



"We'll sue them [BBC] for anywhere between a billion and five billion dollars, probably sometime next week."

Donald Trump  
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## BB moves to tighten grip on banks

Drafts 45 amendments to banking law, including full oversight of state lenders

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Bangladesh Bank has drafted sweeping amendments to the banking law that will place state-owned lenders under its full oversight for the first time and reshape the governance of private banks, in one of the most ambitious overhauls in decades.

The 45 changes to the Bank Company Act, approved by the central bank's board and forwarded to the finance ministry last month, aim to bring the sector closer to global standards after years of mounting distress, governance failures, and politically connected lending.

A finance ministry official told The Daily Star that the draft will be circulated for stakeholder consultations, including input from the Bangladesh Association of Banks, before the draft proceeds to the cabinet for approval.

The centrepiece of the reform package is the abolition of a category that designates state-owned lenders as "specialised banks", a status that currently exempts them from key requirements. If approved, the amendments will align state banks with private banks on capital adequacy rules, governance standards and regulatory supervision. At present, the government can exempt state banks from capital requirements in consultation with the central bank. The proposal removes this discretion, ensuring uniform capital rules across all banks.

The draft also eliminates the exemption that allows state banks to appoint or remove directors and chief executives without Bangladesh Bank's approval. All banks -- state-owned and private -- will be required to seek central bank consent for top management appointments and removals.

Governance reforms extend deep into the private banking sector. The minimum required experience for directors and chief executives will rise from 10 to 15 years, and a new clause will bar sitting cabinet members, members of parliament and local government representatives from serving as bank directors, a measure intended to restrict political influence over lending decisions.

Family control of bank boards, criticised for enabling concentrated ownership and related party lending, will also be curtailed. The existing limit of three family directors will be replaced with a cap of two. The definition of "family" will be expanded to include in-laws, such as son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law. That will close a loophole that has enabled appointments through marital ties. Under the draft, the continuous tenure for directors has been reduced to six years from 12, after which they will be required to observe a three-year "cooling off" period before reappointment.

Board size will shrink from 20 directors to 15, with independent directors making up at least half of the board, a significant increase from the current requirement of three independents. These independent directors will be appointed from a vetted pool of candidates shortlisted by an expert panel, a feature Bangladesh Bank says is intended to inject greater professional expertise into boards.

"Smaller boards are more effective," said Md Nazrul Huda, a former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, suggesting an optimal size of 11 directors. The quality of directors, including experienced bankers and chartered accountants, matters much more than the overall number, he added.

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- ➊ State banks will lose special status that shields them from core rules like capital adequacy
- ➋ Their top appointments, removals will require central bank approval
- ➌ Ministers, public representatives will no longer be allowed on bank boards
- ➍ Cap on directors from one family will drop to two from three
- ➎ In-laws will be considered part of a family

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN,  
SHAHEEN MOLLAH, and  
MUNTAKIM SAAD

As the country heads towards the national election, the open use of illegal firearms, armed clashes, and the resurgence of underworld gangs have sparked growing public concern.

This week, top-listed criminal Tariq Saif Mamun was shot dead in broad daylight only yards from Dhaka's busiest court area.

The killing came just days after Sarwar Hossain Babla, who also belonged to criminal underworld, was gunned down and killed during a voter outreach event in Chattogram city. It was a hit carried out by his rivals over territorial dominance, say sources in the port city police.

According to law enforcement officials, the killings signal a resurgence of top gang leaders released from prison following the fall of the Awami League regime last year, with many of their associates also reactivating.



Meanwhile, intelligence reports suggest weapons are still being smuggled in through several border points.

The government has announced plans to hold the national election in February, with the schedule expected next month. Political parties have begun naming candidates and running informal

campaigns nationwide. Against this backdrop, the recent spate of killings, extortion, and armed clashes in Dhaka and Chattogram has left the law enforcement authorities alarmed.

Police sources said several of these murders and shootings are linked to turf wars and personal feuds, and they trace back to top

figures in the underworld.

Also, the sources say, some political leaders are backing these criminal groups to enlist muscle in the run-up to the polls.

Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury recently said action will be taken if any bailed criminals are found involved in new crimes.

He added that both the Dhaka and Chattogram shootings were the result of conflicts between rival gangs. "Action has been taken against the person responsible in Chattogram, and the ones responsible in Dhaka will be arrested soon."

A recent intelligence report to the Police Headquarters warned that underworld gangs could be used as hired muscle during the election to intimidate voters, attack rival campaigners, and influence outcomes.

The report noted that several notorious gang leaders living abroad are reactivating local networks via digital communication and illicit

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## BNP shifts its focus to polls preparation

Seat-sharing delays, protests, and unfinished tasks pile up

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Though many senior BNP leaders remain unhappy with the July charter implementation order, the party is shifting its focus and speeding up election-related work, as several major tasks remain incomplete.

With the polls just two months away and the schedule expected next month, BNP has little time to finalise seat-sharing with allies, select the candidates for remaining seats, contain nomination-related protests, and drop weak contenders.

The leadership acknowledges that if these tasks are not completed in time, they will face pressure.

"The July charter is not acceptable to everyone, but the election is coming fast. We must finalise our candidates, coordinate with allies, and prepare for the campaign. Time is moving very quickly," a standing committee member, preferring anonymity, said.

### SEAT-SHARING: THE BIGGEST CONCERN

BNP wants to settle its seat-sharing deal within this month before the

### MAJOR TASKS AHEAD

- ➊ Hold discussions with allies to finalise seat-sharing
- ➋ Decide on the remaining 63 unsettled seats
- ➌ Combine all manifesto drafts into a final version
- ➍ Contain protests over nominee dissatisfaction in 33 districts
- ➎ Finalise the full campaign strategy

schedule is announced, as allies have grown increasingly frustrated after the party unveiled its nominee list without resolving the issue.

Alliance leaders said nearly two weeks have passed without BNP

giving them any date for formal discussions. Several leaders said they spoke to BNP individually but received no positive outcome.

Saiful Haque, general secretary of the Biplobi Workers Party, said, "This delay is very unwanted, and it is a big worry for our party and the other parties of Ganatantra Mancha."

The Biplobi Workers Party is one of the six parties in the Ganatantra Mancha, which joined BNP's movement against the previous regime.

He said BNP must wrap up seat sharing quickly, as the delay is harming other parties as well. "We told BNP to finalise the seat-sharing matters as soon as possible. After discussions, every party needs time to plan on its own. If the delay continues, it will become dangerous."

Fariduzzaman Farhad, coordinator of the Jatiyatabdhi Samajmona Jote, said, "We didn't get any date from BNP [for discussions]. The election will be in February, so for us, a 10-day delay feels like a

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## NCP readies its grassroots for debut polls

SHAMIMA RITA

The National Citizen Party is continuing full-fledged preparations to contest the upcoming national election, focusing on organising its grassroots and selecting candidates for all 300 seats.

However, frustration over the ambiguous July charter implementation order remains within the party.

At a meeting on Friday, NCP leaders discussed plans to legally challenge the legitimacy of President Mohammad Shahabuddin's issuance of the charter order.

Contacted by The Daily Star, one leader, seeking anonymity, said that even if the NCP itself does not challenge the legitimacy at the High Court, it will endorse anyone who does.

At the meeting, the party also set their polls preparation priorities.

Speaking to this correspondent, another NCP leader said that apart from organising grassroots units and selecting candidates, a key priority is navigating discussions on a possible alliance and seat negotiation with major parties.

**GRASSROOTS ORGANISING**  
Sadia Farzana Dina, assistant office secretary of the party's central

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## 'When it comes to women, all parties are same'

Speakers lament female exclusion in charter, political space

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The rights women expected to secure after last year's July uprising did not materialise in the July charter, while women's participation has declined across various sectors, speakers said at a discussion in the capital yesterday.

They warned that without increased female participation in the upcoming national election, meaningful progress on women's rights would remain out of reach. They were addressing an event titled "Women in the Reconstruction of Democracy: What We Received", organised by the newly formed platform "Women in Democracy".

Jahangirnagar University anthropology professor Mirza Taslima Sultana said patriarchal dominance has intensified since the 2024 uprising and that traditional politics continues to exclude women from meaningful engagement. Criticising the low number of female nominees in elections, she said, "Black money and muscle power continue to keep women from contesting polls."

Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam said, "Those who were once oppressed have now become oppressors. In this situation, women are the worst affected. Political parties should include women's rights as a key issue in their election manifestos."

He added that a strong wave of reactionary attitudes has emerged in society and that no steps have been taken to stop it. "That is our failure."

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The largest fish-drying village in Bangladesh sits on the Dublar Char, a small island on the edge of the Bay of Bengal bordering the Sundarbans. Around 70 nautical miles from the nearest urban area, the char draws fishermen from all around the country, with around 25,000 people engaged in fishing and drying for six months every year. The dried fish, later sold as the popular delicacy "shutki", are bought by wholesalers at an average price of Tk 500-700 per kilogram. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Declare Ahmadiyyas non-Muslims

**Khatme Nabuwat unveils year-long programme at Suhrawardy Udyan rally**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sammilito Khatme Nabuwat Parishad yesterday launched a year long programme at an international conference in Dhaka, demanding that the government declare Ahmadiyyas a non-Muslim minority.

"If the Qadianis [Ahmadiyyas] are not declared non-Muslim, tougher programmes will be announced," Mohiuddin Rabbani, secretary general of International Majlis-e-Tahafuz-e-Khatme Nabuwat, Bangladesh, told the conference at Suhrawardy Udyan.

The programme includes mass signature collection from alevi, Islamic scholars and supporters until April 30 next year; submission of memorandums to all deputy commissioners in May and June; and divisional Khatme Nabuwat conferences between July and November.

If the demand remains unmet, they will organise a national ulema mashayekh conference in December 2026 with leading Islamic scholars to determine the course of action.

At least 90 clerics, scholars and politicians from Bangladesh and abroad, including Pakistan, India, Nepal, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, addressed the event. Leaders from the BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Andolok Bangladesh, Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis and Hefajat-e-Islam also took part.

This is the first international conference organised by Khatme Nabuwat in Bangladesh.

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**Thousands gathered for a conference of the International Khatme Nabuwat Grand Council at Suhrawardy Udyan in Dhaka yesterday. The organisation announced a yearlong programme calling on the government to declare members of the Ahmadiyya community non-Muslim.**

PHOTO: STAR

## BB moves to tighten grip

FROM PAGE 1

The draft also proposes removing the "wilful defaulter" classification, introduced in 2023, which obliges banks to list borrowers deemed deliberately unwilling to repay loans. Bangladesh Bank officials argue the category has created additional workload and allowed room for corruption due to subjective interpretation; instead, banks will maintain a single defaulter list after the amendment.

"There are no specific criteria to define the wilful defaulters. And that creates scope for corruption," Huda said.

Another amendment will allow the central bank to relax the current 10 percent limit on individual shareholdings for "strategic institutional investors", if deemed beneficial for the sector. That will potentially pave the way for deeper investment by foreign or domestic institutions.

Lending rules for business groups will be tightened. Under the current law, sister firms of a defaulting company may still borrow from banks. The draft amendments will end this practice, meaning a default by one unit of a conglomerate will bar other units from obtaining loans.

## Internet freedom

FROM PAGE 12

against harassment and sexual exploitation online".

But they also caution that "the CSO retained concerning rules related to content removal, criminal penalties for online speech and surveillance".

On political repression, the report points out retaliatory actions by the interim government: it says prosecutors obtained a court ruling in December last year that "prohibited the online dissemination of former Prime Minister Hasina's speeches".

Then in May, the government "banned all AL party activities under an antiterrorism law".

Freedom House also questioned the arbitrary arrests.

"Security forces arbitrarily arrested hundreds of people based on their real or perceived support for the AL, including online journalists. Others were detained in connection with their social media activities."

In the detailed scoring, under Violations of User Rights, the report notes that repealing the CSA improved that subcategory.

The score improved because of the repeal of the CSA, which prescribed severe penalties related to online speech.

However, the CSO "retained an overbroad 'cyber terrorism' provision that carried significant criminal penalties".

Despite the reforms, Freedom House still classifies Bangladesh as "Partly Free" in terms of internet freedom.

After taking office, Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb, the Special Assistant to the chief adviser with executive authority over ministry of posts, telecommunications and Information Technology, introduced a new telecom ordinance, initiated fundamental reforms in the surveillance framework and oversaw the passage of the Personal Data Protection Ordinance and the National Data Management Ordinance, said the ICT Division in a statement.

These measures collectively contributed to the improvement in Bangladesh's internet freedom score.

A World Bank delegation has already described the Personal Data Protection Ordinance and the National Data Management Ordinance as "world-class", the statement added.

## Underworld back in play, raising alarm

FROM PAGE 1

money transfers. Political actors are exploiting these networks.

Sources said top gangsters are again fighting turf wars over extortion, land grabs, and drug money, often using teen gangs as foot soldiers.

Following the regime change, several notorious criminals – including Abbas Ali, alias Killer Abbas; Sweden Aslam; Imamul Hasan Helal, alias Pichchi Helal; Sanjidul Islam Emon; Khondaker Nayem, alias Titon; and Khorshed Alam, alias Freedom Rasu – were released from jail, while others like Molla Masud and Tokai Sagor returned home from abroad.

Upon their return, they reclaimed territories, summoned old followers, and demanded "collections". Clashes broke out when local cadres resisted.

Shafiqul Islam, chief of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Detective Branch, said the rivalry between gangster Sanjidul Islam Emon and top criminal Mamun intensified recently. Mamun was killed over dominance in Dhaka's underworld, allegedly ordered by Rony, Emon's associate, who paid two gunmen Tk 2 lakh for the hit after several failed attempts.

Asked about efforts to control underworld crime, DMP Commissioner Sheikh Md Sazzad Ali told The Daily Star, "Crime in Dhaka is very much under control. Compared to previous months, muggings and daylight attacks have dropped significantly. Police have maintained order without using lethal force."

However, locals and media reports suggest the picture is messy, with groups led by Emon, Pichchi Helal, Molla Masud, and Subrata Bain continuing to carry out extortion and land grabbing.

Subrata and Masud were arrested in Kushtia earlier this year, but others have fled abroad.

### THE NETWORKS

Subrata Bain, once influential in Moghbazar, Motijheel, Paltan, and Malibagh, reportedly lost ground after his arrest. The Jisan group now controls Malibagh, Motijheel, Moghbazar, Badda, and Mohakhali, extorting hefty sums from major contracts, land deals, and businesses.

