

## Violence must be stopped immediately

Govt must maintain firmness in law enforcement

The rise of a new wave of political violence has raised fresh concerns among citizens. The latest incident saw the horrific death of Julhas Mia, a bus driver in Mymensingh, who was burnt alive in his vehicle early Tuesday. This despicable act appears to represent a shift from politically motivated property damage—too often the chosen method of anarchists—to fatal assaults on innocent civilians. The capital city has also been rocked by crude bomb blasts and arson attacks simultaneously. These coordinated acts of intimidation signal a deeply worrying trend ahead of the planned February election, which must be decisively and collectively addressed.

Tension is naturally building as the International Crimes Tribunal prepares to announce the date of its verdict in a case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on November 13. In anticipation, authorities have ordered an immediate security ramp-up. Police headquarters have directed all stations in Dhaka to increase patrols and surveillance, while key infrastructure and religious establishments across the country are under heightened protection. According to a statement from the Chief Adviser's Press Wing, a full-scale manhunt has been launched by the Dhaka Metropolitan Police and the Rapid Action Battalion to arrest those behind the attacks. Nevertheless, incidents of violence have persisted across several areas.

Despite a ban on its political activities, the Awami League's call for a "Dhaka Lockdown" is inflaming the situation. While political expression is a democratic right, it must never come at the cost of lives or public order. The party must resist resorting to violence and agitation, and allow the justice system to take its course.

For his part, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury on Tuesday reaffirmed that all security and intelligence agencies are now operating in synchronised coordination. Security patrols have been intensified at key locations, including the metro rail, railway stations, and most notably, the tribunal premises. This enhanced presence is intended to restore public confidence. Crucially, the adviser has directed law enforcement to act immediately on any credible intelligence about emerging threats. He also called for stricter judicial processes, urging the authorities not to grant easy bail to those accused of "terrorism." While this hardline stance on bail may be effective in containing short-term threats, it raises concerns about the potential politicisation of the judiciary.

That said, the evolving security imperatives go beyond addressing immediate threats; it is part of a broader effort to safeguard a peaceful democratic transition through the upcoming election. The interim government is relying on a combination of visible force, tight intelligence coordination, and zero-tolerance stance on political unrest to navigate this volatile period. Bangladesh remains a nation in constant flux, and the recent surge in violence serves as a warning of the consequences if instability is allowed to escalate. In this critical moment, it is essential for all political stakeholders to exercise restraint, while the government must remain resolute in upholding law and order.

## Fungal 'superbug' in NICUs alarming

Hospitals must take necessary measures to contain the threat

We are alarmed by the spread of the highly drug-resistant fungus *Candida auris* (C auris) in the neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) of hospitals, as revealed by a new icddr,b study. Between August 2021 and September 2022, researchers from the institution examined newborns admitted to the NICUs of two hospitals in Dhaka—one public and one private. Of the 374 infants studied, 32 were found to be colonised with C auris, and one developed a bloodstream infection. Given that C auris infections in low- and middle-income countries have an estimated mortality rate of around 70 percent, this is a public health emergency that requires urgent action.

Declared an urgent antimicrobial-resistant threat by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), C auris can survive for weeks on hospital surfaces, spread rapidly among patients, and often resist multiple antifungal drugs. It is particularly dangerous for people with weakened immune systems, including preterm and critically ill infants, making NICU babies an extremely high-risk group. According to the icddr,b study, among the colonised patients, 44 percent were colonised at enrolment, while 56 percent became colonised after admission. Seven of the 32 colonised patients died. Alarmingly, 82 percent of the colonised patients were resistant to fluconazole, the first-line treatment for invasive fungal infections. Another crucial finding that warrants attention is that 81 percent of the colonised cases were delivered by Caesarean section and had longer hospital stays.

The heavy presence of C auris in hospitals serves as a stark warning about the broader threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the country. A recent WHO report has also revealed a worsening AMR situation, with some critical antibiotics showing resistance rates ranging from 79 to 97 percent. Health experts have previously warned that around 70 percent of deaths in our ICUs are linked to AMR infections. Bangladesh has made significant progress in combating communicable diseases over the past decades, but the rise of multidrug-resistant pathogens risks undermining those achievements. As the head of the AMR Research Unit at the Infectious Diseases Division of icddr,b has noted, this study is a necessary first step towards preventive action.

