following two byes.



A fresh start for SHANTO IN SYLHET

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI from Sylhet

Najmul Hossain Shanto is set for a new beginning when the Tigers face Ireland in the first Test of the two-match series at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium today.

Shanto will return as a leader with renewed purpose.

After disagreements over the Bangladesh Cricket Board's 'three-captain policy', Shanto had stepped away from the role earlier this year.

Now, reinstated as Test skipper, he openly admitted that the system had made him uncomfortable. During the pre-match press conference yesterday, he was calm but honest.

"Yes, I did feel that way [about the three-captain system] at one point and there were sufficient reasons behind it," Shanto said, making it clear that he still values clarity and freedom in leadership.

The setting in Sylhet holds special meaning for him. It was here, in 2023, that he began his stint as Test captain and led Bangladesh to a memorable win against New Zealand on a sporting track.

Back then, everything seemed to click – the conditions, the team spirit, and his own form. Later, he was even handed leadership in all three formats. But times have changed. The current squad features captains of all formats coming together again for this Test, creating a delicate situation for balance and authority.

Still, Shanto appears more assured this time. He shared that he had spoken with both T20I captain Litton Das and ODI captain Mehidy Hasan Miraz about working together.

"We sat together and communicated about how to take our team forward in three formats and what areas we need to improve in. This communication has happened between the three of us. And all three of us are optimistic that we can



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

take the team forward in the way the team needs," he explained.

Many inside sources have said that in his first term, Shanto was not always free to take the decisions he wanted. But he now feels more confident after recent talks with the BCB high-ups.

"I am convinced that the board will provide me with that help about things which were in my mind – that maybe a problem could arise, or that the three-format system was not logical. But, when such senior cricketers or former cricketers of the board who are now present give a suggestion, they definitely think of good things. So, trusting that, I have returned," he said.

With the captaincy questions settled for now, attention turns to his batting. Shanto knows his team will look to him

for stability at the crease. The last series in Sri Lanka, he struck tons in each innings of the first Test. One of the key reasons he was handed captaincy of all three formats in 2024 was his batting.

"As a batter, when you can score a ton in Test cricket, it always brings good feelings but the main focus would be how much I am contributing as a batter," he said.

The Sylhet pitch looks good for batting, though Shanto hinted at wanting a fair balance. "An instruction has been given on behalf of the team to the groundsman. I hope that the wicket will be good, a sporting wicket is what I hope for," he added.

For Shanto, this Test is more than just a match – it's a chance to rebuild trust, lead with clarity.

SHORT CORNER

Bangladesh in tough group in AFC U-20 Women's Asian Cup

Bangladesh have been drawn in Group A with former champions China, hosts Thailand and Vietnam in the upcoming AFC Under-20 Women's Asian Cup set to take place between April 1-18 next year.

BFF condemns Asif Akbar's 'derogatory' remarks on football

Termining the recent remarks made by Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director Asif Akbar about football as "extremely derogatory, insulting, and alarming," the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has formally condemned the comments in a letter addressed to BCB president Aminul Islam Bulbul on Monday.

Gallery tickets for India match sold out in 'six minutes'

The gallery tickets for the much-anticipated Bangladesh-India Asian Cup Qualifiers fixture sold out within just six minutes. The price of general gallery tickets had been fixed at Tk 500.

*Read full stories on The Daily Star website



Leicester City midfielder Hamza Choudhury is greeted with a bouquet by Bangladesh Football Federation member Intiaz Hamiz Sabuj on his arrival in Dhaka on Monday evening ahead of a friendly against Nepal and an Asian Cup Qualifiers fixture against India.

PHOTO: BFF

TWO SILVER JUBILEES LATER, decentralisation still a promise



PHOTO: BCB

SPORTS REPORTER

In less than five months, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Aminul Islam Bulbul has led two silver jubilee celebrations – 25th anniversary of Test status on June 26 and 25 years of the country's inaugural Test match on Monday – and decentralization has been an important theme at both events.

The BCB celebrated the latest jubilee in the presence of several members of the historic first Test squad with a commemorative cake-cutting ceremony at a city hotel.

During the previous anniversary in June, the board had held several events across the country, including an Under-12 six-a-side tournament at divisional cities, before a concluding event in Dhaka.

This time, even though the celebrations themselves got a bit more centralised with only one conference in Dhaka, decentralisation remained a central theme.

The ceremony on Monday also marked the conclusion of the Bangladesh Cricket Conference 2025 – a two-day event that served as the launching pad for the board's new "Connect and Grow" initiative, which brought councillors, district sports officials, district coaches, and female entrepreneurs from all districts to discuss a roadmap for decentralisation.

However, significant questions

linger about how – and whether – the plans discussed here will ever materialise.