Meanwhile, top criminal Emon, operating from abroad, is believed to control large parts of Mohammadpur, Dhanmondi, Jigatola, Hazaribagh, and sections of New Market. His key associates – Rony, Kallu, and Shahidul – collect "protection money" from Baroikhali to Rayerbazar.

A trader at the Sadek Khan Ghat poultry market near Rayerbazar graveyard said "Emon's associates" used

to forcibly collect extortion money and even take chickens from the wholesale market. "Early this year, we negotiated a monthly payment of Tk 1 lakh to keep the peace, and we have been paying them regularly since," he added.

In Paikpara, Kalyanpur, Adabor and parts of Mohammadpur, Pichchi Helal's group extorts money from contractors, local sources say.

In Mirpur-1 and Shah Ali, local businesses, contract work, and waste management are reportedly controlled by associates of top criminal Shahadat, who is currently living abroad.

In Mirpur-10, Mirpur-13, Mirpur-14, Ibrahimpur, Kachukhet, and Bhashantek, individuals linked to Killer Abbas and Ibrahim have been accused by contractors of extorting "protection money". They also extort money from broadband and cable operators, and construction firms.

In Bhashantek and Mirpur-13, men invoking Ibrahim's name force contractors to buy building materials at inflated rates. Those who refuse are pressured to pay large sums before work can start.

An officer of a law enforcement intelligence unit said they received reports that associates of Killer Abbas and Ibrahim blocked work at four under-construction buildings in Mirpur-13 to collect extortion money.

According to police and media reports, most top gang leaders now operate from abroad, running large criminal networks that keep them beyond the reach of law enforcement. They fund bail and living expenses for arrested members until they return to the gang.

In Chattogram, fugitive crime boss Sazzad Ali, alias Boro Sazzad, runs the underworld from abroad. His armed gang collects tolls, controls turf, and eliminates rivals on his orders, police sources say.

Sazzad had once ruled through deputies Sarwar Hossain Babla and Akbar Ali, alias Dhakaia Akbar. A decade ago, both split to form separate gangs.

Sarwar was shot dead on November 5 during an election campaign in the port city's Panchlaish area. Akbar was killed on May 23 in Patenga. Police said both killings were carried out on Sazzad's orders.

Sazzad's followers reportedly don't hesitate to open fire if extortion demands are unmet. Since August last year, his group has been linked to 10 murders, according to police sources.

Apart from the recent killing of Sarwar, local businessman Abdul Hakim and Jubo Dal activist Mohammad

Alamgir were shot dead last month in Chattogram's Raosan as rival politicians fight for dominance.

### ILLEGAL ARMS

All these killings involved the use of illegal firearms. Sources report the spread of pistols, revolvers, rifles, and submachine guns in different parts of the country.

The recent intelligence report submitted to the PHQ identified at least 18 border points through which illegal weapons regularly enter the country.

The most active points include Teknaf, Benapole, Chapainawabganj, Kushtia, Dinajpur, and Meherpur. Smugglers are also using river routes.

Between August 1 and November 9, the Rapid Action Battalion recovered 189 firearms and arrested 98 people linked to illegal arms.

Border Guard Bangladesh said it recovered 1,225 firearms and large quantities of ammunition along the border during the first nine months of this year. Of these, 97 weapons were seized between January and April, and over a thousand from May to September.

Meanwhile, more than 1,300 firearms looted from police stations during the July uprising remain missing, with many reportedly now in the hands of criminals and being used to commit crimes across the country.

Omar Faruk, professor of criminology and police science at Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University, said many top criminals who were released from jail after the August 5 changeover have become active again. "Now, they are aligning with different political parties and engaging in violent criminal activities."

Although police earlier said they would keep these criminals under surveillance, Faruk questioned how that would be possible.

"With so many chaotic incidents happening every day, police currently lack the capacity to maintain effective surveillance."

Regarding illegal firearms, he said, while there have been some drives to recover looted arms, no effective operation has been carried out to control the overall flow of illegal weapons, leading to a politically and socially unstable situation.

"At this point, the government and law enforcement agencies must take decisive action to re-arrest the identified criminals. They must also recover illegal firearms through targeted operations."

"Otherwise, the upcoming election is unlikely to be peaceful, and incidents of killings and violent crimes are expected to rise, pushing the country further into uncertainty," he warned.

The relations must be on the basis of equal footing. Our national interests must come first," Fakhrul said.

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In this regard, Tuku said the party will also make a decision on the vacant constituencies, and announce it.

### MANIFESTO INCOMPLETE

BNP's manifesto committee has prepared draft proposals on employment, economic recovery, education, healthcare, agriculture, foreign policy, and governance. However, these drafts have not yet been merged into a final document.

A standing committee member said,

"The manifesto will be very important especially for young voters. But several parts still need editing."

### PROTESTS AGAINST NOMINATIONS

Protests have erupted in over two dozen districts over BNP's nominee list, with many grassroots activists alleging that weak candidates were favoured over popular leaders.

Road blocks, human chains, rallies, and slogans against central leaders have been reported in 33 districts where BNP has announced candidates.

Party sources said BNP has engaged

independent organisations to assess

grassroots acceptance of its nominees.

### CAMPAGN STRATEGY BEING PREPARED

Once the polls schedule is announced, BNP will have only around two months

for full campaigning. To ease the pressure, the party has already begun preparing its campaign strategy.

The plan includes sending top leaders to key constituencies, preparing area-based schedules, coordinating speeches and messages, and creating social media content in advance.

The party is also working on how Tarique Rahman's return could energise its campaign.

A BNP media team member said, "Online campaigning is now a major part of elections. Videos, graphics, and messages must be ready before the schedule so we can move quickly when the campaign starts."

Senior leaders admit that the party's presence on the ground remains weak in several districts, as many local units have not yet started full-scale activities, which could affect voter engagement.

To fix this, they have asked district leaders to hold gatherings, introduce candidates early, and increase communication with voters.

BNP is also closely monitoring government activities ahead of the election, including administrative transfers, actions of local officials, and the Election Commission's preparations.

Meanwhile, the party is advancing its candidate selection process.

At a press briefing on Friday, NCP Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary announced that the party has already sold over 1,200 nomination applications. "Our target is to sell 3,000

## Protect constitutional rights of Ahmadiyyas

**Nagorik Coalition urges govt, parties**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Nagorik Coalition urged the government and political parties to safeguard the constitutional rights of Ahmadiyya citizens following what it described as "communal and threatening" remarks at a public gathering yesterday.

In an emergency statement, the citizens' rights platform said it was "deeply troubled" by comments made at the International Khatme Nabuwat Conference at Suhrawardy Udyan, where several speakers reportedly issued "hateful and threatening" statements against the Ahmadiyya community.

It expressed particular alarm over major political parties deploying anti-Ahmadiyya rhetoric for political gain ahead of the polls, calling the trend "highly worrying".

Citing article 41 of the constitution, it stressed that Ahmadiyyas hold the same right as all citizens to practice, observe, and propagate their faith.

The statement said Khatme Nabuwat groups have a long history of provocative rhetoric targeting Ahmadiyyas. It said the organisation's activities "contributed to instability and violence" in the early 1990s, when Bangladesh was navigating a democratic transition. It added that similar movements in the early 1950s in then Pakistan had weakened democratic processes, which is a warning for Bangladesh.

The platform said Bangladesh reclaimed freedom of expression and association through struggle and sacrifice. While differences of opinion must be respected, it warned that there can be no tolerance for efforts to stoke communal hatred or target fellow citizens.

It urged the interim government and relevant authorities to remain vigilant against any group seeking to destabilise national life in this sensitive moment, especially those using religion to incite hostility or encourage violence.

the perpetrators. No casualties were reported in these incidents.

Police arrested four leaders and activists of the AL and its affiliated bodies yesterday for allegedly attempting sabotage.

Outside Dhaka, a bus caught fire in the Hurricane area of Gazipur on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway around 8:00pm. No casualties were reported, and the cause remains unclear.

In Pirojpur, miscreants set fire to the July Memorial on the premises of the Central Shaheed Minar early yesterday, damaging part of the structure. Two on-duty police personnel were withdrawn to the police lines for negligence. A case is being filed over the incident.

In Narayanganj, a parked bus caught fire on the Dhaka-Chattogram highway at Shimail in Siddhiganj around 6:00am. Firefighters extinguished the blaze soon after.

## Teesta and Farakka

FROM PAGE 12

"India helped us during the 1971 Liberation War. They need to help Bangladesh even more. But unfortunately, we have seen the opposite. The Modi government has put us under pressure. They have taken everything, but given us nothing," he said.</p

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“



The verdict in the cases against those accused of crimes against humanity will be announced on November 17. Extra caution will be maintained to prevent any disorder. Also, law enforcement agencies and security forces will remain on strict duty in the field five days before the election, on the day of the election, and for three more days afterwards.

JAHANGIR ALAM CHOWDHURY  
Home Adviser



A customer checks a blanket at a vendor's stall on the sidewalk near Baitul Mukarram Mosque in the capital yesterday. Hawkers there are selling winter clothes and blankets, both new and old, priced between Tk 500 and Tk 3,000. With temperatures dropping in recent days, Dhaka has begun to feel the season's first chill.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Persons with disability protected on paper, excluded in reality

Neglect, weak oversight, lack of implementation of ratified laws undermine their rights

NILIMA JAHAN

At just 21, Jyoti Hossain from Jhikargachha, Jashore, is fighting not her disability but rather a system that refuses to include her.

Confined to a wheelchair since age four after a spinal cord injury, Jyoti excelled in school, earning an A+ in both SSC and HSC exams. Last year, she fulfilled her dream of studying Physics at Government MM College, Jashore.

But barriers soon closed in. With no accessible transport, she spends Tk 1,400 a day on private cars, and the college's third-floor physics lab – without a lift – remains out of reach.

After a year of struggling, her teachers advised her to abandon Physics and switch to the degree pass course, saying practical work would soon become "too difficult" for her.

"Physics is my favourite subject. Why should I switch?" Jyoti said. "This disability is not my fault, so why should I give up my dream?"

Her story exposes the stark gap between law and reality in Bangladesh.

The Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013 and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) guarantee equal



### KEY ISSUES

- » Accessibility barriers
- » Policy-practice gap
- » Dysfunctional committees
- » Employment discrimination
- » Weak UNCRPD compliance
- » Poor coordination

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Reactivate monitoring mechanisms
- » Strengthen NDDF
- » Ensure dedicated budgeting
- » Make campuses accessible
- » Generate disability data
- » Empower OPDs

access to education and infrastructure.

Yet inaccessible campuses and systemic neglect continue to hold back students like Jyoti. Bangladesh ratified the UNCRPD in 2007 and its Optional Protocol in 2008.

The 2013 Act incorporated the convention's principles into national law, and the 2019 National Action Plan on Disability outlined short, medium, and long-term goals for 35 ministries across 18 thematic areas.

Still, experts say enforcement remains weak, and policies rarely translate into practice.

Bangladesh enforces the 2013 Act through five disability rights committees – from local to national – covering education, health, employment, and rights. They operate under the National Disability Development Foundation (NDDF) under the Ministry of Social Welfare.

By law, these committees must meet regularly, but experts say they rarely do, leaving monitoring extremely weak.

Dr Nafeesur Rahman, a disability development expert, said deputy commissioners chair too many committees to prioritise them. "Despite legal powers, these committees remain largely ineffective," he said.

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## Intellectual pursuit being overshadowed by capitalism'

Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury warns of declining value of knowledge at launch of his book

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury yesterday expressed deep concern over the declining value of knowledge in today's society, saying capitalist priorities centred on wealth accumulation have overshadowed intellectual pursuit.

He made the remarks at the launch of his book "Dhaka Bishwabidyalay: Itihashe, Smriti" (Dhaka University: In History, In Memory) at the National Museum in Shahbagh.

"Knowledge no longer holds its former value. The entire system has become so capitalist that people have become self-centred, forced to think only of themselves," he said.

"Students now go to libraries to prepare for BCS exams. Government jobs have become the most attractive option. The relationship between education and livelihood has been severed."



PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury and distinguished guests hold up copies of his new book "Dhaka Bishwabidyalay: Itihashe, Smriti" at its launch ceremony at the National Museum in Shahbagh yesterday.

He criticised current development narratives, calling such development "hollow and fraudulent – a development of deception."

"This development does not encourage education or value knowledge," said Prof Choudhury.

He addressed the deteriorating social status of teachers, citing imagery from recent protests for increased allowances.

The professor described a viral image showing broken glasses on the ground after a teacher was assaulted. "These broken glasses are a mark of teachers' dignity in society," he said.

"The current situation is very bad. Bangladesh's situation has never been good, but the level of hopelessness now is unprecedented," said Prof Choudhury.

"Hopelessness is the most serious issue, and that feeling has truly set in."

Despite the grim assessment, he expressed satisfaction at the gathering with fellow intellectuals. "I felt a sense of fulfilment in my life today."

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

30 lakh jobs at risk over new ordinance  
Says association of travel agents, terms it 'black law'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh (ATAB) yesterday warned that around 30 lakh people involved in the sector will lose their jobs if the government turns the Bangladesh Travel Agency (Registration and Control) (Amendment) Ordinance into a law.

Terming it a "blacklaw", ATAB members said they would never accept the ordinance and urged the government to review it in line with stakeholders' demands.

Former top leaders of ATAB and general members raised the demand at two separate programmes in Dhaka.

At a human chain in the capital's Naya Paltan, former ATAB president Abdus Salam Aref and former secretary general Alisia Jannat Saleh said several sections of the ordinance, including the proposal to keep Tk 10 lakh as a deposit for offline travel agencies and the ban on the purchase and sale of tickets between agencies, are not business-friendly and would harm the country's travel industry.

Later at a press conference at a city hotel, former president SN Monjur Morshed said they would resist the ordinance at any cost, as it was formulated without consulting stakeholders.

The government did not involve us in amending the



SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Case filed over Mamun's killing in Old Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five days after the daylight killing in the capital's old town, a murder case was finally filed yesterday – without naming any suspects – even though police have already arrested five people, including two alleged shooters.

Bilkis Akther Ripa, wife of victim Tarik Saif Mamun, filed the case with Sutrapur Police Station.