It is now up to the health authorities to act swiftly on its findings. To limit the spread of C auris within NICUs and other hospital settings, regular disinfection with chlorine-based cleaning agents, strict hand hygiene among healthcare workers, and immediate isolation of infected or colonised patients should be made mandatory. Equally important are continuous monitoring and data-sharing between hospitals and public health authorities to detect outbreaks early and prevent further transmission. Moreover, the misuse of antibiotics across the country must be urgently addressed through proper regulations and strict enforcement.

# EDITORIAL

## Can COP30 deliver on climate promises?



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Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

### FAHMIDA KHATUN

Global attention has currently turned to Belém, one of the gateways to the Brazilian Amazon, where the climate community has gathered for the 30th Conference of the Parties (COP 30) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Marking a decade since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015, this conference carries heightened global expectations for real implementation, accountability, and delivery of promises, rather than simply negotiating new ambitions. Being held against the background of a tense geopolitical scenario and devastating climate events in vulnerable countries, the issues that dominate the 12-day-long COP30 agenda carry far-reaching implications for the people and the planet.

First, countries will negotiate on adaptation-related outcomes at COP30, including a set of indicators to assess progress towards the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), which was anchored in the Paris Agreement. The GGA was designed to guide the transition from the countries' National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to concrete actions by enhancing the adaptive capacity and strengthening resilience to climate change. The progress on the GGA is to be tracked through 100 indicators.

However, the indicator framework and operational details of GGA remain unfinished as reliable data and knowledge gaps prevail in vulnerable countries, which require time to build up their statistical capacity. COP30 is expected to finalise the GGA progress tracking architecture.

The second issue is new national climate plans, such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, which every country is required to submit every five years. Each new plan should show updated and stronger action than before, reflecting what the countries can do. NDCs for 2025 need to explain the countries' plan to tackle climate change up to 2035. Between November 2024 and November 10, 2025, 109 countries have submitted a 2035 NDC target, which will draw attention in Belém. To note, the Emissions Gap Report 2025 of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), published just before COP30, warns that the world is still not doing enough to minimise climate change risk. Based on the current pledges from countries, global temperatures could rise by 2.3 to 2.5 degrees Celsius by the end of this century. This means the Earth's temperature will go past

the safe limit of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels within the next ten years, worsening heatwaves, floods, and storms, according to scientists. The most important goal now is to bring the temperature back down as soon as possible. Failure at COP30 to ramp up ambition or agree on credible implementation will make it increasingly implausible to keep the temperature within the safe limit.

The third issue is the scaling up of climate finance for developing and low-income countries. Mobilising and delivering adequate funding for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and

damages adapt to climate change.