The push to strengthen regional structures is not new. The concept of Regional Cricket Associations was first raised in the 2000 BCB AGM, included in the board's constitution in 2017, and even given a draft framework in 2021. Yet, after 25 years of Test cricket, the idea remains stalled – and its future uncertain.

For many stakeholders in cricket, the most disappointing failure over these years is the board's inability to decentralise the sport and build a sustainable regional structure – an issue spanning multiple administrations.

Bulbul openly acknowledged this shortcoming during the event,

but while he has spoken repeatedly about establishing regional cricket since joining the board in May, his vision still appears distant. His proposal to form divisional and district teams with their own player pools remains largely theoretical under the current setup.

Advisor to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Asif Mahmud, praised the initiative but cautioned that the real test lies in its follow-through.

After a quarter century in Test cricket, Bangladesh's struggles on the field mirrors its off the field failures and in a system where long-promised reforms repeatedly fail to translate into meaningful progress and decentralisation remains aloof, the final output is almost bound to remain poor.

Tales from a Test like no other

ASHEAQ-UL-ALAM

An average Bangladesh cricket fan is well aware of the bullet points of the Tiger's inaugural Test against India. But underneath the hard facts, are hidden stories that deserve recognition. Like fans hiding overnight in bathroom stalls in the hopes of watching history, a last-minute inclusion at the behest of the board president

shining bright, a special bulletin from newsmen on a public holiday to honour a century and a debutant defying the veiled threats of the opposition captain to score a mammoth ton. These are all lesser known tales of that historic event, stories that elevate that one-sided game into a Test like no other.

*Read the full story on The Daily Star website

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Stop 'lamenting', seek 'solutions'

UN climate chief tells COP30

AGENCIES

UN climate chief Simon Stiell yesterday urged nations at the COP30 conference in Brazil to speed up efforts to reduce emissions and keep alive the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5C.



"I am not sugar-coating it. We have so much more work to do. We must move much, much, faster on both reductions of emissions and strengthening resilience," Stiell said, adding: "Lamenting is not a strategy. We need solutions."

Stiell, the executive secretary of the UN framework convention on climate

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2



Young indigenous workers lend their hands to 80-year-old Zinnat Ali, seen in the back, cutting his paddy for free yesterday afternoon at Borgachhi Kutipara in Rajshahi's Poba upazila after noticing him tired trying to do the work alone. PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

NOMINATION BACKLASH

BNP faces new hurdle ahead of elections

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

BNP is facing growing backlash from its grassroots over its recently announced nominee list for the upcoming election, posing a fresh challenge to the party.

Since unveiling candidates for 237 constituencies on November 3, local leaders and activists in nearly three dozen seats have started protesting, demanding nominations for their preferred candidates.

Before finalising the list, the BNP high command held meetings with thousands of district leaders who pledged support for the party's choices. However, many are now defying acting chairman Tarique Rahman's directive to maintain discipline and joining protests.

In response, BNP has expelled at least nine leaders from the party and its affiliated organisations in two districts for participating in demonstrations.

According to party sources, BNP has engaged independent organisations to assess grassroots acceptance of its nominees.

Since November 3, at least 38 protests and clashes have been reported across 26 districts, with activists blocking roads and railways. At least 30 party activists were injured in Meherpur, Cumilla, and Mymensingh.

A day after the announcement, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir urged leaders who were

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

8 killed in car blast near Red Fort in Delhi

At least 20 hurt; train stations, Mumbai, UP on high alert

REUTERS, New Delhi

At least eight people were killed and 20 injured yesterday when a car exploded near the historic Red Fort in India's capital, police said, a rare blast in the heavily guarded city of more than 30 million people.

Major train stations across India, the financial capital Mumbai and the state of Uttar Pradesh, which borders Delhi, were all put on high alert, authorities said.

"All angles" were being investigated and security agencies would come to a conclusion soon, Home Minister Amit Shah said.

A previous owner of the car, named only as Salman, was arrested after the blast, NDTV reported, without going into more details. Reuters could not immediately verify the report.

Mangled bodies and the wreckage of several cars could be seen on a congested street near a metro station in the old quarter of Delhi, as police poured into the area to secure it and push back gathering crowds.

"A slow-moving vehicle stopped at a red light. An explosion happened in that vehicle, and due to the explosion, nearby vehicles were also damaged," Delhi Police Commissioner Satish Golcha told reporters.

He said the blast occurred just before 7:00pm. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences to those who had lost loved ones.

"May the injured recover at the earliest. Those affected are being assisted by authorities," Modi posted on X.

At least six vehicles and three auto-rickshaws caught fire, Delhi's deputy fire chief said.

The US Embassy in Delhi issued a security alert to its citizens, asking them to avoid crowds and areas surrounding the Red Fort, and to stay alert in places frequented by tourists.