According to the case statement, Mamun went to the city metropolitan court on the morning of November 10 to appear in a case. Afterwards, he stopped near the entry gate of the National Medical College Hospital on Johnson Road to drink coconut water. Between 10:50am and 11:00am, 10-12 unidentified individuals shot him dead in a pre-planned attack.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

## Police in new uniform

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new uniform for Bangladesh Police has come into effect, with members of all metropolitan police units and several specialised units, including the Dhaka Metropolitan Police, starting to wear it from yesterday.

However, district police have not yet received the new attire. Officials said district and range units will begin using it in phases.

The decision to change the uniform colours was made on January 20 at a law-and-order meeting at the home ministry. Under this decision, the new police uniforms will be iron-coloured.

Talebir Rahman, deputy commissioner of DMP's media and public relations wing, said police in DMP areas switched to the new uniform yesterday. Some officers received it on Friday, while others will receive it gradually.

Bangladesh Police spokesperson AHM Sahadat Hossaine, assistant inspector general (media) at the Police Headquarters, said specialised units such as the Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI), Tourist Police, Highway Police, and River Police will also use the new attire.

The uniform change comes as part of efforts to reform law enforcement agencies following last year's mass uprising, during which police, Rab, and Ansar were accused of using excessive force against unarmed students, leading to the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5.

Along with the police, the authorities also decided that Rab would wear an olive green uniform and Ansar a golden-wheat one. However, Ansar has requested the ministry to reconsider the golden-wheat colour.



PHOTO: STAR

## CWASA WATER TREATMENT PLANT

- Total cost Tk 1,856cr
- Built to supply 60m litres daily
- Now produces just 4m
- 3,000 of 15,000 targeted consumers connected
- Only one industrial user
- Monthly operating cost over Tk 1cr
- Revenue Tk 21.6 lakh
- Factories avoiding connections citing high water prices



Cwasa plant running at just 7% capacity

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

Even eight months after its inauguration, the Tk 1,856 crore Bhandaljuri Water Treatment Plant of Chattogram Wasa in Boalkhali upazila is operating at only seven percent of its capacity due to a lack of consumer connections.

As a result, the plant's operational costs fall far short of its expected revenue.

The facility is capable of producing 60 million litres of water daily after collection from the Karnaphuli river and subsequent treatment. Of this, 16 million litres were meant for residential use. The remaining 44 million litres, or about 73 percent of the total capacity, were intended for industrial consumers.

However, it currently produces only about four million litres of water a day.

To supply water beyond its main jurisdiction, CWasa built the plant with 133 kilometres of pipelines to deliver water to around 15,000

residential and commercial consumers across four upazilas – Patiya, Anwara, Boalkhali, and Karnaphuli.

So far, only around 3,000 consumers have taken connections, including just one industrial connection.

The plant's monthly operational expenses exceed Tk 1 crore, while revenue from water sales barely reaches Tk 21.6 lakh per month at CWasa's rate of Tk 18 per 1,000 litres.

Mahbubul Alam, the project director, said the plant's operational costs were Tk 1.38 crore in May, Tk 1.18 crore in June, and Tk 1.16 crore in July. Over these three months, the plant produced an average of four million litres daily, amounting to about 120 million litres per month. The plant currently has 25 people working there.

Muhammad Rashidul Hasan, dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Planning at Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology,

said the feasibility assessment of the project was inadequate. "Had it been conducted properly, the project would not be struggling to attract consumers today. It serves as a costly lesson – a reminder that building first and planning later can undermine even the best intentions," he added.

**If this continues, the groundwater level will decrease, and result in saltwater entering the aquifers, shortage of fresh water, and even sinking of land in the long run.**

Mahbubul Alam, however, said, "We mainly targeted providing water to factories. Each factory's water demand was surveyed to this end. There was no mistake in the

feasibility assessment." He said that residents and industries in Patiya, Karnaphuli, and Anwara upazilas are still using groundwater.

If this continues, the groundwater level will decrease, and result in saltwater entering the aquifers, shortage of fresh water, and even sinking of land in the long run," he said.

Mahbubul, also superintendent engineer at CWasa, said the factories are not taking water connections, citing higher prices for CWasa's water. "So, we cannot run the plant at its full capacity," he said.

One of the plant's potential major consumers was Chattogram Urea Fertilizer Limited (CUFL), which requires around 20 million litres of water daily.

However, the company has yet to start purchasing water from CWasa.

CUFL managing director Mizanur Rahman said, "We are not taking CWasa's water as its price is much higher compared

to what we produce ourselves. We plan to buy some water from them on a regular basis once our production resumes."

Akhtar Kabir Chowdhury, a citizen rights activist, alleged that the purpose of this project was never genuine development, rather it was designed to waste public money.

The project director, however, claimed that current operational costs are being borne by the plant's construction company under the maintenance contract for one year after completion.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council approved the project in January 2016 with an initial allocation of Tk 1,036 crore. Later, the cost rose by Tk 820 crore and the deadline extended to June 2025. It was inaugurated in February this year.

Of the total cost, the Korean Exim Bank's Economic Development Cooperation Fund provided Tk 1,224 crore, while the rest by the government.

## Persons with disability protected on paper, excluded in reality

FROM PAGE 3

"Most district committees fail to submit reports, and the NDDF's managing director, who serves as member secretary of the national committees, lacks manpower and resources to analyse them," he added.

Ashrafunnahar Mishti, executive director of the Women with Disabilities Development Foundation, said rare disabilities often go unrecognised and disability cards cannot be issued because committees are inactive. She said employment discrimination is severe, with recruitment of visually impaired teachers in government schools largely

halted since 2014.

"Even worse, remarks like 'Not good-looking, cannot teach' have been reported during interviews – despite court rulings in favour of 204 candidates with disabilities," she said. "Even at the NDDF, only two persons with disabilities are employed."

Md Jahangir Alam, senior coordinator at the Centre for Disability and Development, called for structural reform. "The social welfare and public administration ministries must make the committees functional. NDDF must be restructured with adequate staff and resources."

Dr Nafeesur said financial constraints are a major

barrier. "The National Action Plan has no dedicated budget, and ministries have not integrated disability inclusion into their mandates, since all disability-related issues fall under Social Welfare."

UNCRPD implementation faces similar challenges.

A National Monitoring Committee and 47 ministry focal points were established to coordinate inclusive development, but the committee – never empowered under the Paris Principles – has been inactive since 2017.

Bangladesh must report to the UN every four years but has submitted only one report, in 2017.

During the 2022 UN review, the Bangladesh delegation – led by foreign ministry officials, not social welfare – struggled to defend the report, as they were not directly involved with disability issues.

"It exaggerated the situation and contradicted information given by organisations of persons with disabilities," said Mishti, one of the delegates. "As a result, state representatives were furious, and I was even threatened for exposing the real situation," she alleged.

In October 2022, the UNCRPD Committee issued Concluding Observations, identifying serious gaps – inadequate data, stigma,

poor accessibility, weak oversight, limited access to justice, and the absence of a Paris Principles-aligned monitoring mechanism.

It recommended aligning laws with the UNCRPD, strengthening monitoring and accessibility, combating discrimination, improving access to justice, promoting inclusiveness, collecting disaggregated disability data, and supporting OPDs to participate meaningfully in policymaking.

Bangladesh was asked to submit its next reports by December 2029, but progress has been minimal.

NDDF Managing Director Bijoy Krishna Debnath

acknowledged severe capacity constraints. "I'm holding additional responsibilities, so I only handle urgent tasks. Permanent staff shortages make it impossible to keep committees fully functional," he said.

He also cited budget pressures. "The lump-sum allocation from the finance ministry has to cover 74 schools, 103 service centres, rent, utilities, and assistive devices."

On UNCRPD implementation, he said, "The law is not fully implemented yet, but it will happen gradually, perhaps once a dedicated disability budget is introduced."

Monsur Ahmed Chowdhury, president of Disability Rights Watch and a former UNCRPD Committee member, stressed the need for urgent institutional reform.

"The National Monitoring Committee must be reactivated," he said. "The Cabinet Division should empower it under the Paris Principles, and all ministries must reassess joint secretary-level focal points. Immediate action is needed to implement the UN committee's recommendations."

Looking ahead, Dr Susan Vize, Unesco representative to Bangladesh, said effective implementation of disability rights laws and UNCRPD obligations "requires a shift to accountability-driven mechanisms."

She stressed the need for an independent monitoring body, meaningful involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities, and disability inclusion across ministries and budgets.

Beyond laws and policies, changing mindsets remains a major challenge, she added.

Dr Vize stressed that shifting societal perceptions requires a multi-faceted approach, combining visibility, participation, education, and accountability, so persons with disabilities are recognised as full rights citizens.

**অফিস ভাড়ার বিজ্ঞপ্তি**  
৮২ মতিবাল মেট্রোস্টেশন এর সামনে সর্বমোট ২৩,০০০ বর্গফুট, প্রতিটি ১০০০ বর্গফুট থেকে ৩০০০ বর্গফুট এর ভেতর ভাড়া হবে। ১০ম তলা আল-হাস্তা টাওয়ারে বর্তমানে ৫ HSBC Bank, প্রাইভেট বাংক, লক্ষ বাংলা, শ্রীন টেক্সে সহ আরো অন্যান্য প্রতিষ্ঠান আছে। মোগামোঁ: ০১৬৭৫-০৫৭৮১০, ০১৯১৫-৯১১১৭৭, ০১৭১০-০১৭৩০

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০১৭৩০০৬৬৬৪৮

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Project Director  
National Disaster Management Research and Training  
Institute Construction Project (1st Phase)  
Department of Disaster Management  
92-93, Mohakhali C/A, Dhaka-1212  
www.ddm.gov.bd

## e-Tender Notice

Invitation No: 51.01.0000.031.14.18.24-297

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of the following:

SL No	Tender ID	Package No	Name of Work	e-GP Published Date & Time	Closing & Opening Date & Time
01	1154284	DDM/NDMRTI/2025-2026/W-01	Construction of 3 Storied Academic cum Administrative Building with 10 storied Foundation and 3 Storied Hostel building with 6 Storied Foundation and Boundary wall of National Disaster Management Research & Training Institute (1st Phase) under Gazipur district.	16-Nov-2025 10.00 A.M	Please see the online e-GP Tender Notice

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender Registration in the National portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Document from the National e-GP system Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

১২.১১.২০২৫  
(Md. Rasel Sabrin)  
(Join Secretary)  
Project Director

National Disaster Management Research and Training Institute Construction Project (1st Phase)  
Phone: ৮৮০-২২২৬০৩৮৬  
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GD-2441

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১০ মেজের ২০২৫

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রাপ্তি করা প্রতিক্রিয়া করে প্রতিক্রিয়া করা প্রয়োজন করা হচ্ছে। এই বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রতিক্রিয়া করে প্রতিক্রিয়া করা প্রয়োজন করা হচ্ছে।

GD-2442

০১	প্রতিক্রিয়া নাম	জাপানেস প্লাট কাটে কলেজ
০২	মে কাটে জ্বল দরপত্র আহান	গুরু ও শুক্র দিনে সরবরাহ, চিম ও দুর্ঘাত দিনে সরবরাহ, যান সরবরাহ, দক্ষে দেশ সরবরাহ এবং শান্তিপুর প্রতিক্রিয়া, কলকুল ও কান্দি প্রতিক্রিয়া সরবরাহ, গুল সরবরাহ, পুরুষের দ্রুতান্ত সরবরাহ এবং কলকুল ও কান্দি প্রতিক্রিয়া সরবরাহ।
০৩	দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির তারিখ ও হিন্দ	জাপানেস প্লাট কাটে কলেজ, জাপানেস প্লাট কাটে কলেজ প্রতিক্রিয়া দিন থেকে ৫ তিমিস ২০২৫ পর্যন্ত। (স্বীকৃত প্রতিক্রিয়া দিন দ্বিতীয় প্রতিক্রিয়া দিন থেকে ১০০০-১৫০০ টাকা)
০৪	দরপত্র নথিকর তারিখ, স্বীকৃত ও হিন্দ	০৫ তিমিস ২০২৫, স্বীকৃত ১২০০ টাকা, জাপানেস প্লাট কাটে কলেজ
০৫	বিজ্ঞপ্তি দ্বারা জ্বল করা প্রতিক্রিয়া কর্তৃত	০৫ তিমিস ২০২৫, স্বীকৃত ১২০০ টাকা, জাপানেস প্লাট কাটে কলেজ
		<a href="http://www.jgc.army.mil.bd">www.jgc.army.mil.bd</a>

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/৭৫২  
অধ্যক্ষ  
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## Bangladesh Railway's service woes persist

Its mismanaged system needs more than investment

Bangladesh Railway (BR) continues to bleed financially and fail its passengers despite years of heavy investment. According to a recent *Bonik Barta* report, the government currently spends over Tk 4,000 crore annually on railway operations, with much of it directed towards maintenance, cleaning, and on-board services. Yet, passengers have seen little return from this investment, as complaints about dirty trains and stations, irregular schedules, ticket black marketeering, and technical failures persist. What's more baffling is that investment in the rail sector has increased significantly over the last 10 to 15 years, yet neither its services nor its profits have improved much.

In the fiscal year 2023-24, the Ministry of Railways was allocated a total of Tk 19,010.69 crore, including both operating and development expenditure. BR's income fell to Tk 1,845 crore in FY2024-2025—down 4.15 percent from the previous year—marking its first post-pandemic negative growth. While revenues rose slightly in the first quarter of FY2025-26, losses are projected to exceed Tk 1,574 crore for the fiscal year.

Meanwhile, even at the busiest station of the country in the capital's Kamalapur, there are still not enough toilets, waiting rooms, or functioning fans. Existing facilities are unhygienic, and many passengers have little choice but to wait on crowded platforms. Similar conditions exist at regional stations. Inside trains, passengers face broken seats, unclean toilets, and overcrowded compartments, often filled with "standing" and ticketless commuters beyond official capacity. Frequent derailments and incidents of coaches detaching mid-journey indicate a serious lapse in maintenance. Such conditions contradict the official claim that the purpose of increased operating expenditure is to improve passenger service.

Experts attribute the failures to inefficiency and lack of accountability. The railways ministry's adviser further admitted that the maintenance system "is not functioning properly" and that many of the workshops lack the required technical standards. Although the ministry claims to have reduced the operating ratio from 2.4 to 1.8, the improvement has not translated into visible benefits for passengers. Furthermore, cases of wasteful procurement, including non-operational track machines and defective train models, have been reported in recent years. These incidents point to a pattern of project design driven more by bureaucratic and procurement interests than by service needs.