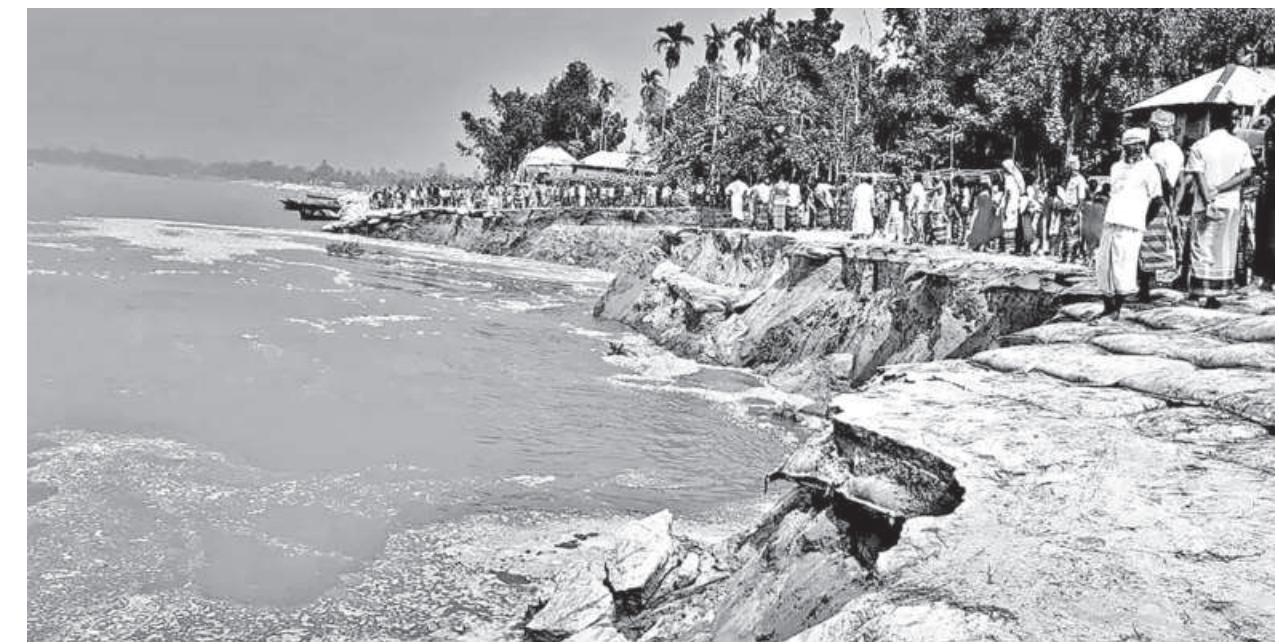
Fourth, it is expected that forests, biodiversity and tropical conservation, central to climate survival, will be at the focus at Belém. Hosting COP30 gives a symbolic boost to forest and nature conservation, since the Amazon rainforest holds about 60 percent of the world's largest tropical forest. Mechanisms like the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF), a proposed blended finance fund to incentivise countries to protect tropical forests, are expected to be a flagship outcome, providing predictable long-term funds to conserve and restore tropical forests.

Fifth, countries are expected to decide a new plan called the Belém Action Mechanism for a Global Just Transition (BAM) at COP30. Such a plan should aim for a shift to a green economy in a fair way where people come first, so that climate action creates new jobs, provides training for workers, and helps communities adapt their economies as industries change. The just transition pathway is critically important for climate-vulnerable countries like

various commitments. Bangladesh is on the frontline of sea-level rise, cyclones, river-erosion and climate-driven displacement. Therefore, obtaining clarity on adaptation finance and the GGA indicators is crucial. Implementation of global commitments on funding, technology transfer, capacity building and institutional strengthening is imperative for Bangladesh.

Moreover, the forest and nature agenda has implications for Bangladesh. Although Bangladesh does not have a vast forest cover like the host Brazil, the global forest agenda—which includes carbon credits, nature-based solutions and preserving critical ecosystems—affects the global carbon markets, international cooperation and South-South partnerships in which Bangladesh might engage.

Moreover, COP30 is being framed not only as a negotiation among states but as a session demanding all-of-society engagement, which includes governments, the private sector, indigenous peoples, civil society, and



COP30 for highly climate-vulnerable countries like Bangladesh is a strategic opportunity to expedite the implementation of various commitments.

FILE PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

damage, especially for vulnerable countries, is a critical task. The new collective quantified goal (NCQG), adopted at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, urged scaling up finance for developing countries to at least \$1.3 trillion by 2035, with a mobilisation target of at least \$300 billion annually. The task at Belém is to turn that collective ambition into concrete financial support. According to UNEP's Adaptation Gap Report 2025, the annual global requirement for adaptation to climate change-induced events such as sea level rise, extreme heat waves and storms will be about \$310 billion. However, in 2023, developing countries received about \$26 billion—two billion less than the amount they received in 2022 and 12 to 14 times less than what they currently need—in international funding to help

Bangladesh. The transition towards green growth, including renewables, sustainable agriculture, coastal defences and blue-economy solutions in these countries, depends on access to finance, appropriate technology and just transition frameworks. The COP30 outcome should be based on country contexts, to ensure climate plans and investments protect the planet, while supporting workers and building stronger, more inclusive societies. Agriculture and food systems is also one of the COP30 action agendas, since agriculture and land use are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

For developing and low-income countries, including highly climate-vulnerable ones like Bangladesh, COP30 is a strategic opportunity to expedite the implementation of

youth. This broader mobilisation is essential to scaling action and ensuring that agreements are not just signed but implemented with transparency.