Nearly 75% CEPZ factories have no fire safety certificate

Fire department probe finds

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, ctg

Nearly three-fourths of all factories in the Chattogram Export Processing Zone (CEPZ) are operating without the mandatory fire safety effectiveness certificate, found a recent investigation by the Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Every factory is required to obtain approval for a fire safety plan when it is set up and then receive an effectiveness certificate after an inspection confirms that the firefighting system is operational.

Only 55 out of 164 factories in CEPZ currently hold a valid certificate, according to the report submitted last week following a massive fire that gutted two factories inside the zone.

The lack of valid certificates not only violates the Fire Prevention and Extinguishing Act, 2003 but also poses significant risks to workers and foreign investors alike, safety experts said.

"In case of an emergency, that could have disastrous consequences," said Abdul Mannan, deputy director of Fire Service and Civil Defence in Chattogram.

Implementing fire safety plans



in older buildings -- especially those constructed before 2008 -- is challenging because most were built without adhering to the fire safety code, he said, adding that the burnt-down building in CEPZ was one such old structure.

The two factories did have valid certificates until June this year, CEPZ Executive Director Md Abdus Sobhan told The Daily Star.

They had already applied for renewal, which was in process at the

time of the incident.

The CEPZ authorities have also formed a separate investigation committee to look into the cause of the blaze. The committee's report is now in the final stage, Sobhan said.

Asked about the latest report, he said: "We have not been officially informed about how many factories lack valid effectiveness certificates. If they provide us with the list, both authorities can work together to

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Medical college seats cut by 572

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The total number of seats in government and private medical colleges has been cut by 572 this year, despite the government's approval of a new private college with 50 seats.

According to the 2025-26 admission circular, there will be 5,100 seats across 37 government medical colleges, down from 5,380 last year.

Meanwhile, 66 private medical colleges, including the newly approved one, will offer 6,001 seats, compared to 6,293 in the previous session.

The newly approved Barrister Rafiq ul-Huq Medical College in Dhaka has been allowed to enrol 50 students.

However, the authorities have suspended student enrolment at two private medical colleges for failing to meet required standards.

They are Bikrampur Bhuiyan Medical College in Munshiganj (57 seats) and Monowara Sikder Medical College in Shariatpur (50 seats).

Health Secretary Saidur Rahman said the ministry conducted a comprehensive assessment of all medical colleges, considering their infrastructure, teacher-student ratio, hospital facilities, and other criteria.

"Based on the assessment, the number of seats has been either increased or decreased," he told The Daily Star last night. "All the measures have been taken to ensure better medical education and ultimately improve the country's healthcare system," he added.

The decision to reduce the overall number of seats comes two years after the previous administration increased the seats by 1,030 for the 2023-24 session, a move widely criticised for being made without proper assessment despite shortages of teachers, infrastructure, and laboratory facilities.

Officials said many of those approvals were made on political grounds. After the fall of the Awami League government in August last year, the interim administration sharply criticised the earlier expansion and announced plans to rationalise seats to uphold academic standards.

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Jamaat, allies gear up for Paltan rally

Alliance to deliver 'strong message' to govt on July charter, PR system

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami and seven like-minded parties will hold a rally in the capital today to press their five-point demand, which includes a legal basis for the July National Charter and the next election under a proportional representation (PR) system.

The eight-party alliance, comprising Jamaat and Islami Andolon Bangladesh (IAB) among others, plans to deliver a "strong message" to the interim government from the rally at Dhaka's Paltan intersection at 2:00pm, Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman Azad said at a press briefing yesterday.

The briefing followed a meeting of the alliance's liaison committee at IAB's central office in the capital.

According to Azad, several lakh people are expected to join the rally, which marks the fifth phase of the alliance's protest programme since September 18. It also comes a day after Jamaat's ultimatum to the interim government expired.

On Thursday, Jamaat Nayeb-e-Ameer Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taher warned that Dhaka would "take a different look" if the government failed to accept their demands by November 10.

Azad said today's rally would "set the country's direction" and send a clear message to the government.

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Police officers inspect the body of a victim after a boat carrying members of Myanmar's Rohingya community sank in waters near the Thailand-Malaysia border, off Langkawi, Malaysia, yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

Israel strikes east, south Gaza City

2 Palestinians killed; Settlers destroy tent, crops in West Bank

AGENCIES

Israeli air raids yesterday struck eastern and southern Gaza City, killing two Palestinians, including a child, as attacks continued in the occupied West Bank.

Israeli forces began a three-day exercise across the occupied West Bank, raising concerns among Palestinians over increased military activity.

In the northern Jordan Valley, Israeli settlers destroyed a residential tent and agricultural crops belonging to Palestinians, the Wafa news agency reported. The attack took place on Sunday night in Khirbet al-Farsiya in the occupied West Bank.

Settlers also stole agricultural equipment during the attack, which came amid a wave of rising settler violence in the occupied West Bank.

Meanwhile, Israel has handed over the bodies of 15 Palestinian prisoners to authorities in Gaza under the ceasefire agreement.