To address these issues, BR must move beyond ad-hoc spending and prioritise structural reforms. Regular technical audits, transparent procurement, and independent monitoring of ongoing projects are essential. Resources should be directed towards maintenance, safety upgrades, and passenger facilities rather than ill-conceived projects. Without strict accountability and long-term planning, even large budget allocations will continue to yield little improvement in railway service or its financial performance.

## A civilised society cannot allow this

Why do we still treat Harijans as less than human?

There is, perhaps, no starker example of discrimination in Bangladesh than the treatment of its Harijan community. Two hundred years after the British brought them to this land to work as sweepers, we shockingly continue to treat them no better. According to a report in this daily, around 200 Harijans live in damp 10-by-12-foot rooms at the Harijan Colony in Kulaura Upazila, Moulvibazar with their families of five to six people. And although that alone paints an unliveable picture, it barely scratches the surface.

Across the country, Harijan people, who spend hours cleaning our cities and municipalities, have been reduced to living lives that would be intolerable in any civilised society. Take, for instance, Rekha Basfor of Sreemangal in Moulvibazar. She leaves for work in the morning after drinking only a glass of water. She cannot afford even the simplest breakfast, as a bun and half a cup of tea cost about Tk 15, while her daily wage is only Tk 33. For her family, she often cooks nothing more than rice and, occasionally, mashed potatoes. Fish and meat are never part of their meals except on rare special occasions, when she manages to gather a little extra money. Reportedly, this "extra income" often refers to earnings from drug peddling, as many are being forced into the trade simply to cope with rising living costs.

According to the Bangladesh Harijan Oikya Parishad, the lowest monthly municipal salaries are alarmingly inadequate: Shariatpur pays Tk 3,000; Madaripur Tk 2,000; Kumarkhali Tk 1,800; Rajbari Tk 2,300; Akhaura Tk 1,500; Kushtia Tk 2,700; Natore Tk 2,100; Bogura Tk 3,300; and Santahar Tk 1,200; Sylhet City Corporation Tk 3,200 (up from Tk 2,200 last July); Sylheti Mangal Tk 1,000 (previously Tk 550), while Kulaura provides the highest rate at Tk 3,800. Despite the variations, what remains glaringly obvious is that none of these amounts constitutes a living wage.

On top of this, the discrimination Harijan children face at school, where other students refuse to sit beside them, and in hospitals, where doctors decline to examine them properly, considering them somehow "contaminated," should shame not the Harijan community but us, as a society. This prejudice is also evident in how we expect them to do their work. According to the book *Study on the Wages of Urban Cleaners*, published by Ngorik Uddog in January this year, 75 percent of workers do not receive protective equipment, and only eight percent have access to healthcare.

There are even more damning data illustrating how thoroughly we have failed the Harijan community. It is high time that the government—and society at large—focused on transforming the conditions in which the Harijan community is forced to live a life of continuous deprivation and struggle.

# The bureaucracy that outlived every regime



Firoz Ahmed  
is a member of political council, Ganosamhati Andolok and former president of Bangladesh Chhatra Federation. He has also served as a member of the Constitutional Reform Commission under the interim government. He can be reached at [firozdhakauttara@gmail.com](mailto:firozdhakauttara@gmail.com)

FIROZ AHMED

*"It is not enough to seize the state; the state machinery itself must be dismantled."*

This very idea marks the key difference between a coup and a revolution in political theory. It emerged while reflecting on the failure of the Paris Commune 150 years ago and has since reappeared throughout history whenever victorious political struggles have failed to achieve real transformation, ending instead in lost revolutions or counter-revolutions.

Strange as it may sound, the power structure in Bangladesh has seen no fundamental change from the British era to the present day. The very foundation that determines whether other transformations in society can take root remains almost untouched. Its outward forms may have shifted—sometimes in the name of Bangladeshi nationalism, sometimes Bangladeshi nationalism, at times through dictatorship, or through alliances and coalitions; but beneath it all, the structure has remained deeply bureaucratic.

Efficient and capable civil servants are essential for any functioning system. But bureaucracy can, at times, turn into a self-sustaining organism—its own preservation and privilege becoming the state's primary priority. The state's prosperity is no longer its goal; the state itself becomes a host for the bureaucracy to feed on. Unfortunately, that is the fate our country has inherited as well.

After the British left, bureaucracy emerged as the most powerful force in Pakistan. In a 1972 essay, Pakistani sociologist Hamza Alavi observed that in postcolonial societies, "the military and bureaucracy cannot be seen simply as tools of a single ruling class in the classical Marxist sense."

Anyone familiar with Pakistan's history will recognise this: before taking power, Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan rose from the civilian bureaucracy; after Ayub's coup, the military bureaucracy took command. Even Sheikh Mujib Rahman noted this trend in *The Unfinished Memoirs*, identifying the crisis of the Pakistani state from its birth: "They began to depend entirely on the bureaucracy inherited from British times. Whatever the bureaucrats said, they followed." He also wrote: "Khawaja Nazimuddin

appointed a bureaucrat, Chaudhury Mohammad Ali, as finance minister. He was then the secretary-general of the government. This is when the open game of bureaucracy in Pakistani politics began. One bureaucrat became governor general, another finance minister... Politicians began to lose to the bureaucratic alliance." Writer Abul Mansur Ahmad also pointed to the weakness of politicians as the reason bureaucracy became so dominant. Despite internal conflicts, this alliance between military and civilian



FILE ILLUSTRATION: SADATUDDIN AHMED AMIL

bureaucrats ran Pakistan throughout its history.

While it is true that the political situation in early Pakistan—marked by instability and weak democratic processes—does not mirror Bangladesh exactly, a local class of businessmen and industrialists has indeed developed here. Yet the same question remains: compared to the bureaucracy, how strong is this local productive class? Or, to frame it differently: in business, industry, taxation—even corruption—who depends on whom? In his autobiography, Rehman Sobhan recalls being harassed by petty bureaucrats in the 1960s while working in the leather trade. Do we not still witness similar behaviour today?

So how do we understand this alliance between bureaucracy and global capital? In today's Bangladesh, engineers.

A recent report offers a broader picture: in the past 10 years, Tk 20,000 crore has been spent on bureaucratic processes—does not mirror Bangladesh exactly, a local class of businessmen and industrialists has indeed developed here. Yet the same question remains: compared to the bureaucracy, how strong is this local productive class? Or, to frame it differently: in business, industry, taxation—even corruption—who depends on whom? In his autobiography, Rehman Sobhan recalls being harassed by petty bureaucrats in the 1960s while working in the leather trade. Do we not still witness similar behaviour today?

So how do we understand this alliance between bureaucracy and global capital? In today's Bangladesh, engineers.

Right now, there exists no effective counter-narrative to stem the flow of disinformation and assure the Bangladeshi electorate that the February 2026 election will be different from before. To prevent this further erosion of hope and trust, and deliver a high-quality, high-turnout election, the interim government must convince voters that voting is safe, meaningful, and celebratory. Domestic and international observers will also be looking for signs that Bangladesh can deliver an election worthy of its people's aspirations and global democratic standards. The stakes could not be higher for the interim government and the political parties competing in the election, who hope to form the next government.

Public expectations are high, but fragile. Citizens, especially women, young people, minorities, and first-time voters, want to believe their voices matter. Yet, spoilers (again notably the Awami League and their international supporters) are using their considerable disinformation apparatus to disrupt the election preparation and frustrate the transition by sowing fear, apathy, and distrust.

While surveys consistently show overwhelming intent to vote, the vast majority of citizens will never see these findings; instead, they are influenced almost entirely by social media consumption. This is a massive vulnerability: with around 50 percent of the electorate

bureaucrats decide the fate of entrepreneurs, not the other way around. Government decisions on national resources do not reflect the interests of productive classes; the ultimate authority lies with bureaucrats.

Our state now seems like a graveyard of bureaucratic failures in education, industry, agriculture, and every other sector. Each hardworking entrepreneur, every citizen struggling to make a living, appears to exist merely to feed a vast bureaucratic machine.

Civil bureaucracy cannot rule directly, as Pakistan's early years showed. In practice, military bureaucracy has often proved the most convenient form of rule for both sides. Yet, such regimes face crises of legitimacy. Without ideological acceptance, no rule can survive without spending enormous resources to maintain control. That is why political parties often need to adopt certain ideologies as a facade. People's will does not form the source of all power of the state; rather, it is the interest of the bureaucracy. In Bangladesh, under former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, the state was transformed into a fully bureaucratic police system, justified in the name of the Liberation War and "countering extremism."

Many now argue that the July uprising could not bring about any structural transformation. Indeed, most organisers of the movement, and even the advisers who emerged from it, seemed unprepared or unwilling to confront or reform the bureaucracy. But bureaucracy is not a formless crowd; it has institutional memory. So, it is no surprise that one of the first commissions formed after the uprising was the Public Administration Reform Commission—staffed largely by bureaucrats themselves. Those who came to power have, in many cases, been subdued or neutralised, while the bureaucratic state remains intact. In fact, during this interim period, bureaucrats have quietly expanded their control over local government and education.

The aspiration of the 2024 uprising stopped right at the wall of bureaucracy. Yet, it sent a clear message: the old order will not last forever. For beneath the surface, the bureaucratic structure of Bangladesh can no longer contain the growing pressure of its people. History shows that sometimes wise rulers reform such systems. Otherwise, new waves of public resistance will continue to rise, seeking the deep transformation that remains unfinished.

*The article is translated from Bangla.*

## Is Bangladesh at risk of losing the election information war?



Jon Danilowicz  
is a retired US diplomat and independent foreign policy analyst. He currently serves as president of Right to Freedom, a Washington DC-based non-profit human rights organisation.

JON DANILOWICZ

*"I've made a solemn commitment to deliver an election that would stand out in terms of voter turnout, participation of new and women voters, global confidence in safety and security, and its festive atmosphere as a celebration of democracy and rule of law." - Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus.*

*"In war, the result is never final." - Carl von Clausewitz*

The current phase of Bangladesh's democratic journey that began with the August 2024 collapse of Sheikh Hasina's autocratic regime will culminate in the February 2026 general election. This election will do more than simply transfer power; it will demonstrate whether Bangladesh has renewed its democratic spirit after years of turbulence and deficit. The election will be judged not only by its procedural credibility, but also by the actual and perceived quantity and quality of public participation.

This reality and perception will also determine the next government's legitimacy. Supporters of the previous Awami League regime understand this and will do their best to undermine the legitimacy of the next government

to increase their odds of returning to exact vengeance from those who ousted them. The Awami League and its supporters have deployed a ferocious disinformation and false propaganda campaign against the interim government for over a year. This campaign shows no sign of abating.

Their recent slogan of "No boat, no vote," which is being dramatically boosted across social media with advertising and coordinated amplification, has yet to be effectively challenged by a counter-narrative that distinguishes between the fugitive Awami League leadership and their supporters, whose right to vote has not been curtailed.

Put starkly, without an effective counter, the emerging dominant narrative at home and abroad risks becoming not one of democratic renewal, but of over-amplified Awami League disinformation, framing Bangladesh as a country trapped in mobocracy, societal disorder, and extortion. It is not simply the case that Bangladesh risks losing the information war, but more that it has unilaterally disarmed, with pro-

democracy forces ceding the field to those driving the Awami League's narrative.

Right now, there exists no effective counter-narrative to stem the flow of disinformation and assure the Bangladeshi electorate that the February 2026 election will be different from before. To prevent this further erosion of hope and trust, and deliver a high-quality, high-turnout election, the interim government must convince voters that voting is safe, meaningful, and celebratory. Domestic and international observers will also be looking for signs that Bangladesh can deliver an election worthy of its people's aspirations and global democratic standards. The stakes could not be higher for the interim government and the political parties competing in the election, who hope to form the next government.

Public expectations are high, but fragile. Citizens, especially women, young people, minorities, and first-time voters, want to believe their voices matter. Yet, spoilers (again notably the Awami League and their international supporters) are using their considerable disinformation apparatus to disrupt the election preparation and frustrate the transition by sowing fear, apathy, and distrust.

While surveys consistently show overwhelming intent to vote, the vast majority of citizens will never see these findings; instead, they are influenced almost entirely by social media consumption. This is a massive vulnerability: with around 50 percent of the electorate

still undecided, disinformation is already disproportionately shaping perceptions, fuelling apathy, and depressing turnout among volatile blocs such as youth, women, and urban voters.

Without a coordinated, well-resourced counter-narrative and campaign, the election risks being remembered not as a festival of democracy, but as yet another turn in an ongoing cycle of fear and division.

The 2026 general election is not just an administrative task; it is a historic opportunity to redefine Bangladesh's democratic identity. By delivering a safe, inclusive, and festive election, the interim government under Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus can inspire its citizens, win global respect, and lay the foundation for a renewed democracy. Future governments and citizens will reap the dividends from the resources invested in ensuring the success of this transition.

This campaign is not optional; it is essential. It will transform voting from a procedural duty into a joyful act of nation-building, ensuring that Bangladesh rises from its democratic struggles with pride and hope. For Professor Yunus and pro-democracy forces, it is an opportunity to leave behind a legacy of global stature: to be remembered for delivering not only Bangladesh's most credible election, but one that the world will cite for decades as a model of democratic renewal. This is also the best way to honour the sacrifices of those who gave so much to restore democracy before and during the long July of 2024.

# Full pay, half freedom, complete upheaval



## MIND THE GAP

**Barrister Noshin Nawal**  
is a columnist for The Daily Star. She can be reached at [nawalnoshin@gmail.com](mailto:nawalnoshin@gmail.com).

## NOSHIN NAWAL

Apparently, salvation for Bangladeshi women has arrived. Jamaat-e-Islami has declared that, under their rule, women will work five hours a day and still receive a full day's pay. Employers will pay for five, and the government will foot the bill for the remaining three. Because nothing screams women's empowerment quite like being paid to work less. Let us take a moment to applaud this grand gesture. Women will finally have time to rest, they say. Rest from what, exactly? The office? The factory? Or the unpaid double shifts they work every day at home?

For centuries, Bangladeshi women have been the country's invisible economic engine. They have built households, raised children, cooked meals, and cared for the sick without clocking out or cashing in. Their labour has been missing from every GDP calculation, every national budget, and every line of economic policy. And now, the political solution seems to be to pay women for staying home. I am sure our grandmothers are thrilled. These are the women who kept entire households running through famine, war, and political upheaval. They managed to make ends meet with ration cards, borrowed rice, and sheer determination. They did not need five-hour shifts. They deserved recognition.