If COP30 ends with weak commitments or compromised implementation pathways, the risks are profound, especially for climate-vulnerable countries like Bangladesh and for the broader global climate regime. It is not just about new promises; it is about cementing credible paths for the fulfilment of promises and ensuring vulnerable countries get a fair share of the burden and the benefits. A meaningful outcome from COP30 can unlock resources, technologies and partnerships essential for climate-resilient development in vulnerable countries. Conversely, the failure to make any progress will be a climate calamity.

## Caring for caregivers: The missing link in disability support



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The most profound acts of love often unfold in homes where a family member lives with a disability. In these homes, a woman—usually the mother, wife, or sister—becomes the entire infrastructure of care; a 24-hour lifeline that holds the household together. Yet, such relentless labour has huge implications on the physical, mental and economic well-being of the caregiver.

We often speak, and rightly so, about empowering persons with disabilities and ensuring their access to healthcare, education, and livelihood. Yet, in focusing so intently on the person with disability, we often ignore those who sustain their daily life. We are failing the caregiver and by doing so, we are also failing the person she serves.

During an interview for a BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) study, a

grandmother in her sixties explained that the physical strain of caregiving for her granddaughter with disability can be overwhelming. She is expected to shift from a position of gentle authority to that of a hands-on therapist, implementing complex and often painful exercise routines that are essential for mobility. Furthermore, the task of taking her to a hospital, which is quite a distance from their home, leaves her drained. She also cannot attend to household chores on those days.

Yet the physical toll is only part of the story. The psychological costs run even deeper. Caregiving demands constant vigilance. For a child or adult with an intellectual or physical disability, the caregiver becomes a sleepless sentinel, forever alert to danger. She cannot afford to let her guard down. This endless watchfulness ensures safety and dignity for her loved one, but it strips

away her own rest, privacy, and peace of mind. Over time, this unending anxiety corrodes her spirit.

BIGD's fieldwork with households that combine disability support with livelihood activities revealed a painful truth. Many caregivers, especially older women, reach a point of profound fatigue and scepticism. Findings from an ongoing BIGD study suggest that separate counselling sessions, focused solely on the mental health of caregivers, can help with their emotional wounds. When caregivers were given space to express exhaustion, manage stress, and rebuild motivation, the entire family's progress in caring for the person with disability improved. Without this emotional repair, every intervention risks collapse.

The burden of caregiving is also deeply economic. In ultra-poor households, the caregiver often manages both care and income. She runs a small business, tends livestock, or manages a poultry farm while maintaining a demanding rehabilitation schedule. She is expected to be an entrepreneur, nurse, therapist, and homemaker all at once.

Her life sits at the cruel intersection of poverty, disability, and gender inequality. This impossible balancing act comes at a cost. If she focuses on the family business, caregiving suffers.

If she focuses on caregiving, the family income declines. The constant tension between economic survival and emotional duty keeps her trapped in a cycle of anxiety and exhaustion.

As a society, we must stop viewing caregivers merely as instruments of care and begin recognising them as individuals with their own rights to health, rest, and dignity. This crisis cannot be solved by sympathy alone. It requires systemic reform. We need to create community-based support networks that provide scheduled respite. Even two hours of rest a week for an elderly mother, taking care of a child with disability, would help. Every disability or poverty programme should include psychosocial care for caregivers as a mandatory component. Government safety nets must be streamlined to ensure that caregivers receive adequate economic support.

The silent suffering of caregivers is one of the clearest indicators of our collective neglect. Their strength is extraordinary, but it is not infinite. If we truly want to secure dignity and opportunity for persons with disabilities, we must begin by protecting the health of those who hold their world together. It is time to lift this invisible burden before the strain becomes too heavy to bear, and the caregivers are lost to exhaustion.