Our mothers, too, have been the silent infrastructure of our lives. When a woman in Dhaka goes to work, five other women make that possible. Her mother cooks, her grandmother picks up the children from school, her sister supervises homework, her mother-in-law cleans the house, and her neighbour keeps an eye on the stove when the gas runs low. For every woman who steps out, there is a small army of other women holding

it all wrapped neatly in the vocabulary of care. The word "honour" is being thrown around again, that sacred Bangladeshi word which has excused everything from child marriage to silencing women on talk shows. Women are being told that they are valued, but only in carefully contained portions. Work, yes, but not too much. Speak, but not too loudly. Exist, but within limits. This pseudo-progressive idea is dressed up as benevolence,

safe, factories humane, and workplaces fair. If the state really wants to honour women, how about enforcing harassment laws so that women can travel without fearing for their lives or dignity? But no, instead we get a political bedtime story. In this version of equality, women are delicate flowers who must be shielded from the exhaustion of an eight-hour workday. Their freedom is measured in coffee breaks, and their dignity

handle without upsetting the moral fabric of society. Sarcasm aside, this is not about kindness. It is about control. Reducing women's visibility in the public sphere, under the pretext of protecting them, has always been a favourite tactic. Because once women start showing up, they also start speaking up. And that is when things get inconvenient.

Our mothers and grandmothers stepped in so that we could step out. They carried the unpaid weight of the household work so that their daughters could study, work, and build lives that stretched beyond the kitchen. They were the scaffolding of progress. And now, the scaffolding is being asked to pack up and go home, along with the building. A five-hour workday is not a gift. It is a leash tied with a silk ribbon. It tells women that they are only welcome in the workforce as long as they do not take up too much space, time, or power.

And for those who argue that this is a choice, let us be honest. There is no real choice when social norms and political rhetoric tell you that "good women" prioritise family over ambition. There is no freedom when staying home is framed as virtue and going out is framed as defiance. If Jamaat truly wanted to empower women, it would address the issues that keep women unsafe and underpaid. They would protect women like the one on that bus in Dhaka, who fought off harassment with nothing but her shoe while other passengers sat silent. They would build systems that respect women's work, not policies that reduce it.

Instead, we are being offered what looks like progress but smells like nostalgia for a time when women knew their place. The irony is that every woman who makes it to the workplace does so because generations of other women made sacrifices to get her there. And now, after all that effort, we are being told that progress means clocking out early. If this is empowerment, then patriarchy must be laughing somewhere in an air-conditioned office, collecting a full day's pay for half a day's work. Bangladeshi women have already worked enough unpaid shifts for one lifetime. They do not need shorter hours. They need respect, safety, and equality—not the illusion of it.



VISUAL: ARWIN SHAMS SIDDIQUEE

the fort behind her. And now, we are being told to go home. We are told it is progressive, even compassionate. It is apparently for our honour and well-being. Because heaven forbid women get too used to public spaces, financial independence, opinions, or options. Better to tuck them back into the domestic comfort zone with a full day's pay and a pat on the head.

but it reeks of regression. You cannot put women in the workforce for decades, rely on their labour to prop up the economy, and then hand them a symbolic half-day like it is a bouquet of roses. Women are not tired of working; they are tired of being patronised.

It is also economically absurd. If the government wants to spend public money on women, perhaps start by making buses

is apparently restored by working less.

If we follow this logic, maybe next the government can introduce the "three-hour honour package" for working mothers, or a special "one-hour premium" for those who promise to stay extra modest. Perhaps we could also establish a Department of Dignity, staffed entirely by men, to determine exactly how many hours of freedom women can

## Apathy and lack of legal protection endanger dwindling urban greenery



**Anjum N Choudhury**  
is a climate policy research consultant at the Asian Development Bank.

## ANJUM N CHAUDHURY

There is a 55-year-old, perhaps older, sheesham tree on a narrow stretch of municipal land behind our apartment building. Roughly five storeys tall, its thick canopy glitters in the sun, and it is visited daily by a wide array of birds—shalik, doyel, bulbul, kaththokra, shui chor and, of course, kaak. In addition to our residential building, it is flanked by the official compounds of two government institutions, neither of which owns the strip of land the sheesham tree occupies.

We had always assumed the tree would be safe from harm, as its surrounding area is fully developed, and it does not pose a threat to nearby structures, electrical wires, or passers-by. On the contrary, its shade cools its vicinity in the summer, and its presence has been an invaluable source of mental support to us through the pandemic and the unpleasant dreariness of day-to-day life in Dhaka. It had slipped our minds that wood from a sheesham tree is widely used to build furniture and, therefore, highly valuable.

One afternoon, the sheesham tree caught the attention of a group of contractors hired by one of the government complexes to do some other landscaping work. Fortunately, my parents and I were at home at the time, and we spotted them just as they were fastening their ropes around its branches and scaling its trunk, equipped with sickles and a chainsaw. In our race downstairs to stop them, we encountered a few of our building's other tenants. Hoping to garner strength in numbers, I asked them to join us in trying to save the tree, but to my utter dismay, no one wanted to help. One uncle even tried to find a silver lining, saying no tree meant fewer insects. To them, the tree's felling was a foregone conclusion, so why even bother?

The tree's protection ultimately fell to me, my parents—both in their seventies—and two guards. We demanded that the contractors show us an official permission for the tree's felling. When they failed

to present one, we scrambled to get in touch with someone from their client institution. The contractors panicked and abandoned their enterprise before we actually managed to speak to anyone.

Having narrowly escaped disaster this time, I consulted a lawyer at the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), hoping to secure some form of legal protection, perhaps a plaque, for the tree's future preservation. Sadly, Bangladesh's existing environmental laws do not have

and stores vast volumes of carbon dioxide. Bangladesh has been party to the Paris Climate Agreement since 2015 and has made an international commitment, through its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20.3 percent by 2035.

Would it not, then, make sense to legally protect the trees that are actively removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere?

A tree's full "environmental value" can only be realised once it is 10 years old. Every Earth Day, every Environment Day, every climate conference at home and abroad, and every heatwave, our leaders and administrators lament the loss of green spaces and entreat citizens to plant more trees. Their words ring hollow when they subsequently do nothing to ensure saplings grow to their full potential, protect older trees, or implement zoning laws mandating green spaces in urban areas.

**A tree's full 'environmental value' can only be realised once it is 10 years old. Every Earth Day, every Environment Day, every climate conference at home and abroad, and every heatwave, our leaders and administrators lament the loss of green spaces and entreat citizens to plant more trees. Their words ring hollow when they subsequently do nothing to ensure saplings grow to their full potential, protect older trees, or implement zoning laws mandating green spaces in urban areas.**

provisions for protection of this kind. The Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act, 1995, only applies to trees in ecologically critical areas. What's more, the sheesham tree is not considered a native species (though a quick internet search would say otherwise) and is not deemed to have any environmental, medicinal, or livelihood value that warrants legal protection. The only way to protect a tree that is not located in an ecologically critical area is by obtaining a High Court order or by getting a prominent public figure to declare it a tree of cultural significance.

The legal assertion that the sheesham tree has no "environmental value" is factually incorrect. Even if one overlooks the wildlife that frequents it, a 55-year-old sheesham tree possesses immense carbon sequestration potential, meaning it absorbs

The sitting environment adviser is a career environmental lawyer who could have, at the very least, begun revising Bangladesh's environmental laws to be more thorough. In December 2024, she announced that a new law for the protection of trees was being formulated, but there has been no follow-up in the 11 months since. In the meantime, a lack of preemptive legal protection led to trees in Hatirjheel and Panthakunja Park being felled for the elevated expressway's construction. Although a High Court order was eventually issued to halt it in September this year, contractors continued their operations, claiming they had not received an official notice.

When I shared the story of my family's confrontation with the contractors on social media, a family friend told me she had come

home one day to find someone had

dismembered her neem tree because

its branches had grown past her

property's boundary wall. I hope her

grief and my family's anxiety over

our cherished trees never harden our

hearts like those of our neighbours.

However, I wonder if there is any

other way to cope when our country's

laws are so ill-equipped to protect

the things we hold dear, and loss is

perpetually imminent.

### Maddhapara Granite Mining Company Limited

(A company of Petrobangla)  
Parbatipur, Dinajpur.

#### Invitation for International Open Tender

01	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/Energy & Mineral Resources Division
02	Agency	Bangladesh Oil, Gas & Mineral Corporation (Petrobangla)
03	Procuring Entity Name	Maddhapara Granite Mining Company Limited (MGMC)
04	Procuring Entity District	Dinajpur, Bangladesh.
05	Invitation For	Procurement of Prilled Ammonium Nitrate.
06	Invitation Ref. No. and Date	28.17.0000.413.38.001.25.162; Dated: 13-11-2025
KEY INFORMATION		
07	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method
FUNDING INFORMATION		
08	Budget and Source of Funds	Company's own fund.
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
09	Last Selling Date and Time of Tender Documents	Date: 28-12-2025; Time: 06:00 PM
10	Closing Date and Time of submission of Tender Documents	Date: 29-12-2025; Time: 12:15 PM
11	Opening Date & Time of Tender Documents	Date: 29-12-2025; Time: 12:30 PM
12	Place of Tender Documents selling	# Accounts Department, Maddhapara Granite Mining Co. Ltd, Maddhapara, Parbatipur, Dinajpur, Bangladesh.
13	Place of Tender Receiving & Opening	# Accounts Section MGMC, Dhaka Office, Petrobangla, Petrocenter (Level-13), 3, Kawran Bazar C/A Dhaka, Bangladesh.
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
14	Eligibility of Tenderer	Any individual(s)/Firm(s) who fulfill the qualification(s) criteria stipulated in the Tender Data Sheet (TDS) and other conditions of the Tender Document are eligible to participate in the Tender.
15	Brief Description of goods	Procurement of Prilled Ammonium Nitrate.
16	Price of Tender Document (Tk.)	Tk. 5,000.00 (Five Thousand).
17	Identification of Group	Procurement of Prilled Ammonium Nitrate.
	Location	Madhapara Granite Mining Company Limited, Madhapara, Parbatipur, Dinajpur, Bangladesh.
	Tender security Amount	US Dollar 18,000.00 or Equivalent Bangladeshi Taka 22,14,000.00
	Delivery time in days	Delivery will be made in 3 schedules as mentioned in Tender Documents under section: 6 Schedule of Requirements.
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
18	Name, Designation and Address of Official Inviting Tender	Md Shamsul Mostafa General Manager (PEP&M) Maddhapara Granite Mining Company Ltd., Maddhapara, Parbatipur, Dinajpur, Bangladesh Phone no. +88 01711-563236 E-mail: <a href="mailto:purchase@mgmc.org.bd">purchase@mgmc.org.bd</a>
19	Special Instructions	<p>a) Tender must remain valid for 150 days from the date of closing of the Tender</p> <p>b) Tender security in the form of Bank Guarantee or Bank Draft or Pay Order in favor of Maddhapara Granite Mining Company Limited from any schedule Bank in Bangladesh with full obligation and liabilities.</p> <p>c) Tender security must valid for 150 (One Hundred Fifty) days from the closing of the Tender.</p> <p>d) If any unavoidable circumstances prevail in the date of receiving/opening of the Tender, Tender will be received/opened in the next working date of same hours.</p> <p>e) This notice may be viewed in <a href="http://www.mgmc.org.bd">www.mgmc.org.bd</a> ; <a href="http://www.petrobangla.org.bd">www.petrobangla.org.bd</a> &amp; <a href="http://www.cptu.gov.bd">www.cptu.gov.bd</a></p>
20	This Tender will be conducted as per the Public Procurement Rules-2025.	
21	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.	

Md Shamsul Mostafa  
General Manager (PEP&M)

# I WANTED TO DO IT MY OWN WAY: Tasnia Farin

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

From OIT and films to now launching her own production house, Tasnia Farin continues to expand her presence in the industry. Foring Films, her brainchild, is a venture she had been planning for a long time. Yesterday also brought another exciting update, with the official announcement that Tasnia Farin will be joining Shakib Khan in *Prince*, which was another great news for her fans as they will be seeing the pair for the first time together, on the silver screen.

"I am elated. Anyone who wants to act in movies, dreams of working with the biggest superstar in the industry, Shakib Khan. When I got this opportunity and saw the big vision that Creative Land Films is starting with, I felt truly happy and glad to be part of it. I will give my best in this role -- Please pray for me," said the actress.

On her new venture, she shared, "When my song *Ronge Ronge Rongin Hobo* went viral, I thought about creating my own music video. I discussed it with many people but felt that I wanted to work in my own way. I wondered why not produce it myself and release it from my own channel, in the way I envisioned. Since I was planning to handle everything on my own, I thought it would be better to do it through my own production house."

Through her production house, the actress plans to fulfill her directorial vision. "Yes, I have plans to start off with short content. I might begin with small projects but at the end of the day I have always had this passion to create my own work." The first project from Foring Films will be a music video. "While brainstorming for the music video, I really enjoyed the entire process. The full production journey was exciting. Fans were curious about why I was not releasing any song after *Ronge Ronge Rongin Hobo*. I wanted to produce something beautiful for my fans with my full creative effort, and that is why I created this production house. I had been planning this for about a year and as the release date approached, I thought it was the right time to announce it," she added.

The music video will be directed by Aga Nahyan Ahmed of Flybot Studios. Speaking about the production, she said, "I had been discussing this project with him for a long time. We worked together to figure out how to approach everything. We wanted to take a song that appeals to the masses, and present it in an artistic way. We want it to stand out from other music videos. Nahyan bhai's team was superb and helped me a lot from pre-production to post production. I am very hopeful that our first collaboration will turn into something good." When asked whether it will be a solo song or a special duet, the actress teased, "You will get a surprise. That is all I can share for now. We are planning to release the music video by the end of November. I hope audiences will love it."



Farin after signing 'Prince'

PHOTO: COLLECTED



## MOSHARRAF KARIM to star in Kochi Khondokar's sports film

Director Kochi Khondokar and actor Mosharraf Karim — a duo known for their long-standing creative partnership — are set to reunite on the big screen for a new feature film centred on football.

After years of collaboration in dramas and telefilms, Kochi Khondokar has finally confirmed that he will begin shooting his first full length film with Mosharraf Karim next year. Titled *My Dear Football*, the project is expected to go on floors in mid-2026.

Casting discussions with other actors are underway, and Kochi hopes to officially announce the project at a press conference by the end of this year.



## SRK unveils 'Shahrukh Danube'

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan attended a grand unveiling ceremony in Mumbai on Friday, joining Rizwan Sajan, founder and chairman of the Dubai-based Danube Group, to announce a landmark real estate project named 'Shahrukh'.

The event, held at a five-star hotel, marked a historic moment as Shah Rukh became the first actor to have a tower named after him, according to NDTV.

Speaking at the event, Shah Rukh said, "My mother would be very happy. This is a huge honour."

# NEWS

## Trial proceedings of 4 cases

FROM PAGE 12

Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif and three Kushtia Awami League leaders for allegedly killing six people during the unrest in the district.

Besides, on October 8, the prosecution submitted formal charges against 32 individuals, including Sheikh Hasina, former home minister Asaduzzaman, three former RAB director generals and 25 current and former army officers.

Two of the cases involve enforced disappearances, secret detention and torture during the AI regime, while one concerns the killing of 28 people in Rampura during the uprising.

### FOUR TRIALS NEARING COMPLETION

The four cases whose trial is expected to be complete by December are: the killing of six people at Chankharpur in Dhaka on August 5 last year; the killing of seven people and burning bodies of six of them in a police pick up van in Ashulia the same day; the police shooting that killed Rangpur Begum Rokeya University (BRU) student Abu Sayed on July 16; and the killing of two and injuring of two more in police firing at Rampura on July 19.

In the Chankharpur case, eight policemen including former Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) commissioner Habibur Rahman stand accused, with four currently in custody and four, including Habibur, still at large. Investigation officer Md Monirul Islam is testifying as the 25th prosecution witness. Once his

statement and cross-examination are completed, arguments will begin as the defence failed to submit a witness list on time, Tamim said.

In the Ashulia killing and burning case, the 22nd witness has already testified and been examined.

Prosecution sources said the special investigation officer may testify on November 18 and then the investigation officer will testify.

If the defence presents no witnesses, the case will move to arguments and then await a verdict.

Sixteen people including former lawmaker Saiful Islam and former Dhaka Range DIG Syed Nurul Islam are accused. Eight, among them former sub-inspector Sheikh Abzalul Haque, now an approver, are in custody.

In the Abu Sayed killing case, 16 witnesses have so far testified. Thirty people including former BRU vice-chancellor Hasibur Rashid and former Rangpur Metropolitan Police commissioner Md Moniruzzaman are accused. Six are in custody and the rest are absconding.

In the Rampura case, ICT-1 has recorded statements of 11 witnesses. Five policemen, including former DMP commissioner Habibur, have been charged. Only one accused, former assistant sub-inspector Chanchal Chandra Sarkar, is in custody.

### PROBES IN 10 MORE CASES ALMOST DONE

The ICT investigation agency has nearly completed probes into 10 additional cases linked to the July uprising and an enforced disappearance under the

previous regime.

Probe reports will be submitted in separate cases against several high-profile political figures, including former ministers Obaidul Quader and Anisul Huq, former adviser Salman F Rahman, former Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh and former state minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak.

They face allegations of making provocative remarks, issuing specific instructions and aiding mass killings during the uprising. Among them, Anisul, Salman and Palak are currently in custody.

According to Rab, on November 12, when Ashraful became fully unconscious, Jarezul, under the influence of yaba, tied him with rope, taped his mouth and struck him repeatedly with a hammer killing him.

The following morning, the suspects bought two plastic drums, dismembered the body, and dumped the drums near the High Court area, he added.

Investigations have likewise concluded in the killings of Golam Nafis in Farmgate and Shaikh Ashabul Yamin in Savar. The probe into Nafis's August 4, 2024 killing was completed several days ago and identifies 27 individuals. Formal charges could have been filed in the case earlier, a source said.

Ashabul Yamin, a student at the Military Institute of Science and Technology, was shot by police in Savar on July 18, 2024.

Viral footage showed law enforcers dragging him from an Armoured Personnel Carrier, injured and barely conscious, before dumping him on a road divider. He later died at the hospital.

"We are coordinating with the investigation agency on various cases. We expect that investigation reports of another ten cases will come to us very soon," Tamim said.

Unless the government ensures strict monitoring and constructs a stronger dyke, Sarankhola will face another Sidr sooner than later."

He added that Bagerhat's iconic Bogi Bandar area has already been devoured by the river due to erosion. "Those who lost parents and children in 2007 have only one demand now — they do not want rights, they only want protection. A strong coastal embankment is the only thing that can save their lives."

Acting upazila nirbahi officer Md Habibullah said the administration recognises the need for a durable embankment.

"I am here with multiple responsibilities, but even then this matter seemed extremely urgent to me," he said. "We have already spoken with the Water Development Board. A project has been approved. Step by step, we hope to construct a stronger dyke so that the expectations of the people are fulfilled."

controlled, this fear will never go away," he added. "Even today we live in a small fragile hut. Nothing has been restored for us..."

For many, Sidr was not just a cyclone — it was a line dividing the life they once lived and the struggle that followed.

Shajahan Molla, 55, another resident of Chalitabunia, said his family climbed on a boat as the surge engulfed their home, yet five of his relatives died that night. "We are living in constant panic," he said. "The barrier built here is not strong. If the riverbanks aren't properly reinforced, we can't live here anymore. We are extremely vulnerable."

Local journalist Shaheen Howlader believes the warning signs are already visible.

"Thank you for covering such an urgent issue," he said. "The embankment built after Sidr has not even been formally handed over yet, but parts of it are already collapsing."

## DB cites love triangle

FROM PAGE 12

"On November 11, Jarezul and Ashraful travelled from Rangpur to Dhaka and met Shamima. They later rented a flat in Shonir Akhra," Lt Col Arefin said.

Rab said Ashraful was given orange juice mixed with sleeping pills. Jarezul then recorded intimate moments between Ashraful and Shamima. Investigators recovered the video from Shamima's mobile phone.

According to Rab, on November 12, when Ashraful became fully unconscious, Jarezul, under the influence of yaba, tied him with rope, taped his mouth and struck him repeatedly with a hammer killing him.

The following morning, the suspects bought two plastic drums, dismembered the body, and dumped the drums near the High Court area, he added.

During primary interrogation, police found that it was a premeditated murder, he added.

Rab recovered the knife from a drain at Reazuddin Bazar based on information provided by Sani, said the official.

With the latest arrests, four people have been held in this connection. Another was held by Kotwali police

### DB cites love triangle

At a separate press briefing two hours later, DB chief Mohammad Shafiqul Islam said the murder stemmed from a love triangle, not extortion.

He said Malaysia expatriate Jarezul met Shamima more than three years ago on a mobile app. They developed a romantic relationship, but when Jarezul's wife learned of the affair, she sought help from Jarezul's close friend Ashraful. Ashraful then reportedly became romantically involved with Shamima himself.

Later, Ashraful and Shamima planned that they would give Tk 7 lakh each to send Jarezul to Japan. Following this deal, Shamima asked both men to come from Rangpur to Dhaka to begin the payment and visa process. On November 12, the three rented a house for Tk 5,000.

Shamima and Jarezul initially planned to give Ashraful sleeping pills so they could spend intimate time together. But when Ashraful refused to take the pill and attempted to get close to Shamima, an argument broke out.

At one point, Jarezul attacked Ashraful with a hammer.

They gagged him with cloth and tape, causing his death. The next day, the suspects bought a plastic drum, dismembered the body, wrapped it in polythene, and dumped it near the High Court in a CNG auto-rickshaw.

Investigators later recovered a hammer, a machete, and a blood-stained scarf from Shamima's house based on Jarezul's confession.

DB's Shafiqul said no evidence of drug use or extortion had been found during initial investigation.

shortly after the incident.

Talking to reporters, Akash's father, Bhulu Ghosh, demanded capital punishment for the killers.

Meanwhile, locals of Enayet Bazar formed a human chain this morning, demanding the arrest of the killers and the highest punishment. Traders, businessmen, and local youths joined the event.

## Declare Ahmadiyyas non-Muslims

FROM PAGE 2

Speakers alleged that Ahmadiyyas hurt the religious sentiments of the Muslim majority by identifying themselves as Muslims and presenting "fabricated" beliefs as "true Islam".

They said the Muslim ummah unanimously believes, based on the Quran and Hadith, that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the final messenger of Allah and that anyone claiming prophethood after him is an impostor.

Some speakers at the event said the Ahmadiyya community, founded in 1889 by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, believes him to be prophet. These beliefs, they added, contradict Islam and promote doctrines "contrary to Islam".

Speakers demanded that the state declare the Ahmadiyyas non-Muslim, bar them from praying in mosques, and confiscate all their books and literature to prevent "religious confusion".

"Some 104 countries in the world have declared Qadianis non-Muslim. In a 1993 judgment, the Bangladesh High Court also declared the Ahmadiyya Jamaat non-Muslim. To protect faith and prevent religious deviation, the state must declare the Qadiani community non-Muslim," according to a statement

of Hefajat Ameer Muhibullah Babunagari. It was read out at the event.

BNP Standing Committee member Salauddin Ahmed also spoke. As he was concluding his speech, several attendees urged him to personally declare Ahmadiyyas "non-Muslims".

In response, he said, "The language you want me to use is not the language of law."

He, however, said, "All legal measures will be taken through discussions in the parliament, Insha'Allah. The entire nation must remain united."

He also said the BNP would restore "absolute faith and trust in the Almighty Allah" in the constitution's preamble and fundamental state principles.

Jamaat-e-Islami Assistant Secretary General Rafiqul Islam Khan said Muhammad (PBUH) is the final prophet and anyone who thinks otherwise cannot be a Muslim.

"If the people elect us, Ahmadiyyas will be declared non-Muslim in Bangladesh," he added.

Islami Andolok Bangladesh Ameer Syed Muhammad Rezaul Karim said the political situation after August 5 had created "an opportunity for an Islamic resurgence". He pledged to declare Ahmadiyyas non-Muslim and pass a law

"With the current situation in view, we appeal to you to kindly safeguard the basic human and religious rights of Ahmadiyya Muslims and protect our lives and properties. This will also save our society and beloved country from any attempt to create chaos or instability," read the letter.

## 18 years on, trauma persists

FROM PAGE 12

swallowed entire villages, residents recalled the night that reshaped their lives.

Delowar Talukder, 44, of Chalitabunia in Southkhali union, lost both his four-month-old daughter and five-year-old son. His voice trembled as he revisited the memories he has never escaped.

"There was drizzle throughout the day. Around 9:00pm the water suddenly started rushing in with such force that everything around us collapsed," he said. "My son was with my mother, who was ill at the time. I took him in my arms but the surge hit the house and snatched him from me. My daughter was in her mother's arms — the wave took her too. We did not even understand when she slipped away."

The government built an embankment afterwards, but it was made with sand and now slowly chips away. "Unless the river is

controlled, this fear will never go away," he added. "Even today we live in a small fragile hut. Nothing has been restored for us..."

For many, Sidr was not just a cyclone — it was a line dividing the life they once lived and the struggle that followed.

Shajahan Molla, 55, another resident of Chalitabunia, said his family climbed on a boat as the surge engulfed their home, yet five of his relatives died that night. "We are living in constant panic," he said. "The barrier built here is not strong. If the riverbanks aren't properly reinforced, we can't live here anymore. We are extremely vulnerable."

Local journalist Shaheen Howlader believes the warning signs are already visible.

"Thank you for covering such an urgent issue," he said. "The embankment built after Sidr has not even been formally handed over yet, but parts of it are already collapsing."

# NEWS

Five more die of dengue, 792 get hospitalised

## DSCC launches special drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least five dengue patients died, while 792 others were hospitalised in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), all the deaths were from areas under Dhaka North City Corporation.

With the new deaths and cases, the total number of deaths rose to 331 while total cases rose to 83,858 this year.

Currently, 3,284 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country.

Meanwhile, Dhaka South City Corporation yesterday launched a special dengue-control drive.

The operation began around 6:00am and covered Bhangapress, Nayanagar, Chantek, Gobindapur, Rayerbagh, Shekdi and Uttar Kutubkhali areas under Wards 62 and 63, according to a press statement.

More than 400 workers from the DSCC's waste management and health departments, alongside local residents, cleaned drains, sewers, and footpaths, and sprayed insecticide.

A rally was also held with leaflets distributed to raise awareness.

## 2 children drown in Netrokona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrokona

Two children drowned in a pond in Netrokona's Kendua upazila yesterday noon.

The deceased are Sadaat Mia, 7, of Borkalian village, and Tasnia Akter, 6, of Shibpur village in the union, said Kendua Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mizanur Rahman.

Police and family members said several children were playing by the pond in front of the house of late Borhan Uddin Bhuiyan, in Borkalian village under Gonda union, when Sadaat and Tasnia slipped and fell into the pond.

Family members and neighbours rushed to the pond and pulled them out. They were taken to Kendua Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared them dead upon arrival.



A fisherman sets a chai, a fishing trap made from split bamboo, along the edge of a canal in Jhalakathi's Kanchabalia village yesterday. Various small fish drift in with the tidal waters in this waterbody, prompting fishers to take advantage of it. PHOTO: TITU DAS

## RAJNAGAR HEALTH COMPLEX

# Services hampered for manpower crisis

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Health services at the Rajnagar Upazila Complex in Moulvibazar are being disrupted due to a prolonged shortage of doctors and other staff.

The 31-bed facility, which serves more than 2.5 lakh people in the upazila, has long struggled to provide basic care amid vacancies in key posts, out-of-order equipment and inadequate cleaning services.

Established in 1985, the health complex was later upgraded to a 31-bed facility, but its infrastructure and staffing have not kept pace with the growing number of patients.

At present, the hospital has only four doctors against 10 approved posts. The six vacant posts include those for junior consultants and specialists in medicine and surgery. There is no anaesthesiologist, forcing doctors from other facilities to attend on assignment.

The hospital's only X-ray machine has

been out of order for a long time, pushing patients to private facilities where the service is costlier.

Of the three ambulances assigned to the complex, only one is operational, hampering emergency transportation.



With four of the five cleaners' posts vacant, maintaining cleanliness has become increasingly difficult.

"My wife has been ill for several days, but we had to return without any service a number of times as there was no doctor. When we finally found one, he said the

X-ray service was unavailable. We had to go to a private clinic and pay extra," said Sulkhon Roy, a local resident.

"We come here for free treatment, but nothing works here, not even basic tests," said Shahana Begum, an attendant. Several others shared similar frustrations.

Shelly Akhter, a senior nurse, said, "Amid the acute shortage of doctors and staff, we have to serve a huge number of patients daily. Five nurses have recently been transferred elsewhere, making matters worse."

Dr Utpal Das, resident medical officer, said, "The outpatient department serves around 450 patients daily. At least 14 more doctors are needed for the hospital to function properly."

Moulvibazar Civil Surgeon Dr Md Mamunur Rahman said he has informed higher authorities about the situation.

"We are hopeful that new appointments and repairs will be made soon to improve services at the hospital," he said.

## Teacher shortage disrupts activities at 16 schools 251 posts remain vacant



### Intellectual pursuit being

FROM PAGE 3

The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam described himself as a lifelong student of Prof Choudhury's teachings.

He highlighted how the book discusses various vice-chancellors -- some who brought glory to Dhaka University and others who failed to protect its autonomy.

"After independence and for 20 to 25 years thereafter, the process of appointing vice-chancellors has been problematic. The guardians failed to make the university a centre of creative thought -- in some cases, shamefully so," he said.

"Despite much oppression, students have maintained their core spirit of building an oppression-free, discrimination-free society. That passion for free thinking has manifested in many cases, which is a tremendous achievement for our nation," Mahfuz Anam added.

Academic and writer Ahmad Mostafa Kamal discussed the book's nine

essays, noting that nearly all of them touch upon the Liberation War.

He said judging DU solely through conventional ranking systems overlooks its unique contributions.

He explained that the book shows that DU was established partly as compensation after the annulment of the partition of Bengal, with the British aiming to produce compliant civil servants.

"But they failed. Instead of producing compliant servants, this university became the epicentre of rebellion -- the Language Movement, the 1969 uprising, the Liberation War, and even the July uprising."

Writer Khalikuzzaman Ilias highlighted Prof Choudhury's advantage in having compiled nearly all DU convocation speeches.

"These speeches show how generations of leaders imagined the university -- sometimes as a place to produce obedient citizens and sometimes as a space for intellectual freedom,"

he said.

Calling the book "essential reading" for anyone entering DU, he said it shows the institution's resilience and ability to rise "like a phoenix".

Actor and playwright Khairul Alam Sabuj said, "In the British era, Dhaka University was not created to make us human beings. It was created to make us subservient. But the people of this country did not let that happen."

Researcher Kazi Samee Sheesh and Bengal Books Managing Director Mahmudul Hasan also spoke at the event.

The session was chaired by BRAC University Professor Firdous Azim.

Wrote Khalikuzzaman Ilias highlighted Prof Choudhury's advantage in having compiled nearly all DU convocation speeches.

"These speeches show how generations of leaders imagined the university -- sometimes as a place to produce obedient citizens and sometimes as a space for intellectual freedom,"

### 30 lakh jobs

FROM PAGE 3

ordinance and approved it autocratically," he said.

"On the very day this ordinance is implemented, about 30 lakh skilled workers employed in the travel and tourism sector, Hajj agencies and recruiting agencies will become jobless," he added.

He said around 6,000 travel agencies, 1,400 Hajj agencies and 2,700 recruiting agencies will be at risk.

"Under the new ordinance, travel agencies must be connected to IATA's ticket selling platform. However, of the currently around 6,000 licensed travel agencies in the country, only about 1,000 are linked to IATA. As a result, on the day the ordinance is implemented, the remaining travel agencies will effectively be forced to shut down their

business," Morshed said.

He said agent-to-agent (B2B) business is a global practice, but the ordinance will shut it down in Bangladesh, as the law will not allow purchase or sale of tickets between travel agencies.

"As a result of banning B2B, every travel agency must obtain IATA accreditation, which costs about Tk 30 lakh. In addition, another Tk 22 lakh must be deposited for Biman Bangladesh Airlines tickets. Since 90 percent of travel agencies do not have this amount of money, all of them will shut down," he said.

Earlier on October 13, Civil Aviation and Tourism Adviser Sk. Bashir Uddin said the new law is aimed at ensuring transparency in ticket sales and improving passenger services.

DHAKA SUNDAY NOVEMBER 16, 2025  
AGRAHAYAN 1, 1432 BS  
The Daily Star 9

## 10 injured as students, workers clash over half fare At least 10 buses vandalised

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

At least 10 people were injured during a clash between bus workers and students in Barishal city yesterday over a dispute regarding half fares.

Witnesses said more than 10 buses were vandalised during the incident, which took place around 7:00pm at the Nathullabad Bus Terminal.

According to students, two BM College students were travelling from Muladi to Barishal and requested half fare after identifying themselves as students. Bus workers allegedly refused, prompting an argument that escalated into a scuffle and eventually a violent clash.



Sahadat Hossain, president of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Sramik Union, said, "Scores of buses were damaged; we demand justice."

Following the clash, students blocked the road, suspending bus movement for nearly three hours. Airport Police Station OC Mamunul Islam said they brought the situation under control around 9:00pm. "The clash led to vandalism of 10 buses, and 10-12 people from both sides were injured."

## KILLING OF JUDGE'S SON Court orders 5-day remand for accused Limon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A Rajshahi court yesterday placed Limon Miah, the lone accused in the case filed over the killing of the son of Rajshahi Metropolitan Sessions Judge Mohammad Abdur Rahman and the attempted murder of the judge's wife, on a five-day remand.

Rajshahi Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner Gaziur Rahman said Limon, 35, was undergoing treatment at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital and that, around 11:30am yesterday, the hospital authorities permitted his discharge.

Later, he was produced before the magistrate around 2:00pm. Following the court order, police took him to Rajpara Police Station, where he will be interrogated.

## Case filed over Mamun

FROM PAGE 3

Meanwhile, police have arrested five people, including the two alleged shooters -- Faruk Hossain Foysal and Robin Ahmed Piayash. The firearms used in the killing were also recovered.

The three other arrestees are Mohammad Rubel, 34; Shamim Ahmed, 22; and Mohammad Yousuf alias Jibon, 42. All five are currently on remand in an arms case.

Ripa also expressed frustration over media reports describing Mamun as a "top criminal".

"He had a past; that's true. But after his release from jail, he stayed at home, prayed regularly, and managed the family with help from relatives. Yet the media call him a top criminal," she said.

NOTICE	
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)	
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1936 OF 2025 IN THE MATTER OF:	
The IBN SINA Polymer Industries Ltd. .... Petitioner	
..... Versus -- The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms	
..... Respondent	
Notice is hereby given that an application under section 59 read with section 60 of the Companies Act, 1994 for confirmation of the reduction of share capital was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division, Company Bench of the Supreme Court of share capital of The IBN SINA Polymer Industries Ltd. Upon preliminary hearing on 03.11.2025, The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel was pleased to admit the application. Any one desirous of opposing the said application may do so before the Hon'ble High Court either personally or through Advocate within 03 (Three) weeks. Copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of nominal fees.	
Mohammad Golam Kibria FCS Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh Mehera Plaza, Suite # 8-B (Lift # 8) 33, Topkhana Road, Dhaka. Mobile: 01707-429282	

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh																			
Office of the Regional Director																			
Directorate of Technical Education																			
Sylhet Region, Technical Road																			
Sylhet-3100.																			
https://rdo.sylhet.gov.bd																			
e-Mail: rdosylhet@gmail.com																			
Memo No: 57.03.9131.102.07.002.24.1953																			
Date: 13 November 2025																			
e-Tender Notice (Corrected)																			
e-Tender Notice will be invited in the National e-GP System Portal ( <a href="http://www.procure.gov.bd">http://www.procure.gov.bd</a> ) for following procurement.																			
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Sl.</th> <th>Tender ID No.</th> <th>Description</th> <th>Tender Security</th> <th>Online Notice Publication Date &amp; Time</th> <th>Online Tender Opening Date &amp; Time</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>1157561</td> <td>Supply of Office Equipment</td> <td>13000.00</td> <td>16-Nov-2025 15:30</td> <td>27-Nov-2025 15:30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>1157622</td> <td>Repair of Office Building roof top</td> <td>18000.00</td> <td>16-Nov-2025 15:30</td> <td>27-Nov-2025 15:30</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Sl.	Tender ID No.	Description	Tender Security	Online Notice Publication Date & Time	Online Tender Opening Date & Time	1	1157561	Supply of Office Equipment	13000.00	16-Nov-2025 15:30	27-Nov-2025 15:30	2	1157622	Repair of Office Building roof top	18000.00	16-Nov-2025 15:30	27-Nov-2025 15:30
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This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal ( <a href="http://www.procure.gov.bd">http://www.procure.gov.bd</a> ) is required.																			
The fees for selling / downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and from e-GP help desk ( <a href="mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd">helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd</a> ), +8809609112233, +8801762655258, +880176265529.																			
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# CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS OF COMMWARD 2025

Bangladesh  
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FORUM  
*Inspiring the Nation*

## WINNERS

	GRAND PRIX	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
ACI Logistics Limited (Shwapno)		01		
Adcomm Limited	01	01	02	
Adcomm Limited & Akij Food & Beverage Limited			01	
AKIJ iBOS			01	
AML		02	04	
AML & Grey Dhaka		01		
Analyzen Bangladesh Limited		01	05	
Animon Studios (Animation Monster Studio)		01		
Asiatic Marketing Communications Limited			01	
Asiatic Marketing Communications Limited & IMS – Integrated Marketing Solutions Limited			01	
Backbenchers Communications			01	
bKash Limited		02	09	
Chorki		01	01	
Dot Birth Limited	01	01	06	
Epyllion Group			01	
FCB Bitopi		04	07	
FCB Bitopi & Analyzen Bangladesh Limited			01	
Grameen Danone Foods Limited & Backpage PR			01	
Grey Dhaka	01	07	09	

## WINNERS

	GRAND PRIX	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
Grey Dhaka & AML			02	
LIE TO EYE	02	03	02	
Masthead PR			01	
Mediacom Limited			02	10
Mediacom Limited & Flying Black Paper				01
Miniso Bangladesh			01	
Mpower Bangladesh			01	03
O&Z Solutions				01
Pinwheel Films			01	01
POP5 Ltd.	01	02	01	02
Pysci Marketing Limited			01	01
Starcom Bangladesh			01	04
Sun Communications Limited				05
Sun Communications Limited & Team YOLO				01
The Bridge Interactive Limited & Khela 71				01
Truenorth Films			01	
WebAble Digital				01
Wittyshots				01
X Solutions Limited				01

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## Our Valued Partners



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### SPORTS

New Zealand vs West Indies  
1st ODI  
Live from 7:00 am  
Asia Cup Rising Stars  
India A vs Pakistan  
Shaheens

Live from 5:30 pm  
**STAR SPORTS 2**  
India vs South Africa  
1st Test, Day 3  
Live From 10:00 am  
**SONY SPORTS 1, 2, 5**  
World Cup Qualifiers

Portugal vs Armenia  
Live from 8:00 pm  
Azerbaijan vs France  
Live from 11:00 pm  
Italy vs Norway  
Live from 1:45 am (Monday)

## HAMZA CONTINUES TO CLICK

On Thursday, all lenses were fixed on Bangladesh star midfielder Hamza Choudhury, who produced the moments of a lifetime for any Bangladesh fan -- a stunning bicycle kick and a cool Panenka penalty -- in Bangladesh's 2-2 draw against Nepal in a friendly at the National Stadium. As the men in red and green prepare for their high-voltage Asian Cup qualifier against India on November 18 at the same venue, a buoyant Hamza was spotted behind a different lens, playfully turning into a shutterbug during training yesterday. With fans swept up in full-fledged Hamzamania, the ever-cheerful Leicester City midfielder greeted supporters, posed for selfies, and even signed a hand-drawn sketch from a young fan.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



## Shamit knows how to hurt India

SPORTS REPORTER

Shomit Shome is optimistic Bangladesh will end their winless streak in international football when they take on neighbours India in an AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers fixture in Dhaka on November 18.

The Cavalry FC midfielder, who made his Bangladesh debut against Singapore in Dhaka on June 10 this year, has already worn the red and green jersey four times but is yet to taste victory as Bangladesh drew two and lost two of those matches. The last victory for Bangladesh came in a friendly against Bhutan at home on June 4 this year.

Having started his Bangladesh journey with a 2-1 defeat against Singapore, the 28-year-old scored his first goal for the country at home against Hong Kong in October with a late equaliser, only to see his side lose through a last-ditch goal.



The men in red and green then conceded an injury-time equaliser against Nepal in Dhaka last Thursday. Shamit, though, believes the win could come against India at the National Stadium on Tuesday.

"We don't need to create motivation separately -- everyone knows what this match (against India) means. Even when I first started playing for Bangladesh, someone told me on my first day to be ready for the India match. At that time, Singapore were our opponents. So this game has been in our minds from long ago. We're motivated -- we want to win this match, and we will," Shamit told the media ahead of the team's training session on Saturday.

Shamit feels he knows how to hurt India to forge a victory against the neighbours, something that has eluded Bangladesh for the last 22 years.

"India are a good team, but they have gaps too," Shamit analysed. "There are spaces between their midfield line and their defensive line. Even the way Nepal defended -- I don't think India will be able to defend as well or maintain that structure. And we can take advantage

of that. With the way we're passing now, we're finding the half spaces. That's how we can create an impact against them."

Meanwhile, the India team reached Dhaka last night, bringing on board Australia-born Ryan Williams, who is yet to receive clearance to play for India from FIFA and Football Australia, after having represented the Socceroos at age-level as well as senior level.

Although the 23-member team does not feature regulars like Subhasish Bose, Lalengmawia Apuia, Brandon Fernandes, Liston Colaco and Udanta Singh, there is enough quality in the side, evident from their 6-1 win against Bhutan in a closed-door friendly on Thursday.

The last time these two sides met produced a goalless draw in Shillong in the first match of the qualifying campaign in March this year. Both teams are out of the qualification race with two points each.

## Mushfiqur's 100th Test celebrations in motion

SPORTS REPORTER

All eyes will be on Mushfiqur Rahim as the veteran wicketkeeper-batter gears up to play his 100th Test, when Bangladesh face Ireland in the second and final Test of the ongoing two-match series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur from Wednesday.

Bangladesh head into the Mirpur Test with momentum, having wrapped up the opening Test in Sylhet within four days, securing an innings and 47-run victory on Friday.

The early finish allowed both teams an additional rest day before regrouping in Dhaka on Saturday morning. Several Bangladesh players even returned to the capital on Friday following the early conclusion of the match during the second session.

With Mushfiqur set to become the first Bangladeshi cricketer to reach the 100-Test milestone, discussions naturally turned to how the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) plans to commemorate the landmark occasion.

When contacted, BCB cricket operations in-charge Shahriar Nafees said preparations are still underway.

"We are still planning to mark the occasion. It will not be a big programme, but it will be a significant one," Nafees told The Daily Star.

Other board officials, however, hinted that the details of the programme will remain secret for now.



## Bangladesh eye medal at home

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh are gearing up for hosting the 2nd Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025, starting from November 17 at the Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur.

Originally supposed to feature 14 teams, the eight-day tournament has been reduced to an 11-team affair as Argentina, the Netherlands, South Korea and Japan have pulled out while Poland have been added from reserves list. The participating teams are: Bangladesh, India, Chinese Taipei, Germany, Iran, Kenya, Nepal, Poland, Thailand, Uganda and Zanzibar.

India are the defending champions -- winners from the first edition which was held in Patna, India way back in 2012.

Bangladesh's women, who finished fifth in that event, will look to improve on that performance, having completed an extensive preparation phase despite the tournament being postponed twice.

Meanwhile, Arduzzaman Munshi, one of the all-time best players of the country, is guiding the team in this global event. Munshi is confident of a strong showing from the hosts.

"Playing at home gives us extra motivation. Apart from India, we have the strength to beat any team. We have trained consistently, and we are hopeful of winning a medal," he said recently.

Veteran Rupali Akter will wear the captain's armband for the first time in her career, and this will be the final tournament of her playing career.

### BANGLADESH SQUAD:

Shaboni Mallik, Brishti Biswas, Rupali Akter Sr, Smriti Akter, Rekha Akteri, Mebi Chakma, Rupali Akter, Anjuara Ratri, Sucharita Chakma, Khadija Khatun, Loba Akter, Yasmin Khanam, Israt Jahan Sadika and Tahrim.

## SHORT CORNER

### Double delight for SOBD

Special Olympics Bangladesh (SOBD) achieved a remarkable double triumph at the Special Olympics Southeast Asia Football Competition 2025, winning both the male and female Division 1 Championships in Indonesia from November 10-14. The regional event featured teams from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, said a press release from SOBD.

### Fahad beats Vietnamese GM

Bangladeshi International Master Fahad Rahman defeated Vietnamese Grand Master Nguyen Duc Hua as the Leoline 3rd Grandmasters Chess Tournament got underway in Dhanmondi on Saturday. Playing with the white pieces, Fahad won in 51 moves against Duc Hua's Petrov Defence.

### Sunzamul's rare ton lifts Rajshahi

Rajshahi Division's left-arm spinner Sunzamul Islam produced a rare batting display, scoring only the second hundred of his first-class career to guide his side to 275 for nine against Dhaka Division on the opening day of the fourth round of the National Cricket League 2025-26 in Rajshahi on Saturday.

\*\*Read The Daily Star website for full stories.



Habibur Rahman Sohan smashed an unbeaten 100 off 35 balls to record the fastest T20 century by a Bangladeshi, steering Bangladesh 'A' to an eight-wicket win over Hong Kong in their Asia Cup Rising Stars 2025 opener in Doha yesterday. The 25-year-old right-hander, who also broke the fastest-fifty mark, reaching 50 off 14 balls, surpassed Parvez Hossain Emon's 42-ball ton from 2020. Bangladesh will face Afghanistan 'A' next on November 17.

PHOTO: BCB



In the wake of recent sexual harassment allegations that have rocked the nation, veteran sports organisers and former athletes gathered yesterday afternoon at Gate No. 1 of Dhaka's National Stadium under the banner Shommito Kirangan (United Sports Arena), calling for action and accountability and speaking out against misconduct in local women's sports.



Veteran spinner Ravindra Jadeja's four-wicket haul kept India in sight of victory as South Africa slumped to 93-7 on a tricky Eden Gardens pitch yesterday. Fifteen wickets fell on a manic day two, leaving South Africa with a 63-run lead and three wickets in hand after Simon Harmer's 4-30 bowled India out for 189.

PHOTO: AFP

## Steyn-inspired Sakib 'trying to master off-the-pitch movement'

As Sylhet and Khulna Division prepared for their National Cricket League match at Sylhet Academy Ground while the national team faced Ireland at the main venue, the appeal of first-class cricket was unmistakable, especially for youngsters sharing the field with rising national fast bowler like 23-year-old **Tanzim Hasan Sakib**. Fresh from his Test debut earlier this year and carrying experience from a few ICC events, Sakib spoke to **The Daily Star's Abdullah Al Mehdi** about his game and his affinity towards first-class and Test cricket.

The excerpts of the conversation are as follows:

**The Daily Star [DS]:** When you become a regular national team player and return to first-class cricket, it creates a different vibe within youngsters in the dressing room. Do you feel it too?

**Tanzim Hasan Sakib [THS]:** We also felt it when we were new in first class cricket and saw senior players... I grew up this way, and I think they feel inspired too.

**DS:** There was a time when national team players didn't play first-class much, but now most of them try to take part. Does this signify the improvement of our first-class cricket standard?

**THS:** Definitely, it creates a competitive spirit. If I don't look above me, I won't improve. If you look below, you won't ever improve. When I see Taskin [Ahmed] bhai in good shape, I feel motivated to bowl better. I really enjoy playing first-class cricket.

**DS:** How is the competitive spirit?

**THS:** It's very competitive in Sylhet

(smiles because of the number of pacers coming through from Sylhet).

**DS:** What other things do you personally feel should be introduced into our first-class structure?

**THS:** I would say the wicket. If the wickets are good, our whole country's cricket will improve, just like India's has. When we play against them in age-level events, we are on par. But they score 200-250 run innings in first-class, and our batsmen don't have that experience.

**DS:** Who inspired your Test dreams?

**THS:** I grew up watching Dale Steyn... Sitting at home, I spent all day watching Test cricket. Didn't miss many South Africa matches in life, especially when Steyn was bowling. So, watching Steyn is what makes you tick?

**DS:** Do you feel hitting the pitch harder is what makes you tick?

**THS:** I am a hit-the-wicket bowler and

came from. In Tests, you can bowl for a long time, show aggression, and enjoy the battle with the batsmen, which is difficult in shorter formats.

**DS:** Alongside Steyn, you mentioned your admiration for Jasprit Bumrah and Kagiso Rabada. What specific things do you try to take from them?

**THS:** Their skill, actually. The off-the-pitch movement and pace they generate... I bowl around 135 to 140 kilometres per hour, and they bowl around that speed too. But their off-the-pitch movement makes the ball nip around a lot, which is very difficult for the batsman. So, I'm trying to see how I can master that skill.

**DS:** Do you feel hitting the pitch harder is what makes you tick?

**THS:** I am a hit-the-wicket bowler and

have no other option. I'm not a swing bowler like Hasan Mahmud. I'm more similar to Taskin Ahmed.

**DS:** What is the biggest factor in achieving the off-the-pitch movement?

**THS:** I think that motion of brushing the surface and the seam position. Sometimes when the delivery falls on the seam, it doesn't happen. It's seen that the scrambled seam makes it happen. I'm trying to work on that. Scrambled seam gets more off the pitch, and [Mustafizur Rahman] Fizz bhai is best at it, and I'm trying to learn from him.

**DS:** You enjoy that direct eye contact with the batter?

**THS:** Yes, which you can do in Test cricket. So, Test cricket is very enjoyable, and definitely every cricketer's dream. It's also tough, but it's the ultimate format, in my opinion.

\*\*Read full interview at **The Daily Star** website.



\*\*Read full interview at **The Daily Star** website.



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**'Teesta and Farakka will be our priorities' Says Fakhrul in Chapainawabganj**

STAR REPORT

The BNP, if voted to power, will lay special priority on solving the issues of Farakka Barrage, Teesta river, and border killings, said its Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

"Fair share of water and border killings will be treated as major concerns. Also, we will prioritise stopping Indian dominance over Bangladesh," he told reporters after inspecting a rubber dam built on the Mahananda river in Chapainawabganj yesterday.

The BNP leader went to Chapainawabganj to attend a rally organised as part of the "Save Padma, Save the Country; Bangladesh First" movement.

He said India can maintain good relations with Bangladesh if it wishes.

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The century-old paddle steamer PS Mahsud returned to the water yesterday as a luxury cruise vessel celebrating the country's river heritage. After inauguration by Shipping Adviser Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain at Sadarghat, the vessel sailed to Chandpur and back. Weekly heritage cruises on the Dhaka-Barishal route begin on November 21. The photo was taken from the Postogola Bridge over the Buriganga. Related story on B3.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## 2 BNP leaders murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A local BNP leader was hacked by criminals and later shot dead over establishing supremacy in Lakshmpur last night, said police.

Kalam Johir, 40, was the general secretary of Ward-4 BNP in Chandraganj union, the union's BNP president Md Bellal Hossain told The Daily Star.

Lakshmpur Additional Superintendent of Police (Sadar Circle) Md Rezaul Haque told The Daily Star the incident occurred in front of a shop near Kalam's house in Pashchim Latifpur village around 8:30pm. Receiving the news, the additional SP visited the scene.

Chandraganj Police Station acting officer-in-charge Fayaz Azim Noman said police have not been able to confirm who carried out the murder and the motive. They suspect that he was murdered over establishing supremacy.

According to police and locals, criminals hacked and shot Kalam on the road. He died on the spot. A bullet shell was found beside the body.

Meanwhile, an expatriate was hacked to death during a clash between two factions of BNP over a land dispute in Jhenaidah yesterday.

Deceased Mahbub Hossain, 40, was killed around 10:00am in Kala village. He had returned home four months ago from Cambodia.

After returning home, he got involved in local politics of a BNP faction led by local Jubo Dal leader Ziaur Rahman.

Zia said, "Members of Humayun Group, a faction of the local BNP, attacked Mahbub with machetes. We rushed him to Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital, but he died shortly."

Attempts to reach Humayun by phone were unsuccessful.

Faria Tahsin, a physician at the emergency department of Jhenaidah Sadar Hospital, said the victim had deep head injuries caused by sharp weapons, along with wounds to his neck, back and lower waist.

Jhenaidah OC Abdullah Al Mamun said police had been deployed to prevent further clashes.

Arson, crude bomb attacks go on

STAR REPORT

Several crude bomb blasts were reported in the capital yesterday, while reports of arson attacks came from three districts.

The incidents occurred as the law enforcement agencies are on high alert with the International Crimes Tribunal-1

preparing to deliver its verdict on November 17 in a case against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina on charges of crimes against humanity.

The Awami League, whose political activities are currently banned, had announced a "Dhaka lockdown" for last Thursday, when the tribunal announced the verdict date. It then announced a fresh four-day programme, including a two-day nationwide lockdown starting today.

In the last five days, more than 30 arson attacks, mostly targeting buses, and crude bomb blasts have occurred nationwide. Two deaths have been reported so far.

Around 10:00pm yesterday, an abandoned bus was set on fire near Genda in the capital,

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## CYCLONE SIDR 18 years on, trauma persists in Sarankhola



PARtha CHAKRABORTY

Eighteen years after Cyclone Sidr tore through Bagerhat's Sarankhola upazila, the memories remain painfully fresh for those who lived through it.

The storm of November 15, 2007 killed at least 908 people in this upazila alone, leaving behind a trail of devastation that changed the landscape and the lives of its people forever.

Families who survived that night say the trauma still weighs on them, worsened by broken dykes, fragile riverbanks, and a coastline that remains dangerously exposed.

Standing beside the same banks where Sidr's tidal surge

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Bicycle shops in Chattogram's New Market area have completely occupied the footpath. The bikes are even hung from bamboo poles to attract customers. Pedestrians are forced to use the busy streets instead. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

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## ASHRAFUL'S MURDER DB cites love triangle Rab claims extortion plot

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two suspects arrested over the murder of Rangpur trader Ashraful Haque, whose dismembered body was recovered from two plastic drums near the High Court on Thursday, have given conflicting statements, law enforcement officials have said.

Rab arrested Shamima Akhter Kohinur from Cumilla on Friday, while Detective Branch detained Jarezul Islam from Daudkandi upazila.

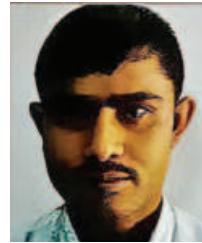
Based on interrogations, Rab and DB held separate press conferences yesterday to share details of the murder.

Rab claims extortion plot

Addressing a press briefing at Karwan Bazar Media Centre, Rab-3 CO Lt Col Fayedul Arefin said Ashraful was killed in a scheme of blackmail and extortion involving Tk 10 lakh.

Hesaid Shamima had been in a relationship with Jarezul for over a year. Rab claimed that Jarezul had planned to honey trap one of his friends, record compromising footage, and extort money.

As a part of the plan, Shamima developed a romantic relationship with Ashraful, the Rab official said.



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Internet freedom improves in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's internet freedom has improved significantly, rising to a score of 45 out of 100 in the Freedom on the Net 2025 report by Freedom House.

This marks a five-point increase from the previous year, the biggest improvement among all 72 countries assessed.

The most significant improvement came in the category "Obstacles to Access", where regulatory changes under a new interim government helped curb internet shutdowns.

The July uprising played a central role in driving reforms, said Freedom House, a Washington DC-based non-profit working on issues of democracy, political freedom and human rights.

The report says Muhammad Emdad-Ul-Bari, who was appointed as chair of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) in September last year, "pursued policy changes to prevent internet shutdowns and pledged to treat internet access as a human rights concern".

A major legal reform came in May, when the Cyber Security Act (CSA) was repealed and replaced by a Cyber Security Ordinance (CSO). The new ordinance "featured some positive provisions, including safeguards

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## 'A life taken for just Tk 1,500' Rab briefs on Ctg phone repairman's murder; three arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rab-7 yesterday arrested three youths in connection with the killing of a mobile repairman who was stabbed to death in Chattogram's Enayet Bazar area early Friday.

After arresting the trio, Rab officials said the murder took place over a brawl centring an unpaid cellphone display repair bill of just Tk 1,500.

The arrestees are Md Sani, 24, his brother Md Yousuf, 35, and Shakil Alam Faisal, 26.

Addressing a press briefing, Lt Col Towhidul Alam, camp commander of Rab-7's Bahaddarhat Camp, said Sani went into hiding at his maternal uncle's residence in Chandanish upazila. He was arrested from there, while the other two were later detained from Reazuddin Bazar and the Kotwali areas.

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